

NAATAPUITEA:

**An artistic interpretation of
traditional and contemporary
Samoan musical structures,
instrumentation and koniseti**

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Igelese Ete

Dedication

O lenei tusitusiga e fa'apitoa mo o'u mātua, le susuga i le Faife'au Toea'ina Penisione Malōlō ia Risatisone Ete ma le Faletua ia Fereni Ete, fa'apea fo'i ma lo'u aiga, ma le fanau - Aria ma le fanau, ia Amaziah ma Divinity, Naatapuilea, Nafanua ma Igelese Jnr ma lo'u toalua ia Vasiti (nee Radekedeke) Ete.

This work is dedicated to my parents Retired Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete and Fereni Ete, to whom I owe a deep debt of gratitude for grounding me in the values of my Samoan heritage, for sharing stories, history, genealogy and faith and for the care they take of the Samoan language and its cultural context.

I also extend this dedication to my dearest family; my son Igelese (Jnr) and daughter Nafanua; my eldest son Naatapuilea and eldest daughter Aria and her children, my mokopunas Amaziah and Divinity, and of course my dearest wife Vasiti (nee Radekedeke) Ete. Thank you family for your love, faith and hope, and for always challenging me to be better every day as I continue to serve. Si'i pea le vi'iga i le Atua. To God be the glory.

Fa'afetai tele lava ma Vinaka vakalevu. Alofa tele atu.

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Typeset by Sam Fraser in:

Noe Display (headings)

Tiempos Text (Body)

Acumin (peripherals, subheadings)

This thesis is submitted to Auckland University of Technology in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

Positioned as an artistic, practice-led inquiry, this thesis asks “What is the potential for Samoan ways of knowing the land, genealogy and ritual to resource creative *fāgogo* (*Samoan storytelling*).” In researching this idea, the composer draws upon his genealogical connection to the legend of Nafanua, traditional and contemporary instrumentation, chiefly oration (*lauga*) and ritual, as foci for designing a contemporary choral work.

Emanating from an interpretivist paradigm, the research design is guided by the principles of *fa’aaloalo* (*respect*), *tautua* (*service with integrity*) and attaining *malie* (*a certain sweetness*). The practice-led, cyclic methodology employed in the project, moves through phases of *fesili* (*questioning*), *foafoa* (*taking action*), *mai totōnu* (*inner reflection*) and *mai fafo* (*external reflection*), as the researcher develops and refines the work.

The study contributes to the development of contemporary, indigenously resourced performance in the revived form of a traditional *koniseti*. By creatively synthesising traditional values, chants, chiefly oration, traditional instruments and pre-missionary vocalisations, the research makes explicit complex relationships that exist between Samoan principles and artistic practice. As an extension of this, the study also proposes a conceptual reconsideration of the *lauga* (*chiefly oration*) of a *tulāfale* (*talking chief*) and demonstrates how a contemporary Samoan composer might ‘give voice’ to pertinent concerns relating to climate change and the role of *tautua* (*service*) in leadership.

Acknowledgements

E mumua lava ona si'i le fa'afetai ma le vi'iga i le Atua mo lona alofa silisili 'ese ma ana fa'amanuiga. Ia vi'ia pea lona suafa pa'ia.

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to my primary supervisor, Professor Welby Ings, for his inspiration, guidance, wisdom, encouragement, humility, strength, wealth of knowledge, accountability and especially his 'alofa'. He went out of his way to ensure that I would complete this PhD journey of self-discovery for which I am forever grateful. Fa'afetai lava I lau susuga Welby.

Malo aupito, I would also like to express my gratitude to the guardian and champion of Pasifika academia; I am honoured to have had Professor Konai Helu Thaman as my secondary supervisor and I would like to thank her for her constant support, inspiration, respect, perceptive analysis and feedback on my creative work. Thank you for your Pacific matriarchal 'mana'.

I also offer sincerest appreciation to my advisor and great friend, Assistant Vice-Chancellor Pacific Advancement and South Campus, Auckland University of Technology South, Mr Walter Fraser who has been a huge supporter and a champion of my academic and creative career. Fa'afetai lava uso for your tremendous support and especially for initiating my Auckland University of Technology Ph.D. scholarship for which I am forever grateful. Fa'afetai, fa'afetai lava le alofa mai.

Malō aupito, Kia mihi nui and Fa'afetai Lava to Massey University; Dean Pacific Professor Halatasa Havea, the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Creative Arts Dr Claire Robinson, Professor Ngataiharuru Taepa Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor Māori (Toi Rauwharangi) Kaihautu Toi Maori, Director of Maori Arts and the Pacific Creative Director Herbert Bartley, work colleagues from Te Ranga Tai Kura: Belinda Weepu, Kura Puke, Rongomaiaia Te Whaiti, Kurt Smith-Komene, Stuart Foster and Paula Bickers. Thank you for accepting me into the Massey family, especially during the transition period when I relocated from Fiji to New Zealand during the time of the coronavirus pandemic in July 2020 and the second wave in July 2021. Thank you for your immense support, continued manaakitanga, care, aroha and alofa.

I would also like to thank the former Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Law and Education, Dr Akanisi Kedrayate, and the former Director of the Oceania Centre for Arts Culture and Pacific Studies, at the University of the South Pacific.

I am also indebted to Dr Frances Koya-Vaka'uta, former Director of the Oceania Centre for Arts Culture and Pacific Studies, for her support and leadership, especially for the way that she enabled me to travel and study whilst working at the University of the South Pacific.

In addition to my parents, Retired Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete and Fereni Ete, I would like to express my appreciation to my brother Risatisone Ete for the informative and inspirational conversations, where we were able to dissect and reflect upon topics relevant to this research. These discussions assisted me in conceptualising the creative work and exegesis. His passion and intellect continues to inspire me. Fa'atetai lava. I would also like to acknowledge my siblings, Menime and Retired Rev. Eteuati Reupena and their family, Anufe and Sione Tugaga and their family, Meititi and Fereti Masun and their family, Eteuati Ete and Mele Wendt and their family, Soteria and Danny Sucic and their family, Sina and Helaman Su'esu'e and their family, Michiko and Rev. Dr Peletisara Limā and their family, Laina and Mu Apelu and their family, Risatisone and Paula Ete and their family, and the whole aiga including all of my aunties, uncles, nephews and nieces.

I would like to thank Mr Waisake Radekedeke and Mrs Luisa Radekedeke (my in-laws), for their continuous support and prayers, and the whole family: Sue and her husband Joji, Baki and Esava for their tremendous support, especially their continual love and care for Nafanua and Igelese Jnr.

I would also like to acknowledge his Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Tupuola Tufuga Efi, for his immense wisdom, knowledge and humility, and I express my gratitude to Dr Richard Moyle for taking time out of his busy schedule to host me at his tranquil home in Te Mata Thames, and for sharing his deep knowledge of Samoan music and musicians.

I would like to thank a number of people whose interviews contributed to the depth of this study. Firstly I express my gratitude to Fuiono Patolo, Taofinu'u Matālio, and Siliāla'ei Tuāi'a, my elders and paramount chiefs from Falealupo, for hosting my parents and me, and for showing us around my beloved village and for sharing such depth of knowledge in the interviews. I extend my gratitude to Tuilagi Siaosi ma le tausi ia Koleti, for the vast knowledge he shared with me during our interview and to Tuilagi Vaefaga, for the grace with which he received my parents when we turned up unexpectedly at his abode in Fatausi. I would also like to thank him for sharing his knowledge and experience as a matai in our village of Fatausi.

In relation to the pe'a that contributed so profoundly to the creative work in this thesis, I would like to acknowledge Tufuga Tā Tatau – Su'a Suluape Peter, for the masterpiece that I have the honour of wearing. It continues to remind me of

my identity, resilience, humility, strength and calling. I thank Tuigamala Andy Tauafiafi for his contribution and support in the organising of my pe'a, as well as tausī Sapphire for her wonderful support in photographing the process. Fa'afetai lava and Vinaka vakalevu. I would also like to acknowledge Lepaga Karl Partch for the insightful interview he afforded me over kava/coffee, during which time he shared his experience of receiving a pe'a at a young age. I would also like to express my gratitude to my cousin Lupematesila Kaio So'oalo, for sharing his experience as Samoan matai who grew up in Samoa and migrated to New Zealand in 2010 with his young family. Fa'afetai lava le fa'asoa.

Thank you Iosefa Enari for accepting the invitation to choreograph the koniseti. I would also like to thank Mike Bridgeman for offering to assist with the lighting design. Unfortunately we had to cancel the stage production due to the COVID lockdown; I hope and pray that we can collaborate in the future. Fa'afetai lava ma Malō aupito.

I would also like to acknowledge the first choir I joined; the Samoan Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Newtown, Wellington in 1981. My father was the conductor in the early years and it was here that I honed and developed my skill as a choirmaster and pianist/organist for the church. This engagement taught me the value of serving through the power of choral music.

Fa'afetai tele lava to all of the fantastic recording artists who brought this work to life via the audio soundtrack submitted for examination. I am incredibly grateful to the soloists: Lesā Lani Alo, Sam Nanai, Punialava'a Peteru, Nanai Manutoipule Peteru, Priscilla Gatoloa'i, Tinei Matafai-Leniu and my five-year-old daughter Nafanua Ete. Huge thanks and meitaki to Samuel Verlinden for his immense support with the choir leadership, recording process and also for utilising his vocal abilities as a soloist. I would like to express my appreciation to the Oceania Voices Ensemble: Gabriella Masoe, Silaulelei Nonu, Sophia Vavia, Reuben Fruean, Christian Tivoli, Lane Unasa, Stella Alofa, Opomataniu Feso, Wainalei Jeremiah, Gaven Bulgia, Patrick Sharrow, Otto Tiatia, and Zak Tulua. I would also like to thank the percussionist Mossiah Sapati Finai for his performance and for allowing me to utilise his SāPate instruments.

Fa'afetai lava i le fetalaiga ia Seumanu Simon Matāfai for the casting assistance, i le susuga ia Rev. Iosefa Lale Peteru ma le faletua ia Vini Lale Peteru for refining the Samoan lyrics fa'afetai lava le alofa mai. Nga mihi nui Kate Scott for all the amazing support throughout this PhD journey. Vina'a va'alevu to Damiano Logaivau for his continued support, prayers and deep discussions. This thesis honours dear family, friends, and colleagues who have passed through to the lagi pa'ia.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation for the support offered by the School of Art and Design and the Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies at Auckland University of Technology, particularly for the annual research stipend associated with this study. I am also appreciative of the University of the South Pacific's conference grant for travel to Hawaii for the Ke Au Hou Conference in 2018.

Table of Contents

Dedication	5
Abstract	9
Acknowledgements	11
Table of Contents	14
Table of Images	16
Attestation of Authorship	17
Ethics Approval and Consents	17
INTRODUCTION	21
The Research Context And Question	21
Rationale and significance of the Study	22
The use of the Samoan language in the exegesis	23
Key Samoan Words Used In The Research	23
Narrative of the Koniseti	24
The origin of the story	25
The structure of the exegesis	25
CHAPTER ONE: POSITIONING THE RESEARCHER	29
Lineage	29
Contributed knowledge	33
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF CONTEXTUAL KNOWLEDGE	37
Oratory/Lauga and the Role and Nature of Chiefly Titles and Genealogical Lineage	38
Instrumentation and Pre-Missionary Vocalisation	41
Fāgogo	41
Texts Relating to the Legend of Nafanua	43
Samoan Composers whose work predates this Thesis	44
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN	51
Research Paradigm	51
Methodology	53
The cyclic process	53
Mai totōnu, mai fafo and tacit knowing	55
Tacit knowing and heuristics	56
Methods	57
Background research	57
Design of the Base Narrative	58
Critique of Methodology	63
Advantages	63
Challenges	63

CHAPTER FOUR CREATIVE WRITING	67
Composer's Vision Statement	68
Significant concepts and principles	71
Samoan Principles	71
Structure/Sound Board	72
Lyrics	80
 CHAPTER FIVE: CRITICAL COMMENTARY	 95
Overview	95
Section One: The Manifestation of Fa'asāmoa (Samoan Ideas And Principles)	96
The Concept Of Tautua (<i>Service</i>)	96
Tatau/Malofie (<i>Tattoo</i>)	97
The Personification Of Gods And Lineage	103
The Nature And Experience Of Koniseti	107
Tulafale And The Use Of Fa'atusatusaga	110
Section Two: Compositional and Design Features Evident in Naatapuītea - The Sacred Star	116
Interpreting Samoan Environmental Influences	116
Koniseti Production	123
 CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	 131
Introduction	131
Exegesis Summary	132
Contributions To The Field	133
Further Research	134
Practice	134
Publication	135
In Closing	136
REFERENCES	140
 APPENDICES	 155
Appendix 1: Indicative Critiques of Iterative Experiments	155
Appendix 2: Documents Relating To Ethics Approval	160
Appendix 3: Interview Transcripts	164
Appendix 4: Account Of The Tatau/Pe'a Process	201

¹ See <https://www.pmca.co.nz/About/Copyright>

² See <https://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/fair-use/what-is-fair-use/>

TABLE OF IMAGES

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Figure 1.1. Sentenced Samoan Chiefs on board a German warship (1909).

Figure 1.2. My father, mother and me in Wellington, New Zealand (2014).

Figure 3.1. Diagram of the practice-led methodology used in this inquiry.

Figure 3.2. Public Performance with the Pasifika Voices Choir on their European Tour in Norway (July, 2015)

Figure 3.3. Public performance of work with the Oceania Voices choir at the AUT University graduation at the Aotea Centre in Auckland (December, 2016).

Figure 5.1. Undergoing the tu'itu'i mālofie under the care of tufuga tā tatau, Suluape Peter Su'a (January, 2021).

ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly stated) nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Igelese Ete 15 June, 2021

³ See Appendix 2 for documentation relating to ethics approval.

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENTS

Given the research involved interviews with cultural experts, the thesis was granted ethical approval on 22 May 2017. The approval covered research until June 7, 2021 by which time all data collection was completed.

The consent number was 17/129.³

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

⁴ Milner (1966) describes fāgogo as a “tale” (p. 52). However in this thesis I use the word to describe the rich, resonant process of storytelling. Fāgogo is an integrated way of traditional Samoan life. Its purpose is to teach, entertain, and reinforce cultural ideas and identity.

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT AND QUESTION

This thesis asks “What is the potential for Samoan ways of knowing the land, genealogy and ritual to resource creative fāgogo⁴?”

I was born in Samoa but my family migrated to New Zealand in 1974. I grew up in one of the pioneer Samoan churches; the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, Wellington in a village/community environment that maintained my Samoan identity. As a Samoan composer and conductor, I have been influenced by postmissionary Samoan hymns, traditional Samoan music, and contemporary music (including Black Gospel, Christian, Pop, Disco, Hip Hop, musicals and Western classical genres including Opera). At the core of this research resides these musical influences, in addition to considerations about the nature of chiefly expression, and the connection of Nafanua through genealogical links in my mother’s village of Falealupo and my chief title Tuilagi from my father’s villages Fusi and Fatausi.

Considering these influences, the thesis creatively reinterprets, recontextualises, reformulates and contemporises the traditional Samoan musical art form of fāgogo and blends it with the traditional performance form of the koniseti.

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Rationale

Since 1998, as a Samoan composer/conductor I have increasingly been asked to create musical work for international forums. However, often these works are experienced as a kind of exotic “Pasifika Performance” without any in-depth understanding of the responsibilities and complex knowledge systems that underpin them. This thesis, in generating an iterative, composite body of work, makes explicit some of this complexity and shows how uniquely Samoan ideas impact not only on the content of musical composition, but also on the creative processes that underpin it.

Significance

The study is significant because it contributes to the development and creation of a distinctive style of music, inspired by both fa’alupega and the traditional indigenous Samoan art form of fāgogo. This new form of fāgogo is performative and draws conceptually on a traditional Samoan entertainment event called the koniseti.

The research also proposes a rethinking of tulāfale oratory, and demonstrates how a talking chief might integrate traditional chants, fa’atusatusaga (*metaphor*), and applications of pre-missionary instruments, vocalisations, and contemporary Samoan music, into a new form of fāgogo (*storytelling*). The koniseti, *Naatapuitema: The Sacred Star*, demonstrates how these elements have been employed by a contemporary matai to ‘give voice’ to pertinent concerns relating to environmental decay and the relationship between service and leadership.

The study also demonstrates the application of a practice-led Samoan methodological framework that employs a cyclic structure, that moves through phases of fesili (*questioning*), foafoa (*creating*), mai totōnu (*inner reflection*) and mai fafo (*external reflection*). This methodological approach to practice-led inquiry is significant because it demonstrates how an artistic Samoan researcher might develop and refine work *inside* indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Finally, the study proposes a relationship between the process of tatau/ malofie (*tattooing*) and artistic research. By intersecting the concept of embodiment in artistic inquiry (Mäkelä et al, 2011; 2011; Klein, 2010; Steagall & Ings, 2018) with this deeply traditional ritual, the study suggests that such an experience might serve to provide cultural insight, resilience and understanding that can resource and influence creative practice.

⁵ See Ete, R. Interview 5, Appendix 3.

THE USE OF THE SAMOAN LANGUAGE IN THE EXEGESIS

In this exegesis, Samoan language is integrated with English, but where a Samoan word or phrase is appropriate it is used as the primary conveyor of knowledge with an English translation appearing in italics.

This preserves the agaga (*spirit*) of the Samoan language and inverts the convention of relegating non-English languages to secondary explanations. Where a Samoan term is too complex to be translated in a few words, it appears as a footnote with an explanation and, where appropriate, a reference to its use in existing literature or oratory. Normally, once a Samoan word has been used several times, it becomes integrated into my exegetical writing without translation.

KEY SAMOAN WORDS USED IN THE RESEARCH

Fāgogo: While I appreciate that this word can have rich meanings, in this thesis I use fāgogo to refer to a form of ‘storytelling’, expressing the traditional legends and myths of Samoa. Traditionally, fāgogo as a word-based phenomenon may be delivered through oratory, chants and singing. In this thesis, like Tui Atua (2016) I extend these communicative devices to include a range of other media and performative devices that I use to creatively interpret Samoan legends, myths and aganu’u (Samoan culture) through a diasporic lens.

Koniseti: This is a Samoan term I use in reference to the creativity of my grandfather Ete Migi Taito who was a fai-koniseti (producer and composer of koniseti). A koniseti describes a distinctive construction where a Samoan storyline is integrated with instrumentation, choreography and songs into a performance that reflects on a moral or ethical theme. In extending my work beyond western constructs of the choral, koniseti also describes a performance specifically designed to enable portability between venues and the flexibility to include local talent from villages it visits.⁵ The phenomenon is discussed in more depth in Chapter 5.

Nafanua: is an aitu (*spirit*), a powerful female ancestor, a warrior and a deity. Born like most aitu in Samoa as an alualutoto (*blood clot*), (Schmidt, 2002) which was hidden in the earth, hence the meaning of her name – Nanā (*hidden*) Fanua (*earth*). A transformer of Samoan politics, she is associated primarily with the village of Falealupo and was also a prophetess who foresaw the coming of Christianity.

Vā Tapuia: Vā literally means ‘space’ and has been considered by a range of scholars including Aiono, 1997a, Anae 2016a, Ka’ili, 2005, Mahina, 2004, 2017a, Tuagalu, 2008 and Wendt, 1996. Vā tapuia often relates to a space that is commonly associated with the sacred relationship between a brother and sister. However, in my ‘koniseti’ I extend the use of Vā tapuia to describe the space between the lagi (*heavens*) and the nafaŋua (*hidden earth*). Thus, “Vā is the space between, the between-ness. This is not an empty space, nor a space that separates, but space that relates; that holds separate entities and things together in a unity-of-all. It is therefore, the space that is a context that gives meaning to things” (Wendt, 1996, para.5). My use of the term is drawn from Wendt’s consideration of a well-known Samoan expression ‘la teu le Vā’, cherish/nurse/care for the vā, the relationships’.

The nature of the practice

The practice in this thesis is iteratively developed and occurs in two bodies of work:

- The first is an annotated, written narrative, formatted as a composer’s vision statement, as a structure/sound board and lyrics. This material appears in Chapter 4 of the exegesis.
- The second is a staged performance, *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star*. This contemporary form of koniseti integrates choral work, solo performances, instrumental composition, dance, sound design and visual elements.

NARRATIVE OF THE KONISETI

The narrative for this koniseti concerns the supreme God Tagaloa who seeks the assistance of Tuilagi and Nafaŋua, the Chief of the Heavens and the Aitu of Earth. The vā tapuia (*the sacred space between*) is on the path to environmental destruction because greed and arrogance are corrupting the human spirit. This demise is causing the once beautiful planet to deteriorate. The deities approach a shy 17-year-old youth named Naatapuitema, who had previously lost his mother in a galu afi (*wave of fire/tsunami*). At first Naatapuitema is reluctant to help, but he consents when he believes that it is his mother’s wish. The boy is transformed into manhood by undergoing the tataua (*tattoo*) ritual. However, he becomes over-confident about his power and, having lost his humility, he attempts to save the vā tapuia by attacking the galu afi heroically, as an individual. The fight is ferocious but Naatapuitema loses the battle. Half dead, he hears his mother’s voice and when he enters a spiritual realm, his ancestors reach out to him. They council him and provide him with a choice. They can restore his energy

and he can defeat the galu afi. However, if this happens, he will be seen for a short time as a hero but he will only defeat this one catastrophe, and others will follow because he has become a warrior rather than a healer. Alternatively, he can sacrifice his vanity and die. But, in so doing, he will become a star in the heavens, providing light for all Samoans and a reminder that defeating climate change relies on *tautua* (service), *loto tele* (courage), *fa'amaulalo* (humility) and *taulaga* (sacrifice).

THE ORIGIN OF THE STORY

Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star is a contemporary myth that draws its inspiration from four sources. The first is my immediate aiga (family) and specifically my son Naatapuitema, who faced challenges with anxiety and depression as he journeys through adolescence towards becoming a young adult. Second, the work is shaped by reflections on my ancestry, specifically on my mother's village Falealupo (and its association with Nafanua and Pulotu) and my father's maternal lineage. Third, the work is a reflection on the role and nature of contemporary Samoan leadership, its values and expectations. These I carry with my chiefly title of Tuilagi, and the associated role of a Tulāfale Matai. Finally, I am inspired by the ancient tradition of Samoan story creation. *Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star* is a contemporary myth, populated with traditional and contemporary characters. It should not be confused with the traditional Tapuitema myth (see footnote 78). It is an original narrative that navigates spiritual and physical realms and draws on conventions of Samoan performance (including a largely undocumented format called the koniseti) to draw attention to environmental issues impacting not only on Samoa, but also the world in which these beautiful islands reside.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXEGESIS

The exegesis is structured into six chapters encased by an introduction and a conclusion.

Chapter 1 offers a positioning of the researcher. It discusses my lineage, how I perceive research and how I came to undertake this study. Chapter 2 offers a review of knowledge impacting on the research. It considers the role and nature of chiefly titles and genealogical lineage, instrumentation and pre-missionary vocalisation, fāgogo and literature relating to the legend of Nafanua. It concludes with a discussion of Samoan composers whose work predates my own. Chapter 3 unpacks the research design underpinning the thesis. Within this I discuss the paradigm, methodology, methods and offer a consideration of advantages and challenges in the research design. Chapter 4 presents three creative documents: A Composer's Vision statement that discusses the style, characters, concepts

and principles underpinning the work, a narrative outline divided into three Acts, and the final lyrics of Naatapuilea – The Sacred Star in Samoan (with an accompanying English translation). Chapter 5 offers a substantial commentary on the work that discusses significant Samoan concepts and design features evident in the work.

The exegesis concludes with Chapter 6, a thesis summary, a discussion of contributions to the field, and a consideration of further research.

The document contains 4 appendices:

- Indicative critiques of iterative experiments
- Documents relating to ethics approval
- Translated interview transcripts
- An account of the tatau/pe'a process I underwent in February 2021.

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE

POSITIONING THE RESEARCHER

⁶ Risatisone Ete.

⁷ Ferani Ete (nee 'Auva'a).

⁸ Ete (2015) Faimalaga Ma Le Atua - E Lutia i Puava Ae Mapu i Fagalele, offers a well documented account of their ministry. In the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, a faife'au's (*pastor's*) ministry is always understood as being shared with the faletua (*pastors wife*).

Lineage

When I consider my ancestral being I am reminded of two things associated with my parents (Figure 1.2). Firstly, my chiefly title originates from my father's⁶ village of Fatausi. This title is Tuilagi and it literally means 'King of the Heavens'. Secondly, I am aware of the deity, aitu (*spirit*), the warrior princess and spirit legend of Nafanua who hails from my mother's⁷ village Falealupo. Nafanua's name literally means 'the hidden earth'.

I am positioned in the Vā or space between these concepts. The thesis draws on the fact that my father and my mother both have distinctive lineages and I am the vessel into which they flow. Accordingly, I am positioned between the heavens and the hidden earth. Thus, the thesis is significantly resourced and determined by my fa'alupega (*genealogy*).

In 1974, my parents were called to Wellington, New Zealand to pastor a church in Newtown, Ekalesia Fa'apotoptoga Kerisiano I Samoa (*The Congregational Christian Church of Samoa - CCCS*)⁸ I remember as a seven-year-old boy who spoke little English, migrating from the tropical warmth of Samoa to a hilly, cold, windy city where our family was welcomed.

This church not only shaped my Christian faith; it also gave me an anchor. I was expected to join the choir, youth group, Christmas productions and Sunday school ... all of the things expected of the child of a pastor in the Samoan Church. The church was also a place that grounded me in my fa'aSamoa (*Samoan culture*);



Figure 1.1
Sentenced Samoan Chiefs on board a German warship taking them to exile in Saipan (1909). My ancestor Tuilagi Letasi is among these chiefs but the only one named in this image is Namulau'ulu Lavaki Mamoe (standing 3rd from left with orator's staff). Photograph taken by Alfred John Tattersall. ©. Alexander Turnbull Library: Ref: 1/2-020688-F Photograph used with permission.



Figure 1.2
My father, retired Reverend Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO), my mother Fereni Ete (QSM) and me June 14, 2014, in Wellington, New Zealand. © Igelese Ete.

⁹ Ete's Bachelor of Divinity thesis (1972, part 2, p. 42 and part 3 pp. 14-15) outlines his vision to build a church in the style of a Samoan meeting house which is a fale.

¹⁰ Tagata Pasifika paid tribute to Reverend Risatisone and Fereni Ete's retirement in their episode: <https://tpplus.co.nz/news-politics/wellingtons-reverend-ete-retires-after-35-years/>

¹¹ This song made it to number 11 on the New Zealand charts and was produced by Makerita Urale. It can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhCcfGjPXgk> Groovalation was the first rapping song in New Zealand music history to incorporate three languages. The lyrics were rapped by the comedian/musician Tofiga Fepulea'i and Rapper Dean Umu.

my father was always resolute that the church building should identify with the Samoan culture⁹. All of the services and programs were in Samoan. As an extension of their roles, my parents advocated strongly for our Samoan community and in respect of this, in 2003, my father received a Queen's Service Order, and in 2014, my mother received the Queen's Service Medal, for services to the Pacific community and education. My parents, but primarily my mother Fereni Ete, were responsible for establishing the first New Zealand A'oga Amata (*Samoan full immersion pre-school*) in 1985 (Hendriske, 1995). They retired from their ministry in 2009¹⁰.

It was in the church that I developed my musical skills as an organist, choirmaster, composer and arranger. At 10, I commenced formal piano lessons (together with my older sister Michiko, and younger brother Risatisone Jnr). Under Mrs Evans' stern tutelage on Friday afternoons at 4pm, I learned the nature of commitment.

My fascination with composition met with varied responses. I recall graphically at 11, how Mrs Evans, who listened to the piano composition I proudly played after winning my South Wellington Intermediate 'talent quest', told me condescendingly that my piece was "just a bunch of chords."

However, the fire to create was ignited within me and I continued to pursue composition through secondary school, where I expanded my interests into school politics and rugby. However, I irritated coaches who had selected me for the Wellington College 1st XV rugby team because I was concurrently selected for the National Youth Choir of New Zealand (which I had secretly auditioned for without telling my parents). To my knowledge I was the only Samoan singer in the choral ensemble (and may have been the first male member).

At this time, I also auditioned for the Music Executant course at Wellington Polytechnic, which was tutored by Flora Edwards. I studied there for two years, then decided to audition for Victoria University's performance degree by the late Emily Mair. There I completed a Bachelor of Music in 1995.

During this period, I began to work on an album and I released my first single called *Groovalation*.¹¹ In 1994 I also became involved in numerous festivals, including 'The International Festival of the Arts' (with Tūta'atasi) and 'Classical Polynesia' (with the late Iosefa Enari Snr).

In 1996 I moved to Auckland and began teaching itinerantly in various secondary schools, including Tangaroa College and Mount Roskill College. I also assisted in establishing the Auckland Pacific Gospel Choir with Taule'ale'ausumai Lealaiauloto Ben. At the same time, I worked with a variety of community services including the Glen Eden PIC Church (with the Rev. Asora Amosa).

¹² In Leota-Ete (2007) master's thesis she discusses and analyses *Malaga – The Journey*.

¹³ See: <https://www.hcgc.org.nz/about-the-choir.html>

¹⁴ Again, in this instance, I was enabled through the agency of Walter Fraser.

¹⁵ Anabalon, J. L. (2015). *We Rise by Lifting Others* (Master's thesis, The University of Bergen). <http://dspace.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/11653/136410723.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

¹⁶ In New Zealand, school deciles indicate the extent to which a school draws students from low socio-economic communities. For state and state-integrated schools, the government uses this system of ranking from 1-10 to target funding, to help overcome potential barriers to learning that lower socio-economic communities might face. Decile 1 refers to the 10% of New Zealand schools with the highest proportion of students from low socio-economic communities.

¹⁷ A discussion of the initiative can be found in: Mackley-Crump, J. (2011). *Malaga—the journey: the performing arts as motivational tool for Pasifika students in Aotearoa New Zealand*. *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 12(3), 255-273.

¹⁸ See: <https://vimeo.com/112716069>

¹⁹ See: <https://vimeo.com/112809369>

²⁰ Feedback from the Moana production team after the recording session with Pasifika Voices 2016 is viewable here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5IFamAyyYs>

In 1998 I co-created with Jakki Leota-Mua, the first iteration of *Malaga – The Journey*.¹² This was commissioned and performed for the official opening of the national museum, Te Papa. The work was also performed in the same year at the Christchurch Arts Festival. It was then reformatted for the University of Auckland (with the assistance of Walter Fraser) in 2001 and 2002.

In 2000, I moved to Hamilton to take up the position as a music lecturer at the Vision College School of Music offered by Samoan violinist Sam Konise. Working with him we established the Hamilton Community Gospel Choir¹³ which continue to perform today.

In 2001 I was invited by Sir Peter Jackson and Howard Shore to audition, rehearse and conduct a predominantly Pacific island and Māori men's choir for the first installment of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, *The Fellowship of the Ring*. The following year I was awarded the first Pacific Creative Fellowship at the University of Auckland. This came with a Master of Music Scholarship in Composition.¹⁴

In 2006 I took up a senior lectureship at the University of the South Pacific (USP). Here, working again with Walter Fraser, I further developed the *Malaga* production as a tool of empowerment for the students in Suva, and in 2007 I was asked to compose work and conduct for the South Pacific Games in Samoa. It was in this same year that I founded the Pasifika Voices choir, that became the subject of a former Norwegian member's Master's thesis *We Rise by Lifting Others*.¹⁵

In recognition of my work at this time I was awarded in 2009, the Creative New Zealand Senior Pacific Artist Award for my commitment and contributions to the promotion and performance of Pacific music in New Zealand and the Pacific. In the same year I created a Fijian version of Bizet's opera, '*Carmen*' as well as another iteration (in Porirua Wellington), of *Malaga – The Journey*. This production involved the local colleges of Aotea, Porirua and Viard Bishop, that were at the time, demarcated as decile 1 schools.¹⁶ I was attracted to these schools because I believed that music might be used to inspire and empower students, especially those of Pacific and Māori ethnicity who comprised a significant proportion of the students.¹⁷

In addition to these commissions, in 2012 I composed music for the production *Vaka: The Birth of a Seer*¹⁸ for the Oceania Centre for Arts Culture and Pacific Studies; *Drua: The Wave of Fire*¹⁹ (2012) and *Moana: Rising of the Sea* (2013-2015). Then, in 2016, I was commissioned to compose for a number of films including Disney's *Moana*. In these works, I was able to draw in students from the Pasifika Voices choir I had been incrementally building and conducting.²⁰

Before approaching this thesis, I had concurrently become concerned with a number of issues. The first was outcomes of conferences like the COP23

²¹ See: <https://cop23.com.fj/samoa/>

²² Schultz, E. (1906). Volume 60, No. 1, Proverbial expressions of the Samoans, p 1-21.

Un-Climate Change conference in Fiji (2017).²¹ This, along with the United Nations Development Programme, noted that Samoa, like many of the Pacific islands, was being directly damaged by climate change. The UN noted that, “Approximately 70% of Samoa’s population and infrastructure are located in low-lying coastal areas.” Continued sea level rise remains a significant threat and is expected to exacerbate “coastal erosion, loss of land, property and dislocation of the island inhabitants” (Cop23/Fiji, 2018, para. 2).

I had also begun to think about the nature of leadership and my responsibilities as a contemporary matai who is positioned in the vā and expresses his identity and thinking as a composer. I had begun asking how I might use my abilities to help raise the profile of environmental threats, by employing distinctively Samoan ways of knowing and expressing. I wanted to highlight the issues for Samoans living at home and in the diaspora, and to use my creativity to concurrently create an artistic bridge that might reach out into a wider world.

Contributed knowledge

It is generally assumed that a doctoral thesis consists of original work that makes a significant contribution to knowledge (Petre & Rugg, 2010). However, the nature of ‘contributed knowledge’ may be culturally determined and it is useful in this study to clarify what I mean when I use the term.

There is a traditional alagaupu (*Samoan proverb*) that states:

‘Ua sau le va’a na tiu, ‘ae tali le va’a na tau, o lo’o mamaulago i le va’a na faoafolau.²²

(One boat returns from the catch; the other is tied to the strand; the third one is propped up in the boat-shed).

Through this alagaupu we might understand both what knowledge is, and its nature as a contribution. The boat returning from fishing is compared to travellers, the anchored boat refers to the chiefs, orators and young men, and the third boat is likened to the old people who stay at home.

As an artistic scholar I see myself inhabiting the canoe that has gone out on a voyage. I am a man who has left his original homeland and returns with a catch of knowledge, not as a discrete and exotic commodity, but as something that is deeply resourced from the homeland I left. Thus, I do not see knowledge as something acquired but something that flows through my ancestry into,

²³ I am also deeply connected to the other *va'as* (*boats*). In the concepts of *aiga* and *nu'u*, we all have important roles to play in our community. Here our contributions interweave like a fine mat (*'ie toga*) that defines us holistically as a people. I believe this is where the *mana* of the *aganu'u* (*Samoa way*) resides.

and through me. I journey with it, synthesise it, create with it, and return it respectfully to the shore.

This bringing in of what is 'newly known' is a part of the greater flow of knowledge that exists between the heavens and the earth. In the instance of this thesis what is known is embedded in artistic work. This is a distinctly Samoan way of knowing. A Samoan is a total being, connected to his or her place of existence and with this are all things spiritual and physical, mental and emotional (Cardinal, 2001; Steinhäuser, 2002; Tavana, 2002; Tamasese et al., 2005). Knowledge in Samoa (as well as in many other parts of the Pacific) contains a *mau* (*covenant*). It is also drawn upon and returned with a sense of respect and honour.

Thus, epistemologically and metaphorically in this thesis, I have travelled on a *va'a* (*canoe*) into unknown waters. Here, I have navigated what is known and what is not yet known. On my journey I have connected and creatively orchestrated what I have discovered externally and internally and I have now returned, bringing a collective knowledge that carries a spirit of *mealofa* (*a gift [of love]*) back to my *aiga*/family/community and country.²³

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF CONTEXTUAL KNOWLEDGE

²⁴ Transcripts of these are available in Appendix 3.

This review of contextual knowledge documents bodies of research that have impacted on or help to position the inquiry. It is useful to note that, given the nature of the project, certain knowledge resides in non-literary texts, including audio recordings of chants, interviews with cultural experts²⁴ and archived documentation of traditional Samoan music. For this reason this chapter is described as a Review of Contextual Knowledge and not a literature review.

A work like *Naatapuītea – The Sacred Star* as artistically generative research, differs from conventional research that Rosenberg (2000) notes normally “starts with a question and develops a research stratagem in advance of the process” (2000, p. 6). Such research tends to organise itself strategically because it is guided by a defined research problem that is pre-formed in advance of the research process. Rosenberg suggests that this “produces research in line with the answerability of the question” (ibid.). In such research, a literature review is normally employed to document what pre-exists and to identify a ‘gap’ in the field. However, Rosenberg notes that artistically generative research is quite different, because it normally begins in more nebulous complexity “drawing out from a number of sources simultaneously ... weaving together disparate elements in a complex and evolving structure” (ibid.). Such research is profiled by non-linear connections, that creatively destabilise, rupture, reform and transform. Material contextualising such an inquiry is not always definable at the outset because the research journey moves between points in response to opportunity and evolving rules.

25 This text is utilised in Experiments 1 and 2 in Appendix 1

26 Tulouna 'oe safotulafai
(Greeted you Safotulafai)

Tulouna e na pule ia te oe
Safotulafai 'o Tuilagi ma
Namulaulu
(Greeted, those who rule over
you Safotulafai Tuilagi and
Namulaulu)

Alaala mai laia
(May they sit wisely in council)

Ae tulouna le aiga Saalaalatoa 'o
Pa'u ma Letufuga
(Greeted the family Salaalatoa
Pa'u and letufuga)

Afio mai lau afioga a Leilua ma
le to'alima o ou alo
(Respectfully welcome your
highness Leilua and your five
sons)

Susu mai alo o Malietoa 'o
Moananu ma Taulapapa
(Welcome the mighty sons of
Malietoa, Moananu & Taulapapa)

O taumafa ava ia te oe
Safotulafai alaala mai laia
(Who prepare the kava for you
Safotulafai may they sit wisely
in council)

O 'oe Letufugaita
ma Letufugapule ma
Letufugatoatama'i
(You Letufuga the angry, and
Letufuga the commanding and
Letufuga the raging)

Tulouna 'oe safotulafai
(Greeted you Safotulafai)

Tulouna e na pule ia te oe
Safotulafai 'o Tuilagi ma
Namulaulu
(Greeted, those who rule over
you Safotulafai Tuilagi and
Namulaulu)

Thus, this review discusses knowledge that was drawn to the inquiry as it progressed. As such, the review provides a broad scoping of significant knowledge that related directly to the development of the work.

The review covers five areas:

- Oratory/Lauga: the role and nature of chiefly titles and genealogical lineage
- Instrumentation and pre-missionary vocalisation
- Fāgogo
- Texts relating to Nafanua
- Samoan Composers whose work predates this thesis.

Oratory/Lauga and the Role and Nature of Chiefly Titles and Genealogical Lineage

The fa'alupega (*genealogy*) and Samoan oratory and its importance to the fa'aSamoa way of life is documented by Kramer (1902). His work, *The Samoa Islands: Volume 1: Constitution, Pedigrees and Traditions*, is focused primarily on the political structure as well as the extensive genealogies from various parts of Samoa. Kramer also transcribed the fa'alagiina (*address*) given to a matai with the Tuilagi title.²⁵ The lauga explains the genealogy of my Tuilagi title,²⁶ and is important because it lays out my identity through my ancestral roots. This work and its findings have been promoted by Meleisea (1997).²⁷ Despite this, I am aware that Kramer's data gathering method was criticised by Freeman (1998).²⁸

Holmes (1974) emphasises the significance of the honour of holding a matai title, and he discusses how others are honoured through the quality of oratory. He also notes that, more than being simple speeches, oratory reaches higher levels of significance in Samoan society because "Samoans have a strong faith in the magical power of words to charm, soothe, persuade, or arbitrate" (1974, p. 349).

Building on Holmes' work, Tu'i (1987) discusses the role of the matai, observing that "Oratory is the exclusive prerogative of Samoan matai, the holders specific title names, whether as ali'i (chief) or tulafale (orator)" (1987, p. 66)

Duranti (1981, 1983, 1984) offers a rich description of the linguistic systems and methods of the lauga, and he also considers the importance of the lauga in the ceremony and fono (*meeting*) as well as a lauga as a "Verbal Art" form.

Tcherkezoff (2000) notes that, in almost all of the literature published by early travellers and missionaries, the concept of the matai is ignored. There are details given about "high chiefs", "chiefs", "rulers", "chiefs and orators", etc., but the only Samoan words quoted are ali'i (pa'ia) and tulāfale" (2000, p. 161).²⁹

Alaala mai laia
(*May they sit wisely in council*)
Ae tulouna le aiga Saalaalatoa 'o
Pa'u ma Letufuga
(*Greeted the family Salaalatoa
Pa'u & letufuga*)

Afio mai lau afioga a Leilua ma le
to'alima o ou alo
(*Respectfully welcome your
highness Leilua and your
five sons*)

Susu mai alo o Malietoa 'o
Moananu ma Taulapapa
(*Welcome the mighty sons
of Malietoa, Moananu and
Taulapapa*)

O taumafa ava ia te oe
Safotulafai alaala mai laia
(*Who prepare the kava for you
Safotulafai may they sit wisely
in council*)

O 'oe Letufugaita
ma Letufugapule ma
Letufugatoatama'i
(*You Letufuga the angry, and
Letufuga the commanding and
Letufuga the raging*) (Kramer,
1994, p. 55).

- 27 Dr Malama Meleisea states,
"It is my personal hope that
not only scholars in the field
of Polynesian and Pacific
Studies will buy this volume,
but every Samoan family will do
so as well, in order to educate
their children in the wealth of
Samoan traditional knowledge'
(1997, p. 284).

- 28 Freeman (1998, p. 975) notes:
By the 1890s very many
Samoans were literate in their
own language, and many 'aiga
(as Kramer confirms) kept
manuscript Genealogy Books
in which gafa, fa'alupega, and
other traditions were recorded.
It was manuscripts such as
these that Kramer sought out,
and he is relatively unabashed
about the means to which
he resorted to obtain them.
The manuscripts, that Kramer
extracted from Samoans in
this exsanguinous way, he
published in his *Die Samoa-
Inseln* of 1902. Despite ethical
issues surrounding the
compiling of these documents,
they constitute an invaluable
source of information on gafa,
fa'alupega, and certain other
Samoan traditions.

- 29 He discusses two significant
exceptions; Kramer's late
19th century ethnography and
the missionary dictionaries
of the mid 19th century. He
also notes that Pritchard's
book (1968, 1st edition 1866),
mentions the word matai once,
but it does not elaborate on
the term.

- 30 However, Tcherkezoff maintains
that the equivalence between
Fa'aSamoa and Fa'amatai may
have been less true for earlier
periods.

- 31 Tcherkezoff (2005, p. 253) says:
This to us astonishing, but
altogether Samoan decision
shows that the idea of malo
'government' [...] does not stand
above the matai system. In the
matai system, rivalry between
men of similar rank is usually
resolved according to hierarchy.
But when the contest occurs at
the very top, there remains only
one solution, which is extreme:
war. That is why one of the first
acts of the German colonial
government was to create a
supreme court of law with the
power to decide all matters
relating to matai titles. This was
an essential tool in eliminating
traditional warfare.

- 32 Tcherkezoff, (2005, p. 256), says:
The faamatai: 'the system of
matai is, for everyone, the
social system of belonging.
Every person, in every social
situation is therefore subjected
to at least one prohibition and
one obligation, and usually to
several acts in accordance or
in conscious and deliberate
contradiction, with reference to
a 'place' (tulaga, nofo) that he
sees himself as occupying with
respect to the others present in
this situation.

- 33 Tcherkezoff, (2005, p. 261)
records the following:
Matai greet each other through
the intermediary of their
ancestors, as it were, as though
each actually was the founding
ancestor of the matai name
he bears, and had just relived
a condensed version of this
ancestor's history. But that is
what each matai is: not only
does he bear the ancestor's
name, he 'is' this ancestor, from
the day he is invested with the
name until the day he dies or
the family decides to take it
away from him.

³⁴ As a Samoan chief I perceive myself in the same role. I understand my responsibility is to demonstrate the values fa'aaloalo (*respect*), alofa (*love*), tautua (*service*), and osi-aiga (*service to the family*).

³⁵ This information comes from an interview with Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete and Fereni Ete, conducted in Suva, Fiji on August 8, 2017). Of chiefly titles and responsibilities Ete says: It is important in a family, because (*the matai*) has the responsibility to look after the land of the family, surrounding lands, ownership of the family, also to ensure that the lineage and genealogy of the family is maintained and that everything is sorted, making sure that family members are aware of their identity and status in the village, community and in the country.

Ete also emphasises that the role encompasses: Communicating with the other chiefs, so all the chiefs can support, in the context of the aganu'u (*culture*). He also has a role in the Church. The Matai leads the family matāfale – (*family church membership*) within the church, he needs to ensure that the matāfale is serving the church, he also needs to be a responsible member of the church – either as a deacon or lay-preacher. He sets an example also in his family and career, so that people will respect him, he needs to uphold the values of the aganu'u ma le lotu – fa'aaloalo (*respect*) alofa (*love*) tautua (*service*) osi-aiga (*to serve your family*) weddings, funerals. This goes hand in hand with the Christian values. (Ete, R. and Ete, F. personal communication, August 8, 2017)

However, Tcherkezoff maintains that the matai system extends deeply into contemporary governance, noting that, “the Fa’aSamoa (*the Samoan custom*) is the Fa’amatai (*the matai-system*)” (ibid, p. 151).³⁰ However, he observes that in the last 2 centuries, governmental decisions have begun to abolish certain privileges of the matai at the level of national politics. Tcherkezoff discusses the unique nature of the Samoan matai, contesting the suggestion that the word may be translated as a Samoan type of “Polynesian chief”, “because matai are not of one type and the concept of Polynesian Chief omits significant transformations that have affected the various kinds of Samoan leaders during recent centuries” (ibid.). He argues that the concept of the “Polynesian chief”, mistakenly understood as simple and unitary, is actually very complex and ‘matai’ may be contrasted with ideas like the Big-man type chiefs in certain Melanesian societies. Tcherkezoff also argues that “the ali’i/matai distinction in old Samoa is one of many oppositions which makes the notion [of the Polynesian Chief] more complex” (ibid, p. 180). The author also discusses the word matai’s association with “being ‘the best’, ‘the best through personal skills’, or a ‘master’ in a craft activity” (ibid.).

Tcherkezoff also discusses the importance of the matai system in relation to government, especially since the time of German rule, when the government created a supreme court of law with the “power to decide all matters relating to matai titles, and that this became a critical tool in eradicating traditional warfare (Tcherkezoff, 2005, p. 253)”.³¹ In this work he also defines and discusses the Fa’amatai system which he describes as a “social system of belonging”.³² He also notes that when we meet a matai, we are meeting both him and his ancestral lineage.³³

The significance of the matai/chiefly title as well as its accompanying responsibility, nature and functioning as a model of appropriate social behaviour³⁴ is also discussed in my recent interview with Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete.³⁵ Here, he emphasises the importance of the role in the aiga (*family*) and also in the lotu (*church*), as well as the significance of my Tuilagi title from the perspective of aiga, nu’u (*village*) and career. He asserts that a matai must thrive in these settings as a leader who upholds the key values of the aganu’u (*culture*).

However Samoan scholar Tominiko’s 2014 Ph.D. thesis argues that the “power of the chief lies not so much in the personal qualities of the holder, but rather in the title itself: a name confers power on its holder” (p. 77).³⁶ And I strongly concur So’o (2008) sentiments that “Sāmoans envisage their political system as one based on a fixed order, legitimized by historical events, in which all matai, whether tulafale or an ali’i, know their place in society. This is reflected in the well-known Sāmoan saying: O Samoa ua ‘uma ona tofi’ (In Sāmoa all positions have been allocated” (p.22).

³⁶ He supports this argument with reference to Freeman, (1948, p. 72), and Shore (1982, p. 59).

³⁷ This is the name of a pandanus tree and a sleeping mat (Pratt, 1862, p. 116). In this particular case the mat is probably referring to the mat rolled up and used as an instrument.

³⁸ Williams describes three distinct forms of drum:

[The first was] ... a log of wood six or eight feet long, hollowed out from a narrow, elongated opening on the upper surface; and this they beat with a short stick or mallet. Another was a set of bamboos, four feet long and downwards, arranged like a Pan's pipe, having the open ends enclosed in a mat bag, and this bag they beat with a stick. A third kind of drumming was effected by four or five men, each with a bamboo open at the top and closed at the bottom, with which, holding vertically, they beat the ground, or a stone or any hard substance, and as the bamboos are of various lengths, they emitted a variety of sounds (Williams, 1842, p. 125).

³⁹ In this context, the word rude means rough or coarse.

Instrumentation and Pre-Missionary Vocalisation

Integral to the creative aspect of the thesis, is research into Samoan vocalisation and instrumentation existent at the time of missionary and early ethnographer accounting. Existing discourse on this subject can be found in the early records of Turner (1861 and 1844), and Williams (1842). In addition, Moyle (1988) offers a detailed description of traditional Samoan instruments, vocalisation and songs. This is accompanied by a western notational, musical analysis of melody, harmony, rhythm tonality, modes and scales. This work has been helpful in this study in terms of my compositional thinking.

Early accounts by Turner suggest that Europeans encountered precolonised Samoan performances as discordant or, “an unearthly concert of voices, in which there were nasal squeaks of old men and women” (1861, p. 429).

Turner also noted that traditional Samoan singing was accompanied by clapping, the beating of floor mats³⁷ and drumming on a log drum.³⁸ However, Turner discussed vocalisation in disparaging terms, describing “a monotonous chant of a line or two, repeated over and over again, with no variety beyond two or three notes” (1884, p. 125). He stated that performers “began slow, and gradually increased until, at the end of ten or twenty minutes, they were full of excitement, the perspiration streaming down, and their tongues, galloping over the rhyme at breathless speed” (ibid.). I would suggest though, that both Turner and Williams demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of the complexities and nature of traditional Samoan music and its role as cultural expression. Thus, the Western lens, limited by a colonial perspective, caused Turner to describe night-dances as typified by “all kinds of obscenity in looks, language, and gesture” (ibid.). Such events, he records often extended through the evening and into daylight.

During his mission in Samoa, between 1830 and 1832, Williams documented fala and log drums as primary accompaniments to singing that he described as a “rude harmony”³⁹ (Williams, 1842, p. 89). Although much of his analysis is at best patronising and at worst derogatory, Williams did consider certain women’s singing in a more positive light, describing their chanting as displaying a “pleasing and lively air” (ibid. p. 91).

Fāgogo

The word fāgogo in Samoan may be broadly translated as storytelling. Its nature and use have been discussed by Charlot (1988, 1991, 1992), and Tielu (2016).

Charlot (1988) in an article in *The Journal of American Folklore*, offered a useful consideration of the nature of chanting and prose in Samoan narrative. He observed that chants vocalised in fāgogo are relatively fixed in format and

⁴⁰ "The ordinary form of the written or spoken word" New Zealand Oxford Dictionary (2005, p. 903).

⁴¹ Charlot observes that "Genealogies have long been recognized as central to Samoan culture, being used for such different purposes as identifying and praising self and family, arranging marriages, awarding titles and claiming rights and land" (1991, p.127). Genealogies, he suggests, are "an important means of thought and communication in religious thinking [noting that] human beings, individual gods or aitu can be explained through genealogy" (ibid.).

⁴² The scholars and practitioners she discusses come from the fields of archaeology, cultural studies, language, education, and art history. They include: Lealaitagomoa Dionne Fonoti, Matiu Matāvai Tautunu, Letuimanu'asina Emma Kruse Va'ai, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi, Gatoloai Tili Afamasaga, Seiuli Vaifou Aloali'i Temese, Taupā'u Luatutu Fiso Evelini Fa'amoe and Lisa Taouma.

⁴³ Tielu refers specifically to Tui Atua's observation that fāgogo is a shortened version of both "fa'agogo" (like the 'gogo', the white tern seabirds) and "fafaga gogo", meaning "to nurture like the gogo(sina)" (2016, p. 72). The gogosina she notes, are valued in Samoan culture, not only as a source of food but also for their feathers that are used in indigenous fishing and decoration.

⁴⁴ There is an implicit connection between this proverb about raising children and the gogosina who inspired the contemporary term fāgogo. The Samoan proverb advises that children are fed on words and stories as birds are fed on flowers and trees.

audiences often participate so the prose may deviate dependent upon who is involved in relating the narrative.⁴⁰ In 1991, in the *Anthropos Journal*, he went on to discuss how fāgogo relates to the importance of genealogy in Samoan culture,⁴¹ noting that complex Samoan fāgogo are normally introduced with some form of genealogical explanation and this is often linked to descriptions of creation. These two frameworks he observed, provided the most prominent schools of thought relating to the origins of the universe. In 1992 Charlot argued that although fāgogo "should not be used as an historical text, it provides material for Samoan culture as a genuine part of historical reality in traditional Samoan thinking" (p. 33). In this article he also discussed how Samoan chants and genealogies are passed down through generations as historical documents. He suggested that in the post-contact era, following the introduction of Christianity, there was not a termination of traditional religion and literature, and that in this period one can identify a "second sphere of thinking and practice that co-exists with the first and has created its own literature, both developments of the traditional and works in introduced forms such as hymns, sermons, and drama" (1992, p. 44).

More recently, Amy Tielu's (2016) thesis has offered a broad consideration of the nature of fāgogo and contemporary storytellers (academics and practitioners) who work in diverse mediums, across Samoa and New Zealand.⁴² She suggested five principles that might guide the design of contemporary, digital fāgogo: Su'i fefiloi (the interweaving of different media), Education, Collaboration, Conversation and Fa'afailelega (nourishment). Tielu's work builds on discussions concerning the reformation of fāgogo in the diaspora, identified first by Richard Moyle (1981), and later developed by Su'eala Kolone-Collins (2010).

Tielu also provides an insightful etymological perspective into the origin of the fāgogo⁴³ which she claims is a derivative of *fafaga gogo*, meaning to feed or nurture the *gogosina* bird. Her assertion links to a well-known Samoan *alagaupu*, "O tama a tagata e fafaga i upu ma tala, a'o tama a manu e fafaga i fuga o la'au"⁴⁴

Tui Atua (2016) also recommends the importance of the fāgogo in nurturing Samoan youth. He believes that fāgogo can potentially embrace diverse contemporary digital media, without compromising its inner essence. He says, "fāgogo and the solo are designed to gently remind us not only of our core Samoan values and beliefs, but also of our village and/or family histories" (Tui Atua, 2016, p. 9).

Texts Relating to the Legend of Nafanua

There is a growing body of material related to Nafanua and how she might be interpreted. In Samoa, Nafanua is an *aitu* (*spirit*) who is considered a *Toa Tama'ita'i* (*Warrior Princess and Goddess of War*). She was the daughter of *Seaveasi'uleo*,⁴⁵ and hails from the village of *Falealupo*, (which is my mother's village). This village is also the site of the entryway into the spirit world *Pulotu*.⁴⁶ Her priest was *Auva'a*, which is also my mother's maiden name and was originally her father's *matai* name which he adopted as his surname.⁴⁷ Schmidt (2002) notes that Nafanua is ranked in Samoa as the highest *aitu*, as well as the nation's mightiest and most victorious warrior. She notes that he deity is said to have prophesied the arrival of Christianity (which was evidenced in the arrival of the London Missionary Society [LMS] at *Sapapali'i* in 1830).⁴⁸ Nafanua promised *Malietoa* that this arrival would form the basis of his *mālō* (government). Also of interest is *Simanu-Klutz's* thesis that re-establishes the important role that ancient Samoan women have played in the genealogy and politics of names and titles. Although the study focusses on an important connection that *Tuilagi* has to his *gafa* to Nafanua, the study also discusses the role of gender in any reassessment and analysis of Nafanua.

In terms of a historical interface, *Derek Freeman*, in a paper presented in 1947,⁴⁹ refers to *Heath*, a pioneer missionary, who made records of the canoes, beads, fine mats, *tapa* cloth and other property that were offered to the war goddess Nafanua at *Manono* in 1830 (prior to an attack being launched on a rival district).

Nafanua is also discussed in *Paul Cox's* 1999 book *Nafanua: Saving the Samoan rainforest*. This work offers a personal account of Cox's time living with his family at *Falealupo*. It provides an important insight into recent environmental understandings of Nafanua and of her position as a deity. The book also outlines politics within the village itself.

*Fereni Ete*⁵⁰ also offers insights into the way in which the legends of Nafanua are ingrained into Samoan identity. She suggests that such narratives define us as Samoans and her ideas may be likened to the writings of the mythologist *Joseph Campbell* in his *Power of Myth* (1991).⁵¹ Speaking of her village *Falealupo*, she notes her genealogical connections to the story. Her father's surname, *Auva'a*, is also the name of the high priest who Nafanua used as a spokesperson. Ete also discusses an *alagaupu* (*Samoan proverb*) that describes Nafanua's family responsibilities when she was preparing for, and engaged in, war. She was warned by her father to be cautious of her power of destruction.⁵² He warned her that she would need to be extremely careful not to harm relatives when she fought enemies in an opposing village. However, she was unable to avoid killing some of her own family members. *Gunson* notes that Nafanua was a formidable foe and her father regarded her as "good as an army", noting that "when she was fighting those who saw her assumed she was a man" (1987, p. 143).

⁴⁵ See *Isaia, M.* (1999). *Coming of Age in American Anthropology: Margaret Mead and Paradise*. (p. 39).

⁴⁶ See *Turner, G.* (1884). *Samoa, a Hundred Years Ago and Long Before* (p. 123).

⁴⁷ *Ete, F.* (Personal communication, August 8, 2017).

⁴⁸ *Meleisea* states: After Nafanua had conquered her enemies, she had control over all political authority in Samoa, and she gave the *malo* to the district of *A'ana* and its allies. When *Malietoa* came from his village of *Sapapali'i* in *Savai'i* to ask her for a share of the *malo*, Nafanua told him that he would have to wait for his turn, and that it would eventually come from heaven. (1987, p. 13)

⁴⁹ Manuscript XV: 'On Missionaries and Cultural Change in Samoa': *Derek Freeman* Preparing for a 'Heretical' Life. (*Hempenstall*, 2004).

⁵⁰ *Ete, F.* (personal communication, August 8, 2017)

⁵¹ *Campbell* argues that myths teach us that we can turn inward and access messages from symbols. Myths, he argues, help us to put our minds in touch with (and explain) the experience of being alive.

⁵² The following was the directive of *Seaveasiuleo* (*Nafanua's father*):

A pa'ia le pa i Fualaga
(When you reach the boundary)

Sua le tuli
(Stop the war)

Aua le ali'i o aiga
(As you have family/a niece in that region)

(See proverb and story discussed in Interview 6 with *Fereni Ete*).

⁵³ An edict cited in Tuiasosopo (2005, p. 88) states, "You left the church, and you are no longer children of God. You are not good enough to use the Bible, and you cannot use our music."

⁵⁴ I don't discuss these notable musicians, composers and choir directors in this review because their contributions, while important, have been focused primarily on local community initiatives.

Samoan Composers whose work predates this Thesis

Given the practice-led in nature of this thesis, it is useful to consider the creative contributions of Samoan composers whose work predates my study.

Work emanating from the Congregational Christian Church of Jesus in Samoa

Before turning to specific Samoan individuals, I would like to prefigure the discussion with a consideration of work emanating from a schism that resulted in a new form of sacred music in the Congregational Christian Church of Jesus in Samoa (CCJS).

In 2005, Kuki Tuiasosopo's thesis explored the notion of song text, musical functions and cultural values as they applied to the sacred music of this church, but his study also considered the wider indigenisation and localisation of music in Samoa.

Tuiasosopo noted that traditional Samoan music tends to emphasise the significance of text over melody, noting that "the use of limited melody in traditional Samoan songs aids in the comprehension by not diverting attention from the text" (2005, p. 3).

In contextualising his analysis of the CCJS, he observed that the arrival of the missionaries in the 1830s produced a discernable influence on the aesthetics of traditional Samoan music (in both its musicality and vocalisation). Samoans, he suggested, adapted new concepts to develop unique styles based on the four part singing of the European tradition and the introduction of western musical instruments like the organ and later, synthesizers.

Tuiasosopo also discussed the significant musical impact on Samoa's sacred music following the establishment of the CCJS in Samoa, when its congregation broke away in 1939 and 1940 from the established London Mission Society/ Congregational Christian Church of Samoa. Following this separation, the CCJS was banned from using the existing church's regular hymn book,⁵³ so the congregation was forced to compose its own hymns (lyrics and music). Significantly the musicians and singers in the CCJS also began using contemporary western notated music for their choirs, as opposed to the London Missionary Society, who formerly had used only text.

Notable Samoan sacred music composers whose work surfaced through this struggle included Matautia Pene Solomona and the celebrated Ioselani Pouesi. Their work impacted considerably on later Samoan musicians like Flo Wendt, Julia Fo'ifua, Marie Maene, Palauni Seumanutafa and Vavae Toma.⁵⁴

55 The bass-baritone Jonathan Lemalu, the soprano Aivale Cole and the tenor Ben Makisi.

Ioselani Pouesi

Rev. Elder Dr Ioselani Pouesi (1921-2002) was a pioneer of Samoan church music who composed a significant number of original hymns. He was also a medical doctor who studied in Fiji and graduated in 1944, before practising at Moto'otua Hospital in Samoa, prior to receiving his Doctor of Divinity in the United States of America (USA).

Pouesi did not have formal lessons in musical theory or counterpoint. He received his training from his Uncle Karene, who advised Pouesi to:

... compose the music according to the lyrics, if the words are sad, the music must accommodate the sense of loss and sadness, if the words are happy, the music must also reveal the sense of joy and happiness.
(Tuiasosopo, 2005, p. 91)

Pouesi was heavily influenced by the environment and natural settings, especially in the construction of his melodies and rhythm. Tuiasosopo notes that "his melodic ideas came from birds chirping in the morning ... the rain influenced some of his rhythmic patterns" (ibid.) Pouesi's contributions are significant to my study because of the way in which the environment becomes central to meaning, rhythm and melodic construction.

Iosefa Enari

Iosefa Enari (1954-2000) may be considered one of the pioneers of Samoan opera. In 1987, he won the Herald Aria Competition and he later performed in numerous New Zealand opera productions. In 1993, he received a New Zealand Fulbright cultural grant that enabled him to study opera in the USA. In 1996, he was awarded a Creative New Zealand, Senior Pacific Artist Award and later, the Iosefa Enari Memorial Award was created in his honour.

Enari was a bass-baritone singer with whom I had the privilege of collaborating in the capacity of a musical director and arranger between 1997 and 1998. The work we produced formed a milestone in Samoan music (as an operatic genre). Classical Polynesia, integrated choral and musical treatments of traditional (sacred and secular) Samoan songs. The stylised Pacific opera (the first of its kind) premiered at the International Festival of the Arts in Wellington in 1998. It featured emerging Samoan opera singers who are now internationally recognised.⁵⁵ Instrumentation included the use of the *pate* (*log drum*), *fala* (*rolled pandanus mat*), piano and a solo violin played by Sam Nokise.

The music was inspired by Samoan Teachers' College recordings of well-known Samoan songs from the 1970s, and conceptually, the work followed a

⁵⁶ This is a work I intend to revise and revive, especially given the increasing number of high calibre Pacific opera singers in New Zealand. I am interested in extending possibilities relating to fusions of the western vocal style of bel canto, combining this with features of pre-missionary Samoan musicality.

Samoa day from morning to dusk; commencing with devotion then moving through a series of work and love songs, concluding with the well-known hymn Lota Nu'u.

For this work I arranged the choral music based on a conventional western format with the standard four-part harmony of soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The choir consisted of church youth from the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Wellington. (None of the 12 performers were trained opera singers). Although the opera had no dialogue, through stylized choreography (designed by Teokatai Patai), we were able to portray the story using songs and movement.

Because the work was so well received by the Samoan and broader arts community, it was re-staged at the Auckland Town Hall in 1999. Prior to his passing, Iosefa and I had discussed the possibility of adding a chamber orchestra or string quartet to the existing instrumentation.⁵⁶ It was anticipated that this would contribute a different texture and timbre to vocal and music expression whilst still maintaining the impact of Samoan instrumentation.

Ueta Solomona

I had the privilege of meeting the late Ueta Mata'utia Pene Solomona (1935-2018) in Suva Fiji in 2005, and I was honored to succeed him as senior lecturer of Music and Expressive Arts from 2006 to 2008 when he retired from the University of the South Pacific (USP) after his service of 30 years.

Solomona was the first Samoan to be awarded the Fullbright Scholarship at the Fredonia Campus, New York State University, as well as being the first recipient of the Officer of the Order of Samoa for his achievements in music (Likou, 2018).

Considered one of Samoa's finest music educators, Solomona was also a composer, choirmaster, arranger and performer. He assisted in the arrangements of the first official, chorally notated Hymnbook for the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa (*Ina Pepese Ia*) published in 1986. I used this work whilst a faipese (*choirmaster*) and tāpiano (*pianist/organist*) at the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Newtown. Although Dr Solomona became hard of hearing in his latter years, after his retirement from the University of the South Pacific, he returned to Samoa to establish the National Orchestra of Samoa in 2006 which he led for a number of years. He also taught at the National University of Samoa.

While I was working on this thesis, I became increasingly aware that many of the realms of knowledge required to resource the inquiry had relatively sparse amounts of archived, written documentation. By necessity therefore, the study drew into itself interviews and personal communications with Samoan scholars and leaders who may be understood as living repositories of knowledge. Their interviews are documented in Appendix 3. Without the generosity and insight of these individuals, this review of contextual knowledge would have been insufficient to meet the needs of the inquiry. I would like therefore, in closing this chapter, to refer the reader to interviews from: Fuiono Patolo, Taofinu'u Matālio, Siliala'ei Tuāi'a, Tuilagi Aufaga, Tuilagi Siaosi and his wife Koleti and Lupematesila Kaio So'oalo. These reflections concern the nature of leadership and the role of a Matai. I would also draw attention to the interview with Lepaga Karl Partsch where he discusses his experience of receiving a pe'a, and to interviews with Retired Rev. Elder, Risatisone Ete and his wife Fereni Pepe Ete, who shared knowledge relating to traditional koniseti in Samoa and the nature of fāgogo respectively.

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter considers a unique Samoan research design created to explicate the study.

Introduction

The UNESCO definition of research is “any creative systematic activity undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this knowledge to devise new applications” (OECD, 2008, p. 463). This thesis attempts to demonstrate creative, systematic inquiry through practice and exegetical writing. Through iterative practice I have pursued ideation and refinement of knowledge that has led to the design of a new form of Samoan musical narrative. In the chapter, I discuss research paradigms and the research design and methodology. I then unpack five methods used in explicating the study and conclude the chapter with a critique of these methods.

Research Paradigm

A paradigm might be defined as a body of beliefs and values, laws, and practices that govern a practitioner (Lincoln et al., 2011). In terms of research, (Guba 1990) suggests that the paradigm one adopts positions one as a researcher. In this context, one’s values and viewpoint govern how the problem is approached. Paradigmatically, this thesis adopts a mixed paradigm, namely a creative fusion between fa’aSāmoa and artistic research.

⁵⁷ Pratt defines the word as "According to Samoan custom" (1862, p. 108).

⁵⁸ It is always considered appropriate and respectful to obtain permission from the chief/s or elders of a village before undertaking an inquiry (personal communication, F.Ete, January 17, 2020).

Fa'aSāmoa

Although this work is sourced from diverse ways of knowing, my broad orientation is that of a Samoan man. As a composer, this orientation is fundamental to shaping the research inquiry and an indigenous epistemology accompanies both the narrative content of my work as well as the approaches I adopt. Fa'aSāmoa literally means 'the Samoan way'⁵⁷ and it includes the way Samoans think, talk, act and behave.

The fa'aSāmoa paradigm elevates and positions indigenous Samoan knowledge as central to the inquiry. In procedural terms, this orientation impacts on research protocols. For example, before conducting research in Samoa, I always visited the local matai (*chief*) to ensure that he would afford my intensions formal approval on behalf of the village.⁵⁸ In addition, before I commenced any research in the village, a gift was given as a token of thanks. In most cases this was monetary and it was normally combined with food. This gesture is seen as a form of fefa'asooa'iga/fesuiaga (*reciprocity*). The principle and its significance is noted by Sauni (2011, p. 59) who says the practice is seen as fa'asupporting the "continued preservation of material wealth throughout the life of Samoan people." In such exchanges, the researcher is normally invited to share a meal and meet with participants' families.

Inside a fa'aSāmoa paradigm, the researcher's legitimacy and access to knowledge is often prescribed by his genealogical connections and position. However, while one's lineage may provide special approval, access to people or knowledge, it also carries considerable responsibility, because one must ensure that the information and knowledge provided is accurate, informative, positive and inspirational for the family and village represented. Without this, an indigenous researcher can bring shame not only to himself but also to his family and his position.

In addition, fa'aSāmoa embraces the contributions of both intellectual and spiritual knowledge. Within this understanding, the researcher is positioned as a servant of the community and a contributor to tautua (*service*). This is exemplified in the well-known Samoan proverb:

O le ala i le pule o le tautua.

The pathway to leadership is service.

Knowledge is also understood as something that is returned and is for everybody to embrace. Accordingly, both my practice and my exegetical writing are expected to be conducted with respect and communicated in a manner that

⁵⁹ Thus, my academic writing style is clear and accessible, and the exegesis and performance are objects of beauty and celebration of Samoa's unique nature and ways of knowing the world.

⁶⁰ The term derives from two words, *mea* (*thing*) and *alofa* (*love*). Thus, it may be translated as 'an object of love.' Traditionally in the Samoan culture 'ie toga (*fine mats*) are an example of mealofa. They are presented in formal gatherings. This process is reciprocal and it is understood that the finer the mat; the higher the level of respect that is being shown.

⁶¹ Procedurally, artistic research employs "the use of the artistic processes, the making and doing of art as a means of understanding experience" (Savin-Baden & Wimpenny, 2014, p. 7).

⁶² I use the word *foafoa* (*creation*) in this context to embrace both the composition of music and artistic considerations of its production and performance.

is inclusive of Samoan people.⁵⁹ Within this, the research is understood as a *measina* (*treasure*) that will be gifted back to the people as a *mealofa*.⁶⁰

Artistic research

As well as the Fa'a Sāmoa paradigm, the research is also oriented as an artistic inquiry. By an artistic inquiry I refer to a distinctive approach to research where "the researcher's subjective perspective is constitutive, because experience can only be negotiated intersubjectively" (Klein, 2010, para. 9). Klein argues that "if 'art' is a mode of perception, then artistic research is a process." He suggests that within this, "reflection on artistic practice takes place at the level of artistic experience itself" (ibid. para. 13).⁶¹

As such, my research is not driven solely by rational thought; there is also an element of emotion through which I feel both the power and *agaga* (*spirit*) of something. Inside an artistic paradigm I do not pursue objective truth but, instead I try to communicate the essence of something. This said, cultural integrity requires deep and considered research into what exists (for narrative credibility), and an understanding and application of protocols surrounding knowledge use. Within an artistic paradigm I use "embodied knowledge ... whether silent or verbal, declarative or procedural, implicit or explicit [that is] sensual and physical" (Klein, 2010, p. 6). Such knowledge Klein describes as "felt" (ibid.)

Methodology

I use the term methodology to describe the overall approach to a research project. Guba and Lincoln suggest that methodology asks the question: "How can the inquirer go about finding out whatever they believe can be known?" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108). Methodologically then, my overall approach may be described as practice-led inquiry.

THE CYCLIC PROCESS

This practice-led methodology functions as a cyclic process. I begin with a *fesili* (*question*). From there I engage in *foafoa* (*creation*).⁶² This may involve narrative composition, sound experiments or the creation of lyrics. However, it can also include trials with a choir to explore potential relationships between voices and recorded sound. At this point I listen deeply and I 'feel' the rightness of what I am hearing (either aurally or internally).



Figure 3.1.
Diagram of phases in the practice-
led methodology used in this inquiry.
© Igelese Ete.

⁶³ These reflections also contain links to the discussed experiments.

This process I describe as *mai totōnu* (*inner reflection*). However, as my work progresses I employ a more objective state of *mai fafo* (*external reflection*). Here I consider more exterior issues like communicative clarity, the pitch of a dramatic arc or issues of production (staging), volume and choreography. After *mai fafo*, the result can return to a cyclic refinement or leave the cycle as a resolved decision. The outcomes of each cycle are then folded into the increasing complexity of the whole *koniseti*. Each resolution is influenced by resolutions surrounding it and I fine tune these to create overall harmony and dramatic impact (Figure 3.1).

This cyclic, practice-led process is both iterative and reflective, and examples of its use are provided in Appendix 1 (Critiques of iterative experiments).⁶³

Although Figure 3.1 suggests a certain chronological sequencing, the stages should be read as permeable. For example, while processes of *fa'alogo* and *mai*

totōnu (*inner listening and reflection*) generally coexist, I often return to them *after* engaging in mai fafo (*external reflection*). So, once a work is created as an external experiment that can be tested with a choir, I will sometimes revert to this internal reflective process and use it to feel resonances and potentials and sense adjustments that need to be made to what I have been hearing.

If I do not return to the interior realm of mai totōnu, I will sometimes progress mai fafo (*external reflection*) into written critiques to myself. This writing, evidenced in Appendix 1, is something I used more extensively in the early stages of the project. It was useful because it forced me to summarise and make tangible my thinking - in written language. Writing about my thinking helped me to develop skills in exegetical expression. However, these written critiques were by their nature formative so, although I contextualised many of my decisions, the reflections were normally tentative, personal and slightly introspective in nature.

These reflections are examples of what Hamilton (2011), Ings (2015) and Ventling (2018) suggest can be a resourcing relationship between writing and artistic thinking in practice-led artistic inquiry. Gray (1996, p. 10) suggests that practice-led, artistic research is “simultaneously generative and reflective”. This dynamic has also been identified by Pouwhare and McNeill (2019), Sheehan (2020) and Ventling (2018). Thus, as I create episodes, the emerging work calls me to more deeply investigate knowledge relating to Samoan creation narratives, traditional harmonics or instrumentation. Practice *leads* the inquiry, and I am reminded in this regard of Candy who says that practice-led inquiry “is concerned with the nature of practice and leads to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice” (Candy, 2006, p. 1).

MAI TOTŌNU, MAI FAFO AND TACIT KNOWING

My iterative, practical thinking involves immersion inside conceptual and material development. Here, I employ mai totōnu to access what cannot be made explicit and mai fafo to assess what is physically audible or visual. By using these two states of reflection I am able to make critical decisions using tacit knowing and exterior, aesthetic assessment. This enables me to find conceptual and musical harmony in an overall composition, such that elements within it cause an emotional resonance or a sense of loto mālie (*contentment*). The role of tacit knowing within this is important.

The term tacit knowledge was coined by Michael Polanyi (1967) to describe those things that we know (and use) but cannot explain. In his observation, “... we can know more than we can tell” (p. 4), Polanyi suggests that tacit knowing is precognitive and cannot be explained verbally. He contrasts tacit knowing

⁶⁴ Their presence is also with me when I engage in deeply Samoan journeys through knowledge. A discussion of this presence is provided in Appendix 4, where I discuss their presence during my pe'a ceremony.

⁶⁵ "Uā Fa'afetai" describes a traditional response where listeners harmonise and sing in reaction, returning a gift of thanks back to all parties involved in the creation of the work. The words in Samoan are:

Uā fa'afetai, Ua fa'afetai
(We give thanks, we give thanks).

Uā malie mata i le va'ai
(Our eyes are satisfied with what we have seen)

'Ua tasi lava 'oe,
(There can only be one)

'Ua tasi lava 'oe
(There can only be one)

I lou nei fa'amoemoe
(In what you're hoping to do).

with explicit knowing which he suggests is knowledge that can be articulated. Within the realms of mai totōnu and mai fafo, my knowing is often tacit. Usefully Lam (2000) notes that although tacit knowing and explicit knowing can be distinguished conceptually, they are not separate and discrete in practice. Polanyi suggests that by using tacit knowing the researcher explores "knowing" based on "know how" in an effort to discover the new "know what". According to Preston (2008, p. 347), terms such as "implicit relational knowing," "unformulated experience," "pre-reflective unconscious," "horizon of experience," "sub symbolic process," "embodied knowing," and "the unthought known" (all emanating from different disciplines) are related to the concept of tacit knowing.

TACIT KNOWING AND HEURISTICS

When I compose music, although I use certain bodies of explicit knowledge (that may be technical or a result of historical or genealogical research), many of my critical decisions are sensed. So, I *feel* my way forward, guided by mālie (sweetness) that I cannot directly define. Although I relate this to mai totōnu (inner reflection), in western methodological thinking this process may be likened to heuristic inquiry.

Heuristics describes an informal method of problem solving that is often 'sensed' and is concerned with discovery and knowledge. A number of writers; Douglass and Moustakas (1985), Moustakas (1990), Kleining and Witt (2000), Sela-Smith (2002), Ings (2011, 2018) and Ventling (2018); recommend its potential application in research projects that are largely subjectively experienced. It is characteristic of heuristic inquiries that the researcher is working without a pre-established formula and is therefore, sometimes uncertain about the direction in which he is travelling. This is because he is working flexibly with constant changes in the research question.

Although as a form of inquiry, heuristics utilises high levels of intuition and tacit knowing (Kleining & Witt, 2000; Moustakas, 1990; Ventling 2018) within this, my knowledge is also resourced by my ancestors. In other words, because the past and present coexist, their knowledge also permeates my thinking. They are with me when I work.⁶⁴ They flow through what has passed and what is becoming evident - and they help me as I edge my artistic work towards a state where it might attain a sense of approval 'Ia maua le 'malie' (obtaining a certain sweetness), where what is received by an audience is responded to with "Uā fa'afetai".⁶⁵

- ⁶⁶ For example the recording of the fāgogo O Sina ma Le `Ulafala, by Seiuli (n.d.) <http://www.fagogo.auckland.ac.nz/>
- ⁶⁷ This 8:27 minute recording was accessed at: <http://www.fagogo.auckland.ac.nz/content.html?id=1>

Methods

Methods may be broadly understood as the tools and systems that a researcher employs in research. Gray and Malins describe them as the “specific techniques and tools for exploring, gathering and analysing information” (2004, p. 17).

However, in artistic research, the analysis of information may be subjective and felt. Accordingly the methods I discuss below vary in their levels of objectivity. They may be unpacked under two headings of the project’s development:

- Background research
- Design of the base narrative.

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Methods associated with this part of the project relate to three processes:

- accessing archives of historically relevant audio recordings
- interviewing Samoan experts and
- an analysis of contextualising literature.

Accessing archived audio recordings

There is a paucity of audio data relating to early Samoan music but, in the inquiry, I was able to access recordings of traditional Samoan chants and oration. While some of this data is available online⁶⁶ most was archived in the University of the South Pacific (USP) ‘Pacific Collections’ and the University of Auckland’s (UOA) ‘Archive of Māori and Pacific Sound’.

Initially I contacted the University of Auckland archive and they guided me through their database, where I accessed call numbers so I could listen to digitised, as well as analogue recordings of Samoan music, fāgogo and lauga. I was able to upload recordings of this material to my flashdrive and take copies away with me.

These recordings were influential in the shaping of the opening to Song 1A *The Creation*, where Tagaloalagi is delivering his lauga (*traditional Samoan speech*). By attentively analysing Moyle’s (1981) Fāgogo: fables from Samoa in Samoan and English; in particular the *fāgogo* O Sina ma Le Ulafala (*Sina and Le `Ulafala*) from the village of Falelima, Savai’i,⁶⁷ I was able to integrate indicative inflexions into my work and check its veracity against traditional musical, lyrical, emotive, compositional design.

Interviews

I also interviewed experts as I sought to access unpublished knowledge concerning koniseti, Samoan rituals and narrative aspects of my work.

Before conducting the interviews I attained ethics approval through the

- ⁶⁸ This is because I needed to establish a strong sense of Samoan antiquity in his character.
- ⁶⁹ The Aitu Nafanua and the history of Samoa, a study of the relationship between spiritual and temporal power.
- ⁷⁰ These are presented in Chapter 4.

university's ethics committee (AUTEC). Interviews were conducted in Samoan and English where appropriate, and data was recorded on my iPhone 8 Plus or the Logic Pro X program on my laptop. Transcriptions of these interviews are available in Appendix 3.

I followed traditional Samoan protocols (as outlined earlier in this chapter) when working with participants who live in Samoa. Normally, I arranged appointments through my family, primarily my parents, who would contact the various individuals. I then travelled to their homes in Wellington, Thames-Coromandel, Auckland (in New Zealand), and Lalomalava, Fatausi and Falealupo (in Samoa).

Literature

Although Chapter 2 of this exegesis provides a review of contextualising literature, it would be remiss not to mention methods employed to access some of this material. While a significant amount of literature is available online (including recent theses and archived journal articles), material was also obtained from the Auckland University of Technology library, the University of Auckland library and the University of the South Pacific, Laucala Campus Pacific library collection in Suva.

Of particular use to the study was William's missionary journal *A narrative of missionary enterprises in the South Sea Islands*. This provided significant, first hand descriptions of pre-missionary singing, dance and instrumentation, as well as extensive genealogical material. Kramer's historical book *The Samoa Islands: Volume 1: Constitution, Pedigrees and Traditions* (1902) provided me with information regarding gafa (*lineage*) and through this I was able to refine the design for Tagaloa as the supreme creator.⁶⁸

There was also significant material on pre-missionary belief systems (including the nature and narratives of Samoan gods) referred to in Schmidt's (2002) doctoral thesis.⁶⁹ In addition, this study provided insights into the deity's character and background. The material was influential in decisions that shaped the design of Nafanua's musical voice (for example determining whether she was a soprano or mezzo-soprano), refining the balance between dramatic and lyrical tone, and including the strategic placement of traditional nasal sounds within the vocal delivery.

DESIGN OF THE BASE NARRATIVE

Initially, the design of the koniseti involved the construction of a Composer's Vision Statement followed by a Structure Sound board.⁷⁰

⁷¹ Traditionally in a Three Act structure the first act sets up the action and creates an inciting incident. Act 2 deals with rising action and Act 3 with resolution. This idea is discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

Composer's Vision Statement

A composer's vision statement is a method borrowed from film design. Here a director creates a document where a motive and vision behind how a film might be approached is articulated. Such a 'statement' is normally included in a proposal to producers or financiers, but it can also appear in press material given to distributors, festival programmers and critics.

While such a document normally includes a statement about the 'feel' of the work, its inspiration, genre, style, casting, sound and special effects (Garza Film, 2018), I used the approach to also clarify and articulate a summary of my initial thinking around characters and characterisation, narrative content, Samoan principles and cultural constructs, and environmental issues impacting on my intended approach to the production.

The method was useful because it solidified not only the overall narrative but also who might feature in it, and the issues with which they might be associated. It also helped me to clarify thinking that would later impact on the production.

Structure/Sound board

The structure/sound board grew out of the Vision Statement. This method may be likened to a Director's Treatment in narrative design for cinema. The term 'treatment' is also borrowed from film making. It typically refers to a body of prose that sets up chronological episodes. While in film it precedes a formal screen play, in my work it was used to create the narrative, divide the storyline into episodes and consider potential features of the performance. I also used it to create arcs and divide the koneseti into a viable three act structure.⁷¹

This method enabled me to consider the overall narrative content of each act and then to break it down into episodes (performed songs that contained specific plot points and character deliveries). I also made initial notes on interludes, transitions and performance. Each song was given a title that encapsulated the ethos of the episode. This enabled me to look across the final structure and gain a clear sense of where its emotional shifts needed to occur.

Although this treatment was established early in the design process, it was constantly revisited and refined by discoveries made in the next two phases (writing lyrics and instrumentation). It was also shaped by new information that was brought into the inquiry. An example of this occurred when I created the initial approach for the creation sequence at the opening of the koniseti. In the motif sketch of July 2019, I composed this as a deep drumming that reaches a crescendo emanating from the vastness of the creation. However, I revisited this once I had considered the sketch in terms of the emotional arc. I researched more

⁷² By 'wholeness' I include the spiritual realms of my identity. This identity goes beyond the physical, intellectual, social and emotional. It embraces a past, present and future but, most specifically, it is an integration of the genealogical. Betham (2008, p. 3) suggests that for Samoans, "Spirituality is life expressed in solidarity, a communion with the whole of creation, the very life of a people, their history, stories of creation, myths, legends and culture. It speaks of their way of thinking (mentality) hopes, beliefs, values and aspirations." He notes that, "Samoans traditionally lived their lives with regard to the world of the gods/spirits as they understood it. They believed in a 'spirit' world, which pervaded their physical world, and the gods manifest themselves in various ways in which they were involved in the daily life of the people" (ibid.). As an extension of this, he suggests that Samoan spirituality can be understood as "relational and is grounded in a healthy self-image, and grows within the context of life affirming and nurturing relationships" (ibid., p. 6).

⁷³ Logic Pro X is a digital program that I had installed into my Macbook Pro computer. It formed the digital platform from which I developed work. Logic Pro X is electronic software used for recording, editing and producing audio files such as musical elements, songs, speech or sound effects. So, I was able to record my interviews on this device, as well as compose iterative musical experiments and final compositions.

deeply into Samoan creation narratives and set the tone more quietly, lifting a sense of mystery, so the deterioration of Vā tapuia would not be overshadowed by too dramatic a precursor.

Composition of lyrics (including Samoan songs, chants and orations)

An initial composition of lyrics followed the design of the structure/sound board. However, the lyrics went through diverse iterations as the project progressed. This said, certain foundational wording was evident in the sound boards (e.g. 'Io'u. Moana in Song 1c and Song 12 'Ua Sau Le Va'a Na Tiu').

When I write lyrics, I sketch in or imagine spoken monologues within each episode. Resourcing these lyrics are songs, chants, oratory and information related to the subject of the song or transition I am composing. This material connects me to other ideas and a 'wholeness' of being.⁷²

Iteratively I trial and refine lyrics so that they flow musically. I then go to the piano and sing variations of the content until I feel that the piece is establishing emotional resonance or *loto mālīe* (*contentment*). I have found it easier to write the initial lyrics in English and then have them translated by Samoan language experts (Risatisone Ete and Fereni Ete), because they are able to capture the emotions and the beauty of formal, chiefly Samoan language better than I.

The design of instrumentation

Once I had a sense of the lyrics for an episode I turned to the composition of instrumentation. I used a Korg midi keyboard to find the emotion of the piece and to clarify the essences I needed to communicate. Here, I experimented with melody, rhythm and harmony. In this process I sometimes altered lyrics to achieve a greater sense of flow or emotional accent. This process determined which instruments I would use as the work developed. I avoided notating anything at this stage, because I wanted to hold the composition in a state of transformation.

This process is cognisant of traditional Samoan music that develops through listening and singing (rather than through the Western process of transcribing music into manuscripts that are then adjusted in written form, re-read, and then performed). In adopting this process, I was also aware that few of the choir members read music; instead they had highly trained musical ears. I played my thinking into a recording device (Logic Pro X).⁷³ This software enabled me to play back, listen to and refine iterations of the work. Incrementally the compositions began to take form. At this stage in its development, I was very selective about who I shared my work with. I tended to work very privately and if I did play formative compositions, it would be to other musicians, composers or

⁷⁴ This work can be accessed at https://youtu.be/PE5KHI_CDqg

⁷⁵ Oceania Voices usually comprises 50 to 100 singers, dependent on which time of the year we're rehearsing, and Pasifika Voices is a much smaller choir of between 10 to 16 people. The signature choir has approximately 20 to 30 singers.

⁷⁶ It is members of this choir whose voices I am envisaging to record for the soundmix in the final koniseti.

directors who could offer informed critique of the work in terms of its structure and narrative or emotional arcs within the koniseti.

When composing the first act of the work, I constructed a short 5min, 33 sec overview of the act to gain a sense of its potential transitions and emphases. This was used to elicit feedback on a proposed structure from other directors before progressing on to the full composition of the three songs (interlinked in parts) in the act.⁷⁴

Most of my reflection was singular and occurred as mai totōnu (*inner reflection*). I often returned to this work later, listening to it with 'fresh ears' so I could experience it at a greater distance (mai fafo). These processes normally occurred at the keyboard where work was created and reflected upon as I sang through the lyrics and composed melodies that communicated a clear sense of agaga (*spirit*).

Iterative performance

The final phase of refinement in a composition involved working with performers. At this point I normally gave an iteration of the composition to the choir or a soloist. I worked primarily with two choirs; Oceania Voices from Auckland University of Technology and Pasifika Voices from USP in Suva.⁷⁵ However, after accepting a position at Massey University College of Creative Arts (based in Wellington), I also began liaising with a Pacific group called the Signature Choir.⁷⁶

When a choir rehearsed a work, I listened to the emotion of the rendition. If a word, melody, rhythm, tempo, harmony (or a combination of these elements) was not resonant with loto mālie (*contentment*), I would rework and re-record refinements in my studio by singing the piece again and making the necessary adjustments. The revised recording was then brought back to the performers to ensure that the piece was working on both musical and emotional levels.

I had an established history of working with these choirs so there was a high level of trust established between us. This had been built on a process of intensive, reflective rehearsal and a history of public performance (Figures 3.3 and 3.4), going back to the choirs' formations in 2016 and 2011 respectively.



Figure 3.2.
Public Performance with the Pasifika
Voices Choir on their European Tour
in Norway (July, 2015). © Igelese Ete.



Figure 3.3.
Public performance of work with
the Oceania Voices choir at the AUT
University graduation at the Aotea
Centre in Auckland (December,
2016). © Auckland University
of Technology. Used with the
permission of Mr Walter Fraser.

Critique of Methodology

In concluding, this chapter it is useful to consider the advantages and challenges inherent in the research design.

ADVANTAGES

First, as a Samoan composer dealing with a Samoan narrative, the fa'aSāmoa paradigm validated both spiritual and physical dimensions of my artistic inquiry. This meant that, as a researcher, I was able to use and discuss openly my propensity to understand something emotionally and spiritually through its *loto mālie* (*contentment*), and *agaga* (*spirit*). In addition, the paradigm provided me with clear protocols and responsibilities for accessing, generating, processing and returning knowledge.

Second, the practice-led methodology, resourced by heuristic approaches, afforded the study flexibility so I could make discoveries outside of expectation or templated processes (Kleining & Witt, 2000). This was important because disruption can be very productive in a creative process where one is dealing with iterative, experimental practices designed to enable the unexpected to surface and be reflected upon.

Third, by positioning practice at the centre of my study, I could function beyond the limitation of words. As such I could address questions like 'What is the rhythm of a life force?' or 'How does such a force *sound* in a state of genesis?' I could navigate nebulous potentials that were not sufficiently answered by objective analysis and connect knowledge inherent in sound, without slowing it down by translating it into written form (for example written manuscripts). To resource my questioning I was able to draw upon both my deep inner self and the accumulated knowledge of my ancestors, who shaped and communicated knowledge through the beauty and complexity of oratory and performance.

CHALLENGES

However, the research design for this project also posed distinct challenges.

First, without an existing road map, there are neither templates nor precedents with which I could work. This can lead to anxiety and required attentive time management. To deal with this, I used a system of contracting progress with my producer, supervisors and participants. This approach was not unfamiliar to me because in my commercial work for organisations, I work inside deadlines and budgets.

Second, the exegesis and my practice have to stand authentically between and across worlds, such that my research is respectful of the values of the Academy, Samoan scholarship, and artistic quality. This means that the research

⁷⁷ An example of this 'closeness' is the pe'a process that I was advised to undergo before composing music for what eventually became the song *Malō le Taliaū*. This undertaking constituted an internal journey through an experience I intended to compose for the koniseti's protagonist. Accordingly, I needed to not only be conscious of what I was experiencing but also to listen to, and respectfully question, experts in the cultural constructs surrounding the ceremony. Evidence of this process is provided in interviews with Karl Partch and Su'a Suluape Peter, (Appendix 3) and in my account of the experience (Appendix 4).

⁷⁸ Evidence of this process is provided in interviews with Karl Partch and Su'a Suluape Peter (Appendix 3) and in my account of the experience (Appendix 4).

design has to enable very high levels of authenticity. To achieve this I checked. I checked with my elders, I checked with scholars and I checked what I created against exacting personal, artistic standards.

Finally, as a composer I cannot be separated from the work I create. In artistic, practice-led research, Griffiths says "the self is inescapable, because the person creating, responding to, working on, developing or evaluating performances, artefacts and practices is central to those activities" (2010, p.185). This means that I have had to develop strategies to emotionally separate myself from critiques of what I produce. Ings notes that without this ability, a subjective, artistic thesis "can dislocate from the consequences and expectations of its position as a scholarly work. By extension, without a rigorous critiquing of emerging outcomes, the candidate can end up defending themselves instead of the work" (2014, p. 679).

As an extension of this 'closeness' I have had to navigate intimate emotional and social connections between the self,⁷⁷ family members and places that are intricately entwined with the fabric of my being. I had to come to know some things through embodied experience. I had to balance issues of reverence and revelation, and of fiction and belief inside the overriding Samoan expectation of fa'aaloalo (*respect*). Although the fa'aSāmoa paradigm offers protocols for aspects of the research, it doesn't offer direct guidelines when dealing with the fictionalising of historical belief or the artistic transfer of knowledge into contemporary choral compositions. In such instances I had to seek a sense of loto mālie (*contentment*) and check this against the advice of Samoan scholars of greater standing than myself.⁷⁸

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FOUR CREATIVE WRITING

Introduction

Prefiguring a critical discussion of *Naatapuilea - The Sacred Star*, this chapter contains annotated, creative writing that formed a broad, artistic scaffold for the project. It is divided into three sections.

The first section comprises my Composer's Vision Statement. This was constructed before the three act structure was determined and it contained a consideration of narrative style, character, synopsis and significant concepts and principles that guided the work.

The second section is a Structure/Sound Board. This interfaced the work's narrative plot points with notes on musical and production treatments. The plot was divided into three acts:

- Act 1 O Le Amataga O Le Malaga - The Journey Begins
- Act 2 O Le Lu'itau - The Challenge
- Act 3 O Le Toetū -The Resurrection

In these acts, plot points are mapped on to 12 songs and transitions. This board also contains notes indicating performers and emphases I considered as I thought my way through the ethos of each act.

The third section contains the final lyrics created for the work. These are presented in Samoan, (the language in which they are performed), accompanied by English translations.

⁷⁹ Todorov's Equilibrium Theory in narrative construction is divided into five stages.

1. Initially there exists an equal balance or Equilibrium
2. This is disrupted by an event (Disequilibrium)
3. The disorder is recognised
4. There is an attempt to repair the damage caused by the disruption
5. The narrative resolves with the restoration of a new equilibrium. However, the equilibrium attained at the end of the story is not the same as the initial equilibrium.

⁸⁰ Turner (1884) notes that in traditional legend, Tapuitema was the wife of the king of Fiji. The king realised that his wife was becoming wild and cannibalistic. Out of fear for his sons' lives, he advised the boys to flee to Samoa. Tapuitema missed her sons and found footprints on the beach that were directed towards Samoa. Using all of her strength she swam back to her parents' village Falealupo. Fearing his monstrous mother, Tasi asked his brother to bury him alive in a hole. His brother Toiva obliged, and he was left to confront his mother alone. Tapuitema, overcome with remorse at the death of her son, promised to change her cannibalistic ways, vowing that she would ascend into the heavens and shine in the evening so that Toiva might enjoy his meals, and in the morning her light would assist him when he was pigeon hunting.

⁸¹ Contemporary musical theatre refers to a style of singing influenced by diverse vocal styles including gospel, rhythm and blues, hip hop, and pop rock.

Composer's Vision Statement

Title

Naatapuitema -The Sacred Star

Style

This fāgogo employs a reconsideration of the Samoan koniseti. It utilises a number of mythological Samoan characters, and esoteric spaces, as well names and places that are personally significant. It is divided into three acts containing 12 compositions as narrative episodes. These 'songs' form a dramatic trajectory from equilibrium to disequilibrium and back to equilibrium (Todorov & Weinstein, 1969).⁷⁹ In the narrative, a young Samoan man (Naatapuitema) moves from innocence and reluctance, through adolescent arrogance, to insight and resolution.

The production posits an alternative story to existing lore associated with my mother's village Falealupo, regarding the Samoan star Tapuitema (the planet Venus).⁸⁰

Aurally in the koniseti, we encounter a combination of musical styles including opera, musical theatre⁸¹, references to contemporary Pacific gospel and choral work, and traditional Samoan/ Pacific chanting and percussion. These are fused and counterpointed in a manner that suggests a distinctive sense of contemporary Samoan identity.

Main Characters

Naatapuitema is the protagonist.⁸² He is a shy 17year old boy, traumatised by the loss of his mother to a galu afi⁸³ when he was seven. This death results in him having developed a deep fear of the sea (thalassophobia). Since this tragedy, he has become reserved and reclusive. Paradoxically, he is the reluctant hero (prophesised by the supreme God Tagaloalagi) who will be the tagata (*human*) who will defeat the galu afi. To achieve this, he must rapidly mature, understand the nature of Samoan values relating to tautua (*service*) and responsibility, and transform himself to ensure victory and the survival of Vā tapuia⁸⁴ and its peoples.

Tagaloalagi is the progenitor and the creator of the Vā Tapuia and its people. In traditional Samoan belief, he is the creator of the universe, the paramount deity and progenitor of all gods and other humans. He resides in space and created the lagi (*heavens*), fanua (*land*), vasa (*oceans*), vai (*fresh water*), plants and people. In addition, he created lagi tua iva (*nine heavens*). In the koniseti, he is

⁸² Tapuitema is similar to the name of my son, Naatapuitema, after whom I have named the work's protagonist. It is a combination of two names; Natapu which hails from the village of Salamumu in Upolu the origins of my son's mother Jakki Leota-Mua. Tapuitema heralds from Falealupo in Savaii, my mother Fereni Ete's village of Falealupo, where the original lore originates.

⁸³ Galu – a wave (Pratt, 1862, p. 126). Afi, fire (ibid., p.79). When combined the term is applied to a 'tsunami' which literally translates as 'the wave of fire.'

⁸⁴ "The sacred relationships in socio-political and spiritual arrangements" (Anae, 1998, p.xiii). In this context the vā tapuia is the sacred spiritual space that is an area between the heaven and earth (which is the land and its people).

characterized as powerful, paternal, passionate and compassionate. In the story he appoints the two spirits, Nafanua and Tuilagi, to oversee the livelihood of the people and to ensure the continued existence of the earth.

Nafanua is the war goddess of the underworld Pulotu. She is courageous, caring, matriarchal, grounded and fearless. She, together with Tuilagi, travels with the reticent Naatapuitema and oversees his transformation into a warrior, so that he can defend the Vā Tapuia and face his greatest fear.

Tuilagi is the Tupu o le lagi (*King of the Heavens*). He is tenacious, compassionate and perceptive, and is positioned in this work as a balance to Nafanua. He is the link to all of the genealogy of Vā Tapuia, and it is he who connects Naatapuitema to his ancestors, past, present and future. As the konesiti progresses, he adopts an increasingly compassionate, surrogate father role for the young man.

Supporting Characters

Moana is Naatapuitema's mother who, along with his father, died tragically in the 2009 galu afi when her son was 7-years-old.

Tagata O Le Vā Tapuia are the inhabitants of the Vā Tapuia, who have neglected their homeland.

Synopsis

The supreme Atua, Tagaloa creates the Vā Tapuia (*sacred space*) and the tagata o le Vā tapuia (*people of the sacred space*) who he cares for as his own children. He is supported by two aitu (spirits) Nafanua and Tuilagi, who assist him by presiding over the underworld and the heavens respectively.

The Vā Tapuia was a once perfect place of ecological balance and harmony. However, due to human greed and arrogance it has descended into disarray. Because Tagaloalagi sees that the Vā Tapuia is on the path to environmental destruction, he summons then informs the two spirits Tuilagi and Nafanua that they must find a prophesied tagata. This youth has the heart that will enable the survival of humanity and he will be willing to battle the galu afi and stop the destruction of the Vā Tapuia before it's too late.

Tuilagi and Nafanua locate a shy 17-year-old youth named Naatapuitema who, having experienced the loss of his mother (Moana) in a galu afi, now suffers from acute thalassophobia.

Tuilagi and Nafanua unite to save the 'sacred space' by encouraging, guiding and mentoring Naatapuitema. In this process he must meet his ancestors and also

⁸⁵ The Samoan tatau represents the traditional rite of passage from youth to adulthood. In pre-Christian times, it was a most significant event in the development of a Samoan male (Va'a, 2006, p. 300).

undergo the tatau (*tattoo*) ritual⁸⁵ to attain his matai status. This will prepare him so he can face and battle the thing he fears the most, the galu afi (*wave of fire*).

Initially, Naatapuitema is transported to the heavens where he meets his ancestors. They and Tuilagi show him what the world once was, and he witnesses the projected destruction of the earth (including the impact on the village of Vā Tapuia) if life continues the way it is going. Having understood the urgency and the nature of his ancestry, Naatapuitema moves with Nafanua to the underworld. Here he receives the transformational malofie/pe'a on his body. This initiation causes him to transition spiritually, emotionally and mentally.

Now transformed, Naatapuitema becomes a lone hero. But, over-confidence and pride infect his personality. Perceiving himself to be a powerful, singular man, he attempts, without support, to battle the galu afi. The fight is ferocious and Naatapuitema, drawing on a new but misunderstood sense of power, loses the battle. Half dead, he hears his mother's voice and as he enters a spiritual world; Naatapuitema's ancestors reach out to him. Time stands still and in the stasis they council him and provide him with a choice.

They can either restore his energy and he can defeat the galu afi. If this happens, he will be seen for a short time as a hero but he will only defeat this one catastrophe, and others will follow because he has been a warrior, not a healer. Alternately, he can sacrifice his vanity and die. But, in so doing, he will become a star in the heavens, providing light for all Samoans and a reminder that defeating climate change relies on *loto tele* (*courage*) *fa'amaulalo* (*humility*) and *taulaga* (*sacrifice*). He will shine forever amongst a constellation of other stars as a reminder of the necessity of united care.

A choice is made and he becomes *Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star*. As the villagers watch his ascension, the galu afi retreats and they are emboldened to change.

⁸⁶ These issues are discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

SIGNIFICANT CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES

Samoan Principles

- Loto tele (*courage*)
- Fa’amaulalo (*humility*)
- Taulaga (*sacrifice*)
- Aganu’u (*identity*)
- Fa’aaloalo i le aiga ma le nu’u (*respect for and responsibility to the family*)
- Tautua (*the service that one does for others e.g. family, church, community, village and society*) (Sauvao Vaauli, 2017, p. 13)
- Alofa (*love*).

Samoan Cultural Constructs

The respective natures of the chief and aitu.

The use of the tatau (*Samoan tattoo*) to transform one physically, spiritually and emotionally.

Environmental References

The work draws specific inspiration from galu afi’ (the catastrophic Pacific tsunami that struck Samoa on September 29, 2009), the Apia Cyclone (March 15, 1889), Cyclone Val (December 7-9, 1991), and Cyclone Gita, (February 16th 2018). It is also influenced by issues relating to the impact of rising sea levels and their increasing destruction of the Pacific Islands.

I have also drawn inspiration from a contemplation on the numerous epidemics that have swept through Samoa, including the 1849 whooping cough epidemic, the 1837 and 1847 influenza epidemics, the 1891, ‘great epidemic of Fiva’, the 1918 Spanish flu, the 1907 dysentery epidemic, and the more recent 2019/20 measles outbreak.⁸⁶

Structure/Sound Board

NAATAPUI TEA – THE SACRED STAR

Narrative Plot Points

ACT 1: O LE AMATAGA (IN THE BEGINNING)

Creation and Deterioration

CORE NARRATIVE

Tagaloalagi creates the Vā
tapuia & the tagata Vā Tapuia.

We see the signs of destruction
and the death of Naatapuitema's
mother.

Nafanua and Tuilagi move down
to the physical world where
they ask Naatapuitema, a chosen
youth who is now a timid
17-year-old boy to help.

Although he initially refuses,
because he is traumatised
by his mother's death 10
years earlier in a tidal wave,
when they adopt a more
compassionate approach he
agrees to accompany them.

Musical & Production Treatments



SONG 1A.

O le Fofoaga (The Creation)

Full Cast/Village of Vā
Tapuia (linked to 1b & 1c)

We open with ancient, esoteric, ancestral choral sounds (vocal chants in a language that we don't comprehend). These are accompanied by big log drums. As these reach a crescendo we hear the voice of Tagaloalagi (the language of Gods). In a booming basso profundo voice he delivers a passionate opening that is a fusion of Samoan oratory and operatic recitative style. We hear and see the creation of the Vā Tapuia and the tagata in all its glory.

SONG 1B.

Lalolagi Matagofie (The Beauty Of The Earth)

Performed by Tagaloalagi,
Nafanua and Tuilagi.

As we close the creation piece, we segue into the introduction of Nafanua and Tuilagi. As they enter the scene, they admire the Vā Tapuia and its tagata and how beautiful and perfect everything is. However, this is cut short when they discover that the world is deteriorating. This is signalled by the sudden change of instruments directing us to the next song 1c.

SONG 1C.

**O le Fa'aleagaina o Vā
Tapuia
(Deterioration of the Vā
Tapuia)**

Interlude - transition: (opening)

Instrumental, vocal and body
percussion and log drums.

The choral/vocal language switches to sounds of fire, oceans, pain and death, depicting the galu afi (tidal wave) as it wreaks havoc upon the Vā tapuia, wreaking destruction on the sacred space and its people. The world is in chaos; the oceans rise, the firmament is torn by cyclones and flooding devastates the land.

In the turmoil, we encounter a tragic scene. Naatapuitema, as a 7-year-old boy is holding the body of his dead mother Moana. She has been killed by the galu afi. In a boy soprano voice he sings through his tears. This is a melodic, haunting lament or requiem, that is beautiful yet tragic with loss. The words 'lo'u Moana' (my ocean) are significant. These will recur again in a much more dramatic form when he battles the 'wave of fire' in Song 10b.

**O le Vala'auina
(The Calling)**

SONG 2.

**'Tinā 'ea'
(Oh My Mother)**

Duet: Seven-year-old
Naatapuitema sings first, then
changes to the adolescent
Naatapuitema.

As we hear the sounds of the waves and drums, we see a silhouette of the seven-year-old Naatapuitema sitting crosslegged on a fala. He sings the haunting melody for his mother. This image slowly changes to that of the 17-year-old Naatapuitema. We hear the change of his voice which is more mature. This device shows us that a decade has passed. The dissolving of one into the other may be achieved using lit, translucent screens.

Naatapuitema's singing still contains the vulnerability and trauma of his childhood.

SONG 3A.

**O Le Valo'aga
(The Prophecy)**

Performed by Nafanua
and Tuilagi

Nafanua, in her dramatic mezzo soprano voice, and Tuilagi, with his strong bass baritone, discuss (in Samoan) a prophecy given by Tagaloalagi that there is a 'chosen one' and this person is Naatapuitema. He is a youth who must face the galu afi and thereby save the world. Although they are fully aware of the death of his mother, their approach is one of authoritative command. We sense their power.

Naatapuitema's response is heard in English, in a mix of contemporary styles in contrast to Nafanua and Tuilagi's more traditional Samoan style.

Although he can't see them, the boy can hear the aitu and he is afraid.

SONG 3B.

**Ou Te Lē Mafaia
(No I Can't)**

Solo performed by
Naatapuitema

He says he cannot face the galu afi because it is too traumatic; his fear of the ocean is overpowering and he does not want to re-experience the pain of losing his mother again. He tells Nafanua and Tuilagi that he has constant nightmares over her death and he refuses the task.

In it we see Naatapuitema's sense of being inferior, suffering from depression and feeling anxious.

SONG 4A.**O le Tauānauga
(Persuasion)**

Nafanua and Tuilagi – Son
(interlinked to Song. 3b)

Tagaloalagi empathises with the loss of Naatapuitema's mother Moana, and persuades the aitu to take a more compassionate, nurturing approach.

Nafanua and Tuilagi understand the pain and listen to Tagaloalagi. The melody is reminiscent of Naatapuitema's melodic theme.

SONG 4B.**Atali'i e
(Son)**

Performed by Nafanua, Tuilagi
and Naatapuitema

Nafanua and Tuilagi explain to Naatapuitema that they will train, mentor and guide him with parental love and commitment so he can obtain skills, knowledge and courage in the ways of the ancient Samoan matai & 'toa' (warrior). They explain that part of this will involve a ritual tattooing of the 'pe'a' so he will be a true toa/warrior and attain his chiefly status.

This moves Naatapuitema deeply and the song transitions into the next piece through the sound of Samoan chants.

SONG 5.**Ua Ou Talia le Vala'auina
(I accept the Calling)**

Performed by Naatapuitema

This is a haunting melody where Naatapuitema's mother's words 'loto tele atali'i' (be brave son) convince him to accept the calling. However, we still experience him as an apprehensive youth. He says he will accompany the deities.

**ACT 2: O LE LU'ITAU –
(THE CHALLENGE)**

Ancestry And The Challenge

CORE NARRATIVE

Naatapuitema is taken to the heavens where he meets his ancestors. They and Tuilagi show him what the world once was and he witnesses the projected destruction if the earth continues its decline into chaos.

Having understood the nature of his ancestry and the urgency of the situation, he moves with Nafanua to the underworld.

Here he receives the transformational malofie on his body. The initiation causes him to transition spiritually, emotionally and mentally.



SONG 6.

**O le Fa'atama'ia
(Destruction)**

Performed by Tuilagi and Cast.

The act begins with a sense of the heavenly, angelic and ethereal. It depicts the ancient ancestors, but also the heavenly realm of Tuilagi.

Naatapuitema meets his ancestors and encounters his gafa (genealogy). His ancestors speak to him and encourage him through a lauga (the oratory style of chiefs). They then show Naatapuitema what was, what is now happening, and what will happen if nothing is done to battle the wave of fire. Not only will the present world be lost, the catastrophe will also extinguish his ancestors, as well as the future. Everything will cease, resulting in the death of his identity and everything he represents. The spirits of the people including that of his mother will be wiped forever from the Vā Tapuia.

The destruction of the Vā Tapuia will be represented through instrumental and vocal chants and environmental sounds like thunder, ocean waves, wind and torrential rain. Traditional Samoan instruments log drums and fala, will be counterpointed by the sounds of industrial technology to create a cacophony.

TRANSITION TO PULOTU

This cacophony will transition and transport the location of Naatapuitema from the heavenly realm of the Lagi' to the underworld of Pulotu.

Accordingly, the sound transforms from the surreal heaven to heavier, more earthy environmental sounds, including wooden logs, as well as traditional vocal chants.

**PULOTU – THE
UNDERWORLD**

SONG 7.

**Ia e Fa'amalosi'
(Be Strong).**

Performed by Nafanua

Nafanua guides Naatapuitema to her homeland, the underworld Pulotu. Here we encounter the distinctive sounds of a Fijian meke. The language is a mix of Fijian and Samoan. This is because legend states that Pulotu is actually Fiji or a nearby location.

Nafanua sings in a more contemporary musical theatre style and tells Naatapuitema to be strong as he enters Pulotu.

She explains to him how to channel pain, and the challenge that he will face through his pe'a – the tattoo, not only physically but also spiritually, emotionally and mentally.

SONG 8.

**'Malō le Taliau'
(Receive the pain)**

Performed by Naatapuitema and cast.

Naatapuitema prepares for the tatau and is anxious. We hear the sounds of tapping and immediately he feels excruciating pain on his body as the au hits his skin. He screams as he hears various chants, a fusion of contemporary vocalisations and Samoan oratory, describing the pain he must endure. He is encouraged by Nafanua during the pe'a. We hear the sounds of the tattoo implements, body percussion and vocal chants.

As Naatapuitema faces his ordeal he is challenged with Samoan principles which emphasise the demonstration of "one's malos (physical force) and self-abasement through tautua (service) and usita'iga (obedience)" (Galliot, 2015, p.10). This act of tattoo comprises his initiation. The pain pushes Naatapuitema to the brink of death and he enters a transcendent state where he hears the voice of Tagaloa giving him comfort and courage.

Having successfully passed his ordeal, a circle of chiefs surround Naatapuitema. When he awakes, he sits up and sees his chiefly tattoo glistening on his body.

**INSTRUMENTAL
INTERLUDE**

We transition with the sounds of the tattoo and traditional accolades from the cast and chorus celebrating Naatapuitema's success.

**ACT 3: O LE TOE-TŪ
(THE RESURRECTION)**

The Transformation
and Resurrection)

CORE NARRATIVE

Naatapuitema is now transformed.
But over-confidence enters his
personality.

Perceiving himself to be
a singular, heroic man, he
attempts to battle the galu
afi alone. The fight is
ferocious and Naatapuitema
loses the battle.

Half-dead, he hears his
mother's voice and, entering
a spiritual world, his ancestors
reach out to him.

He is given a choice between
momentary heroism and
chiefly duty. Humbled by what
he is shown, he sacrifices
himself to become Naatapuitema
– The Sacred Star.



DESTINY

SONG 9.

**O lou Taunu'uga
(Your Destiny)**

Performed by Nafanua and
Tuilagi

Nafanua and Tuilagi congratulate Naatapuitema on the completion of his training and hand him the symbols and tools of a matai, the to'oto'o (staff) and fue (fly whisk). He knows now that the battle of his life awaits him ... and we encounter the sounds of fire and waves beginning to build. Through this we hear the villagers chanting, encouraging and urging Naatapuitema on.

Incrementally, the roaring sounds of the galu afi increase. We hear sounds of frigate birds as the people of Vā Tapuia gather together near the ocean. They begin to scream with panic as they experience the wave of fire descend upon their world.

SONG 10A.

**Taua Ma le Galu Afi
(Battle against the Galu Afi)**

(interlinked to 10b)

Performed by Naatapuitema and
slap-dancers.

From the centre Naatapuitema emerges, holding in his left hand the matai to'oto'o (staff) and in the other, the fue (whisk). He waves his weapons and a shield of protection, almost in the manner of a martial arts fighter. As he sings in a oratorily chiefly manner, the wave of fire thunders towards him as a deadly chant, combined with screams of death. The galu afi may be represented by a sole male fa'ataupati (slap-dancer) who personifies the tsunami. He is likely to be accompanied by the sounds of thunder, waves, big log drums and male vocal chanting.

In response, Naatapuitema sings with vigour and walks heroically towards the galu afi. But he is hit by wave after wave of fire he continues to use his whisk and staff to defend himself and this builds towards a climax. He is confident that he will win the battle.

In exhilaration, he chants "Che-hoo!! Yes I did it ! I've killed the galu afi!" But he has spoken too early; this was just a prequel to the attack. In a crescendo, the main galu afi thunders towards Naatapuitema and rapid fire hits him continuously. It is clear that he is out of his depth and he will be defeated; crushed by his arrogance and singular heroism.

The galu afi pummels Naatapuitema with a thunderous hit. This brings the music to a sudden halt. The young man is mortally wounded; struck with a killer blow to the heart.

The mood now shifts to desolation. Naatapuitema moans with pain. This is responded to by background sounds of Vā Tapuia woman wailing, symbolizing his mother's death.

The tempo also changes, immediately slowing down, as we hear the desolate requiem-like the humming and the wailing of the villagers. This is accompanied by the slow beating of the log drums.

Naatapuitema falls to the ground in slow motion, engulfed and surrounded by the solo slap-dancer representing the wave of fire. Slowly the lights dim to black and the men retreat from view. When the lights pick up again, the men have been replaced by Naatapuitema's ancestors in a Alofi Sa (sacred circle).

Here we encounter an ava ceremony where Naatapuitema faces the spirits of his ancestors. They counsel him, explaining that they can restore his energy and he can defeat the galu afi.

SONG 10A. continued

However, if this happens, he will be seen for a short time as a hero. This is because he will only defeat this one catastrophe and others will follow, because he has chosen to fight as a single warrior, not to operate as a healer. He will win the battle but the people will lose the war.

SONG 10B.

**'Ia e Loto Tele/
Fa'atamatane'
(Be courageous)**

Performed by Moana and
Naatapuilea.

Barely conscious, Naatapuilea knows that he is at the edge of death and he must make a critical decision. A part of him wants to kill this galu afi. He is still filled with pride and anger.

Suddenly he hears a distant voice. It is singing 'loto tele' (be brave). It is haunting and beautiful and it gives him comfort in his pain.

He calls, "Mum?"

Her voice replies, "Yes son it's me, it's me son - ia e loto tele - To be strong you must sacrifice yourself for your people. Don't forget, 'O le ala i le pule o le tautua- (The pathway to leadership is through service)."

As Naatapuilea breaks down, we see his mother come forth to comfort him. She is in spiritual form.

Naatapuilea tells his mother, that he wants to beat the wave to show his love for her, but she tells him that "love for her, is love for the world" and he must rise above revenge and heroism.

Naatapuilea decides to embrace the values of the aganu'u. He understands now the significance of his duty to serve. He releases himself to the sacrifice for the people of Vā Tapuia. A drum beats slowly - indicating his diminishing heart beat.

Naatapuilea sings though weakly with much emotion and passion. "Ua lelei tinā, o le a ave lo'u ola e fai ma taulaga mo o tatou tagata" ("Yes mother, I will sacrifice my life for our people"). He turns to the people. He says "I will be with you. In the darkness of night and the coming of the dawn. We must see what we are doing, the damage we wrought ... and we must shine and heal and bring this darkness into light."

These are his final words. We hear the sound of the log-drum slow ... and eventually stop. The stage descends into blackness.

SONG 11.

**Pese Fa'amāvae
(Requiem)**

Performed by the 'Tagata Va
Tapuia.

The people of Vā Tapuia honour Naatapuilea. He is wrapped in tapa and carried by the men. The village grieves for his sacrifice. They are forever indebted.

As the people carry Naatapuilea's body to the horizon, we slowly see from the darkness above them, the ascension of a sacred star. Naatapuilea's body disappears from their hands and they look up into the heavens in wonder and in joy.

SONG 12.

**Finale - Susulu Mai Lou
Mālamalama
(*Shine your Light*)**

Performed by Naatapuitema,
Tagaloalagi, Nafanua,
Tuilagi, Moana, and the
Tagata Vā Tapuia.

We open the final scene with celebration. We see Naatapuitema elevated and shining brightly above the villagers who have approached the ocean. The Pacific log drums begin beating in a moderate to fast tempo.

Tagaloa sings, affirming Nafanua, Tuilagi ... and Naatapuitema. This is then reciprocated by all three, and then we see Naatapuitema's mother Moana enter, with the ancestors.

She sings of a continual reminder to embrace the greatness of their aganu'u/ fa'aSamoa/values and to show respect, not only for each other but also for their ancestors and the earth.

We hear Naatapuitema's, voice disembodied filling the world. He sings with her, reminding the people that we must journey in the va'a of life and only through working together and caring beyond ourselves can we save the environment.

The people respond and the production ends with a joyful, triumphant adulation – an acknowledgement of the transformative power of tautua.

END

Lyrics

Naatapuilea – The Sacred Star

(These represent the narrative as of the June 15, 2021, prior to rehearsing the Koniseti.)

Samoan	English
VAEGA 1: O LE AMATAGA...	ACT 1: IN THE BEGINNING...
PESE 1A	SONG 1A
O Le Foafoaga/ Solo o le Va ⁸⁷	'The Creation'/ Song of Creation
O galu lolo ma galu fati'oo.	Rollers flooding, rollers dashing,
O galu tau ma galu fefatia'i.	Rollers fighting, rollers clashing;
O le auau peau ma sologa	The sweep of waters and the extension of waves,
E na ona fa'afua ae le fati	Surging high, but not breaking;
O peau taoto, peau ta'ape	Waves reclining; waves dispersing;
Peau a sifo mai Gaga'e.	Waves agreeable; waves that do not cross;
Ona soa le auau tata'a.	Waves fearsome; waves leaping over;
Mapu i lagi tuli o Tagaloa.	Rest in the heavens, Tagaloa's Tuli (bird)
Tagaloa!	Tagaloa!
Tagaloalagi:	Tagaloalagi:
Mua o Mua o ...	Calling everyone
Sho... sho... sho	Sho... sho... sho
PESE 1B	SONG 1B
Lalolagi Matagofie (Fereni Ete)	Beauty of the Earth (Fereni Ete).
Tali	Chorus
Ou te savali ma le fiafia e tuli le lumana'i manuia	I walk with pride, looking foward to my future.
Ou te tamo'e, i le sa'olotoga ua si'omia a'u - i le	I run, with freedom that surrounds me with love.
alofo. Ou te tago atu i lo'u lumana'i ma le loto	I reach out to my future, with great zeal and fervour
naunauta'i. Leai se fefe. Leai se fefe. I lo'u lumana'i.	There is no fear, there is no fear for my future.
Fuaiupu 1.	Verse 1.
Faafetai le Tagaloalagi i le matagofie o lalolagi	Thank you God for this beautiful world.
Le pupula mai o le la e soluia ai le sami	The sun's rays as it reflects on the ocean.
O manufelelei ua pepese ma fetalia'i	The birds that sing
O i'a ua mitamita i le lanumoana o le sami	And the fish that take pride in their blue ocean.
Tali	Chorus
Ou te savali ma le fiafia e tuli le lumana'i manuia	I walk with pride, looking foward to my future.
Ou te tamo'e, i le sa'olotoga ua si'omia a'u - i le	I run, with freedom that surrounds me with love.
alofo. Ou te tago atu i lo'u lumana'i ma le loto	I reach out to my future, with great zeal and fervour
naunauta'i. Leai se fefe. Leai se fefe. I lo'u lumana'i.	There is no fear, there is no fear for my future.

⁸⁷ Refer to appendix 1, experiment 3 for origin of these lyrics.

PESE 1C AGI MAI

1. Ua sou le moana
Sou i luga ma lalo
Sou atu i uta
Sou i le moana

Sou mai sou mai
Ae aloalo pea
Fa'amalosi mai
Sou mai sou mai
Ae aloalo pea
Sami e te alofa?

2. Va'ai i le fetu
Emoemo mata o ali'i
Fetu ao o tapuītea
Fetu goto o tapuītea

Sou mai sou mai
Ae aloalo pea
Fa'amalosi mai
Sou mai sou mai
Ae aloalo pea
Fetū e te alofa?

3. Lele mai / le lupe
Tatala / lou apa'au
Fua'o po / le gogo
Felelei ifo / i lalo

Sou mai sou mai
Ae aloalo pea
Fa'amalosi mai
Sou mai sou mai
Ae aloalo pea
Lupe e te alofa?

SONG 1C WINDS BLOW

1. The ocean swells
Currents high and low
Swell toward the shore
Swell toward the ocean

Swelling oceans, swelling seas
Paddle/row on
Be strong and courageous
Swelling oceans, swelling seas
Paddle/row on
Sea do you not love?

2. Gaze of the bright stars
Twinkling eyes of the chiefs
Venus in the morning (morning star)
Venus in the evening (evening star)

Stars shine/glimmer
Paddle/row on
Be strong and courageous
Stars shine/glimmer
Paddle/row on
Stars do you not love?

3. Fly to me Pigeon
Spread your wings
Gannet or Seagulls
Now descend your flight.

Fly to me, fly to me
Paddle/row on
Be strong and courageous
Fly to me, fly to me
Paddle/row on
Pigeons do you not love?

PESE 2

Tina 'ea'

(leo o Naatapuïtea o lo'o usu lana pese I lona tine,
o le ā maliu -a'o tagi lona tinā)

Naatapuïtea

Lo'u Moana, Lo'u Moana
Ua e alu 'ese

Lo'u Tinā, Lo'u Tinā
'Ua ou misia 'oe

Tagi ai loto
Ou te alofa ia te 'oe

(Naatapuïtea matua – e pepese fa'atasi ma
Naatapuïtea laititi).

Lo'u tinā
Lo'u tinā pele
Lo'u moana
Lo'u moana, pele

Ou te alofa ia 'oe
Ou te alofa ia te 'oa.

PESE 3A/3B

O le Perofetaga (leo e lua)
Talanoaga

Nafanua:
"E tatau ona tatou fa'amalosia ia te ia,
Ina ia na iloina o ia o le tagata ua filifilia"

Tuilagi:

"E moni
Ua tele nisi mea ua uma ona ia ui mai ai...
E tatau ona ia talia le vala'auina"...

SONG 2

Oh my dearest mother

*(Naatapuïtea is singing to his mother, while she is dying in his
arms from the wave of fire)*

Naatapuïtea

*My Moana (mother's name) literally means Ocean),
My moana
You have gone away.*

*My mother, my mother
I miss you.*

*My spirit dies
I love you.*

*(The older Naatapuïtea – hamornises with the
younger).*

*My mother
My dearest mother
My ocean
My dearest ocean*

*I love you
I love you.*

SONG 3A/3B

*The Prophecy (duet)
Dialogue*

*Nafanua:
"We need to encourage him,
Let him know that he is the chosen one"*

Tuilagi:

*"Indeed
He has been through so much
He must accept the calling"...*

PESE 3B

LEAI OU TE LE MAFAIA

Naatapuilea

O ai ea oe? (Tautala)
Ou te le iloina oe
O oe o ni Atua (Atua)?

Fuaiupu 1

Leai, leai lava (Tautala)

E le o a'u,
E le mafai ona ou faia
E matua faigata tele
E le o a'u le tagata ua filifilia

Ou te fefe
Su'e se isi tagata
Ou te le toe mana'o i lena tiga
O le aveesea o lo'u tina ua o se manu'a loloto
Lo'u Tina
Se'i tu'u mai ia na o a'u to'atasi!

SONG 3B

NO I CAN'T

Naatapuilea

Who are you?
I do not know you ...
Are you Atua's (Gods)?

Verse 1

No No way (Spoken)
It can't be me.
I can't do it
It's way too hard
I am not the chosen one.

I am afraid
Find someone else
I do not want the pain again
The loss of my mother cut too deep.
Lo'u Tina
Leave me alone!

PESE 4 FA'ATAUĀNAU

Tagaloalagi - Nafanua ma Tuilagi - 'Atali'I'

(feso'ota'i ma le Pese 3b)

Fa'apei o se Lauga - Matai/fetalaiga fa'a matai

Tagaloa: E tatau ona 'ese le auala e va'ai ai i lenei mea,
Ia e faia o ia e pei o sou atali'i,
Na te mana'omia 'oe e ta'ita'i ia te ia.

Nafanua: Ua matou iloa.

Tuilagi: E moni oe.

SONG 4. PERSUASION

Tagaloalagi - Nafanua and Tuilagi - 'Son'

(interlinked to Song. 3b)

Lauga Like - Matai/chief delivery

Tagaloa: You need to approach this differently.
Treat him like your son,
He needs you to guide him.

Nafanua: We understand.

Tuilagi: You are right.

PESE 4B

Tafatolu:

Atali'i'

O 'oe lava

E mafai lava ona e faia Atali'i

Naatapuitema

Ua na o oe lava le tagata e mafai ona
faia E mafai ona e faia lenei mea Atali'i

O lou tofi lea ma lou vala'auina

Ua uma ona valo'ia

O Oe Lava O Le Tagata Ua Filifilia

Tali

Atali'i

O 'oe lava

Atali'i

E mafai lava ona e faia.

Naatapuitema!

Fa'amolemole – Fa'alogo i lou loto/fatu

Ua matou vala'auina oe...

Ua vala'au lou tina ia te oe.

O oe o la matou fitafita-tau

Ina ia fa'asa'olotoina o tatou tagata.

SONG 4B

Trio:

Son

You Are The One

You Can Do it Son

Naatapuitema

You are the only one who can

You can do this Son,

It is your destiny

It has been prophesised

You Are The Chosen One.

Chorus

Son

You Are The One

You Can Do it Son.

Naatapuitema!

Please - Listen to your heart

We call you ...

Your mother calls you.

You are our warrior

To set our people free.

PESE 5

Talia le Vala'auina
Fa'atinoina e Naatapuītea

Fuaiupu 1 (Talanoaga)

Ua ou fefe

Ua na o a'u o se taule'ale'a

(Faia ma le musu) Ae ui lava i lea, ou te ava ma fa'aaloalo i
lo'u tina

Ou te fa'aauauina ai mea lelei e tele sa ia faia

O le Galu Afi lava

Na ave'eseina ai o ia

Fuaiupu 1.

Ua ia vala'au mai i lo'u loto/fatu

I le tiga matuitui o le to'esea atoa ma le alofa

Ou te toe fa'aso'isia mai o ia

O le taulaga fa'aola ua ofoina atu

ma taofia ai le fa'afanoina

o Vā Tapuia

Peita'i ua ou fefe

Ou te le mafaia ona fai

Ou te mana'omia lau

ta'ita'iga

Tali

Ua ou talia le vala'uina

Ina ia lavea'i ma tautua i lo tatou laufanua

Ua ou talia le vala'auina

Ta'ita'i a'u ma fa'aali uma mai mea e mafai ona e ta'u
mai ina ia mafai ona ou faatoilalo le Galu Afi

Tali (Sui le ki)

E faapefea ona ou fa'ato'ilalo le Galu Afi?

Ma tete'e atu i se malosia mata'utia faapena?

Ua ou fefe

Ou te vaivai

Ua leai so'u iloa po o se loto iai

Ua matua pipi'ima le fefe i lo'u loto

Nafanua Tuilagi

Ta'ita'i mai a'u ... (tautala)

SONG 5

Accept the Calling

Performed by Naatapuītea

Verse 1 I (Dialogue)

I am afraid

I am only a taule'ale'a

Ua na o a'u o se taule'ale'a

(Reluctantly) But, I will honour my mother

I will continue her legacy

It was the Galu Afi

That tore her away

Verse 1.

She calls in my heart

In the pain of loss and love.

I will restore her

Sacrificial legacy

and stop the destruction

of Va Tapuia

But I am afraid

I am not capable

You will need to guide me.

Chorus

I accept the calling

To save and serve our motherland

I accept the calling

Guide me and show me all you can

So I can defeat the Galu Afi

Chorus (Key change)

How do I defeat the Galu Afi?

Against such a brutal force?

I am afraid

I am weak

I don't have the skill or the will

Fear grasps at my heart

Nafanua Tuilagi

Guide me... (Spoken)

VAEGA 2 O LE LU'ITAU

PESE 6

O le Faa'aleagaina

(Tautalaga o le Aiga)

Ou te fa'atalofa atu, susū mai ma tatāla mai a'ao,
ma ou te fa'atulou i pa'ia o le taeao ma le aso, malii
mai Naatapuitema....

(Tautalaga)

E le gata ina o le a leiloa le lalolagi oi ai nei, ae o le ā
sōloia'ese ou tupuaga,

O le ā taofia fo'i mea uma ma i'u ai ina fasiotia lou
fa'asinomaga ma mea 'uma e tau ia te 'oe.

taimi lenei, e ao ai ina e tula'i mai ma fa'ato'ilaloina, ma ia
mautinoa ua saunia lelei 'oe mo le fa'atāma'ia le galu afi.

PESE 7

Fa'amalosi Tea (Naatapuitema)

Fa'atinoina e Nafanua

Fuaiupu 1.

Talofa - Bula Vinaka

Pulotu

Ia fa'aliliuina 'oe

Ia fa'amalosia 'oe

Fafagu mai le tama toa

Tali

Fa'amalosi Tea (x 2).

O 'oe o le toa

O le ā ē tau ma le malosi.

Fuaiupu 2.

Malaga

Manuia

Pe' a

Fa'apa'ia

Fa'amalosi

O le a ave'a 'oe ma malamalama i le lagi.

ACT 2 THE CHALLENGE

SONG 6

The Destruction

(Spoken words from the ancestors)

*I greet you, and beseech huge welcome, seeking
Naatapuitema).*

(Dialogue)

*Not only will the present world be lost, the catastrophe will
also extinguish your ancestors.*

*Everything will cease, resulting in the death of your identity
and everything you represent.*

*They did not look after vā-tapuia, they did not care for her
needs, her health declined. Now is your time, you must
rise and defeat it, we will make sure now that you are well
prepared to defeat the galu afi.*

SONG 7

Be strong Tea (Naatapuitema)

Performed by Nafanua

Verse 1

Hello

Pulotu

Transform you

Empower you

Awaken the mighty warrior

Chorus

Be strong Tea (x 2)

You are the warrior

You will fight with might

Verse 2

Journey

Blessings

Tattoo

Sanctify

Fortify.

You will be the heavenly light.

PESE 8

Malo le Taliau

Fa'atinoina e Nafanua, Naatapuītea and Moana

Manuia lou taoto.

Ia ou onosa'i

Ia ou fa'amālosi

Ia ou taliau

(Tautalaga a Nafanua)

Naatapuītea

Ua e iai i lou pouliuli

Aua le fefe o lo'o fa'atasi a'u ma 'oe

Talia (ma le fiafia) le matuitui ma tigā o le oti

Ia toetu lou agaga.

(Tautalaga a Nafanua)

Malo le taliau

Malo le sausu

Malo le onosa'i

SONG 8

Well done for receiving the pain

Performed by Nafanua, Naatapuītea and Moana

May your lying down be blessed

I must be patient

I must be strong

I must receive this pain well.

(Spoken by Nafanua)

Naatapuītea

You are in your darkest place

Fear not for I am with you

Embrace the sheer pain of near death

Let it resurrect your spirit

(Spoken by Nafanua)

Well done for accepting the pain

Well done for the tattooing

Well done on your patience.

VAEGA 3 O LE TOETŪ

PESE 9 O LAU TAUNU'ŪGA

Fa'atinoina e Nafanua, Tuilagi ma Naatapuilea

Fuaiupu 1

Malo lava

O 'oe o le toa

O lou to'oto'o

Ma lou fue

O lou lauga

Tali

O lou taunu'uga (Nafanua & Tuilagi)

O lau taunu'uga (Naatapuilea)

Lagona le mamafatū (Nafanua & Tuilagi)

loe - o lau taunu'uga (Naatapuilea)

la tau ma le malosi.

Fuaiupu 2

O ai o le toa? (Nafanua ma Tuilagi)

O a'u o le toa! (Naatapuilea)

Alo loa ia – alo i ai

Alo i ou faiva!

Tali

O lou taunu'uga (Nafanua & Tuilagi)

O lau taunu'uga (Naatapuilea)

Lagona le mamafatū (Nafanua & Tuilagi)

loe - o lau taunu'uga (Naatapuilea)

Tau ma le malosi (tafatolu).

PESE 10

Taua ma le Galu Afi

Pati!

Tasi, Lua, Tolu, Fā.

la tau ma tuā tau,

fai ia mafai

Tau le toa i aso vale"

ACT 3 THE RESURRECTION

SONG 9 YOUR DESTINY

Performed by Nafanua, Tuilagi ma Naatapuilea.

Verse 1

Greetings

You are the warrior

Your to'oto'o staff

And your fue (fly whisk)

Your lauga (oratory speech)

Chorus

This is your Destiny

Feel the intensity

Defeat the galu afi

Fight with might.

Verse 2

Who is the warrior (Nafanua and Tuilagi)

I'm the warrior! (Naatapuilea)

Go for it

Go for your mission!

Chorus:

This is your destiny (Nafanua and Tuilagi)

This is my destiny (Naatapuilea)

And feel the intensity (Nafanua and Tuilagi)

Yes – I feel the intensity x 2

Fight with might (trio).

SONG 10

Battle with the Galu Afi

Clap!

One, two, three, four.

Fight fiercely

Do it to achieve

The brave fights in the hardest times

PESE 10B

Loto Tele

(Ua matuā mafatia Naatapuitema)

(Tautalaga)

(Moana)

"Talofa e

Naatapuitema - Si a'u tama Pele."

(Naatapuitema) "Mama, mama, mama o 'oe lenā?"

(Moana)

"La'u atali'i pele e!

Naatapuitema,

Ou te mano'a lava e ave'esea le tigā."

(Naatapuitema)

"Lo'u tinā pele e!

Ua ou misia lava 'oe

Ua ou matua mafatia i le galu afi."

Tali (Moana)

Lo'u atali'i x 2

Ia e loto tele

Aua le fa'avaivai lou atali'i e x 2

E te toe tū mai.

Fuaiupu 1.

Naatapuitema

'Ua ta'elua lo'u fatu

O lo'o mafuta pea 'oe ma a'u

I lo'u agaga

O le mea lea 'ia sili a'e ou lagona lelei nai lo le

tauimasui. O lou malosui i le loto fa'amagalo.

SONG 10B

Be Brave

(Naatapuitema is severely hurt)

(Dialogue)

(Moana)

"Oh my beloved,

Naatapuitema - My dearest son."

(Naatapuitema) "Mum, mum, mum is that you?"

(Moana)

"My dearest son

Naatapuitema

I want so much to take away the pain."

(Naatapuitema)

"My beloved mother

Mum I've missed you so much

This galu afi is killing me."

Chorus (Moana)

My son x 2

Ia e loto tele Be courageous

Don't give up? my son x 2

You will rise again.

Verse 1

Naatapuitema

My heart breaks in two

You're always with me

In my spirit

So rise above revenge

Your power lies in forgiveness.

CHORUS:

Lo'u atali'i (x2)

Ia e loto tele

Lo'u atali'i (x 2)

Aua le fa'avaivai

Aua le pulea lou loto i le ita lo'u atali'i e E

mafa'i ona e manumalo ai i mea 'uma

Fai ma taulaga

Ia ofoina atu lo'u ola e fai ma taulaga

O le a toe maua mai

O le e toe fa'aopoopo ma maua pea lou

ola lo'u atali'i

Ia e loto tele..

(Tautalaga - Naatapuitema)

"Ua lelei si 'au tinā pele

O le a ave lo'u ola e fai ma taulaga

Mo lo tatou tagata

O le a ou fa'atasi ma 'oe

I le pogisa o le pō

Ma le fotua'i mai o le taeao

E ao ina tatou va'ai ifo ia i tatou lava

O le manu'a na tatou faia

E ao ona tatou susulu atu, ma fa'amalōlō

Ma 'aumai lenei pouliuli i le malamalama."

CHORUS:

Lo'u atali'i (x 2)

Ia e loto tele (Be courageous)

Lo'u atali'i x 2

Don't give up

Don't give in to hate my son

You can rise above it all

Sacrifice your -

Sacrifice your life

You'll gain it

You'll gain find your life

My son

Be courageous

(Dialogue - Naatapuitema)

"Ua lelei si 'au tinā pele

I will give my life as a sacrifice

For our people

I will be with you

In the darkness of the night

And in the coming of the dawn

We must look within ourselves

The damage we wrought

We must shine, heal,

and bring this darkness into light."

PESE 11

E tagi lo Matou Agaga

(Fa'atinoia e Vā Tapuia)

E tagi lo matou agaga

Manuia lou malaga i le lagi.

Tofā, tofā

Manuia lou malaga i le lagi.

SONG 11

Our Spirit Cries

(Performed by Vā Tapuia)

My spirit cries

Blessed Journey to the heavens

Farewell, farewell

Blessed Journey to the heavens.

PESE 12

Susulu mai Lou Malamalama

Fa'atinoina e Naatapuitema, Tagaloa-lagi, Nafanua, Tuilagi, Moana, and the Tagata Va tapuia.

Fuaiupu 1. (Tagaloalagi)

Malo lava Naatapuitema

O 'oe o le fetū pa'ia

O lau taulaga ua maua ai le ola

Va tapuia O lo'o autilo mamao mai le lalolagi.

Tali: (Tafatolu – with Nafanua & Tuilagi)

Tula'i mai

Susulu mai lou Malamalama

Fuaiupu 2. (Moana)

Lo'u atali'i pele

Ou te matua mitamita ona o 'oe

la tatou talia fiafia lo tatou va tapuia

la si'itia pea le alofa ma susulu atu

Tali: (Moana/Tagaloalagi/ Nafanua ma Tuilagi)

Fuaiupu 3. (Nafanua & Tuilagi)

O ai o le toa/ O 'oe o le toa..

(Nafanua) Ua tumau i lenei taeao fa'apitoa

Ua si'itia 'oe i le maua luga fa'alelagi

Ua fa'atoilaloina le pogisa e lou malamalama

Tali: (Moana/Tagaloalagi/ Nafanua ma Tuilagi)

Faiā/Alaniu: Naatapuitema

(Lauga)

"Fa'afetai le alofa mai ma le agalelei

Ua fa'apa'iaina/fa'amamaluina le va tapuia

la amata mai i lenei aso e o'o i le lumana'i"

(Usuina)

la a'oa'oina tatou e alolofa ma puipua le lalolagi

Tali: (Tagata o le Va Tapuia/Tagaloalagi ma le afaipese atoa)

Susulu mai Lou Malamalama

Susulu mai Lou Malamalama x 3.

SONG 12

Let your Light Shine

Performed by Naatapuitema, Tagaloa-lagi, Nafanua, Tuilagi, Moana, and the Tagata Va tapuia.

Verse 1. (Tagaloalagi)

Malo lava Naatapuitema

You are the sacred star

Your sacrifice has given life

Vā Tapuia (the world) gazes from afar.

Chorus: (Trio only – with Nafanua and Tuilagi)

Rise Up - Shine Your Light

Rise Up - Shine Your Light

Verse 2. (Moana)

My dearest son

I am so proud of you

Let's embrace our sacred space

May our love rise and radiate

Chorus: (Moana/Tagaloalagi/ Nafanua & Tuilagi)

Verse 3 (Nafanua and Tuilagi)

Who is the warrior? You are the warrior ...

(Nafanua) It it has been declared this auspicious occasion.

You have risen to the heavenly heights.

Your light has overcome the darkness.

Chorus: (Moana/Tagaloalagi/ Nafanua and Tuilagi)

Bridge: Naatapuitema

(Speech)

"Thank you for love and kindness

Let's sanctify our sacred space

From this day onwards we must learn"

(Sung)

To love, protect our precious world

CHORUS: (Village of Va Tapuia/Tagaloalagi and full cast)

Rise Up - Shine Your Light

Rise Up - Shine Your Light x 3.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHAPTER FIVE

CRITICAL COMMENTARY

OVERVIEW

Having now considered the structure and nature of the *konesiti* this chapter offers a critical commentary on *Naatapuitema* – ‘*The Sacred Star*’. It is divided into two sections. The first considers a discussion of Samoan ideas underpinning the content and construction of the work. These include:

- The concept of *tautua* (*service*)
- *Tatau/malofie* (*tattoo*)
- The personification of Gods and lineage
- The nature and experience of *Koniseti*
- *Tulafale* (*speaking chief*) and the use of *fa’atusatusaga* (*metaphor*).

The second part of the chapter discusses specific features evident in the performed work. These include:

- The interpretation of Samoan environmental influences
- *Koniseti* production, composition, and sound design.

Section One: The Manifestation of Fa'asāmoa (Samoan Ideas And Principles)

THE CONCEPT OF TAUTUA (SERVICE)

In *Naatapuileta – The Sacred Star* we encounter a young man who is asked to serve a greater idea; protecting the Vā Tapuia from the assault of environmental disaster (in the metaphorical form of the galu afi). Fundamental to his success is his acceptance of the principle of tautua (*service*).

Tavale (2013), suggests that tautua is a principle that serves Samoa's social, political and spiritual structure; that is the aiga (*family*), nu'u (*village*), creator (*Atua*) and country. Filisi (2018, p. 377) notes that the principle of service is fundamental to how indigenous Samoans draw into harmony, living with both individual needs and those of one's surroundings. This harmony of dimensions, Efi (2007) suggests, includes the cosmos, relationships between people and the environment, between individuals and their community and between an individual and the self. Tavale (2013) suggests that harmonious living through servitude is expressed through four tautua:

- tautua tuavae (*provisions*)
- tautua matalilo (*serving with honour, respect and protection of the aiga*)
- tautua malele (*distant provisions*)
- tautua upu (*honouring with spoken words*).

Filisi (2018), argues that these tautua constitute a form of relationality through which all things are interconnected. He describes tautua tuavae as a form of self-determination that ensures that food from the land and ocean is humbly brought forward to the matai so it can be blessed before it is shared with the faifeau (*priest/pastor*), neighbours and family. This conscious commitment to ensuring an abundance of provisions, he suggests, means that a greater number of people are able to benefit from the bounty.

The second form of service, tautua matāililo, Filisi suggests, relates to expressions of honour, respect and protection. This tautua places emphasis on a commitment to protecting the family name through words and conduct.

The third, tautua malele, Filisi explains is often associated with the provision of assistance from family members who live overseas. This commitment to providing monetary gifts is seen as assisting the local economy while constituting service to the nation as a whole. However, he notes that this tautua can also be associated with churches and schools when they fund-raise for building projects.

Finally, tautua upu he notes, relates to oration. This represents commitment

⁸⁸ See the interview excerpt at 7:52 where the high chief Va'asiliifiti Moelagi Jackson discusses this issue in Marks of Mana - Malu Story Part 1 [Video]. Accessible at: <https://www.thecoconet.tv/know-your-roots/pacific-documentaries/marks-of-mana-malu-story-pt1/>

to what Tuimaleali'ifano (2006) describes as *tū* (*customary norms*) and *ma aga i fanua* (*local practice*). Here one is committed to understanding the art and responsibility of *lauga* (*formal speech making*). Filisi notes that service to the rigours of oratory means that:

...a *lauga* must be structured and delivered using the title and *nu'u fa'alupega*. Meleisea (1987, p. vii) defined *fa'alupega* as the 'formal expression of recognition associated with a matai title. Each village and district has a set of *fa'alupega* which act as a constitution by expressing the rank and by alluding to the historical or genealogical origins of its senior titles.' These must be linked through the appropriate use of proverbs and metaphors. (2018, p. 383)

These four *tautua* demonstrate subservience to things that are greater than the self. They constitute ways in which Samoan people and traditions are strengthened and identity and relationships are protected. Filisi (2018) notes that *tautua* is woven into emotions, religious expertise, physical and social interactions.

When Naatapuilea ignores these principles and pursues self-aggrandisement and personal revenge, he undermines the principle of servitude that holds Samoan society together. He forsakes a commitment to tradition and the elevation of the needs of others. Naatapuilea is destined to fail because his behaviour runs counter to the principle of strength through service.

TATAU/MALOFIE (TATTOO)

A second concept that permeates the *konesiti* occurs as a turning point for Naatapuilea, in the underworld. This is a deeply rooted and complex Samoan process known as *tatau* (*an ancient tattoo art form*).

Tatau normally refers to the traditional male tattoo, but it can also refer generically to traditional tattooing, both male and female. Natanielu (2020) notes that colloquially, the traditional male tattoo is referred to as the *pe'a* and in the matai register, it is called *mālōfie*. The traditional female tattoo is called the *malu*. For women *malu* protects the family and shows her guidance and work in service to the family.⁸⁸

The Samoan *tatau* is a traditional ceremony that constitutes a rite of passage from youth to adulthood. In pre-Christian times it marked the most significant transition in the advancement of a Samoan male. Va'a (2006) suggests that to be without a *tatau* was comparable to being socially shunned and for young people, not to have a *pe'a* was inconceivable.

Visually, a *tatau* constitutes tattooed lines and motifs worn by Samoan men

⁸⁹ Personal communication and discussion about the pe'a at Auckland University of Technology, January 16, 2019.

⁹⁰ A male who has a pe'a – a traditional Samoan tattoo.

⁹¹ (c.f. Interview with Karl Partsch (Appendix 3) and my account (Appendix 4).

⁹² Natanielu, personal communication November 16, 2018.

and women and Mallon and Galliot (2018) consider it to be an indigenous form of writing. The process of tattooing is known as pa'ū le mālofie, (or tu'itu'i mālofie in its polite form). The tatau specialist is known as a tufuga tā tatau.

Tatau is a much deeper concept than the ornamentation associated with much western skin embellishment. Maliko (2012), Mallon (2005), Sulu'ape (2011), and Vaka'uta (2013) suggest that tatau constitutes an iconographic representation of Samoan history, knowledge and custom that reflects and informs norms, modes of behaviour and ways of thinking and doing. However, Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2001) and Natanielu (2020) maintain that it also constitutes an epistemological site that contains insights into understanding processes that shape thinking and behaviour.

As an extension of this, Natanielu (2020, p. 195) suggests:

The tatau is the story of Sāmoans as a people, as well as the story of a person and the transformative journey they have survived. The pain journey required in completing the tatau is a mirror of the pain journey the aspirants of the tatau have endured in a prior adversity that called to question their identity.

In this thesis I was moved by the thinking of Dr Sonny Natanielu who, in a personal conversation, noted that literature available from Samoans who have the tatau is sparse, and the majority of writing is by non-Samoans.⁸⁹ Accordingly, he recommended that I interview *soga'imiti*⁹⁰ for my *koniseti*, so I might access more culturally embodied reflection and insights into the nature of the ritual and its impact.

Natanielu (2020) asserts that the tu'itu'i mālofie (*tatau process*) may be considered the most agonising experience in Samoan custom and traditions.⁹¹ He argues that this process plays a crucial role in the “exploration of the journey through pain and adversity [...] to build psychological resilience and it is therefore a form of protection as well as transformation” (p. 103).

I concur with Natanielu when he suggests that the greatest knowledge about this process must be accessed through *soga'imiti* (*someone who has a pe'a*). He notes that many *palagi* (*non-Samoans*) conceive tatau as a rite of passage. However, he and a number of other *soga'imiti* understand tatau as a form of service that leads to a transformative journey. He also recommended that, as a condition of creating authenticity in this project, I needed to go further and become embodied in the process; undergoing tu'itu'i mālofie (*the tatau process*) myself.⁹²

Figure 5.1.
Undergoing the tu'itu'i mālofie under
the care of Tufuga tā tatau, January
26, 2021. Suluape Peter Su'a. January
2021 © Igelese Ete.



⁹³ See also, the interview with Karl Partsch, Appendix 3.

⁹⁴ Same as footnote 93.

My embodied experience of this journey became manifest on January 26, 2021, when I underwent this transition at the Taupou Tatau Studio in Wellington, New Zealand (Figure 5.1). The tufuga tā tatau was Suluape Peter Su'a and the tu'itu'i mālofie was a deeply transformative experience.

While an illustrated account of, and reflection on, the tu'itu'i mālofie is provided in Appendix 4, it is useful here to briefly record significant features of the ritual as they related to pain, transformation and power.

Knowing that tu'itu'i mālofie would be demanding, I prepared myself physically and spiritually months in advance. The process had the full support of my family with the exception of my mother who felt that it was wasn't necessary. However, once the tatau commenced and the pe'a was taking shape she became supportive and eventually described the pe'a as beautiful.

The pe'a was an expected outcome of the conferral of my chiefly title.⁹³ The pain and transition that I experienced is not easily described. During it, I came to understand the nature of pain and I learned to channel it across days of tattooing. During this journey I entered into the realm of Puluotu. Puluotu is the natural realm of my lineage, (through the atua Nafanua on my maternal side), but it is also a place of pain. As I journeyed into it, I understood pain as both physical and spiritual. Here, pain was something more expansive and transformative than the physical experience of having my body cut and pigmented; pain was also spiritual. It drew into itself both the pain of my past and pain from the lives of those I love. To clarify this, although I experienced pain made by the striking of the au, this pain was channelled inwards and I experienced it as an alleviation of the pain of others. Pain became a transformation. Through pain I discovered who I was and in this process I experienced the living essence of both alofa (*love*) and tautua (*service*). My pain became the pain of something greater, that was no longer concerned with the self and the immediate. As Natanielu had suggested, the pe'a became a form of service, a form of surrendering that led to a transformative journey. Here, pain was transformed through the tu'itu'i mālofie into a form of power. Surrounding the transformation was the alofa and care of my au-tapua'i (*moral supporters*).⁹⁴

Having experienced such a profound shift in my sense of identity, I restructured and recomposed the section of the koniseti where the protagonist (Naatapuitema) experiences this transition. I then revisited the whole work, refining and realigning aspects so the transformative experience became more authentically woven into the narrative.

- ⁹⁵ Her insight into the ritual and its meaning is captured in the lyrics of Fa'amalosi.
- ⁹⁶ Here we encounter greetings in the two languages associated with the deity, Samoan and Fijian.
- ⁹⁷ The au is the main instrument used for the tatau.

Artistic interpretation of tatau

Tatau as a concept surfaces in *Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star*, in Act 2 – O le Lu'itau (*The Challenge*). Here it mirrors the pain journey of Naatapuitema, and the trauma he endured following the death of his mother Moana.

Schmidt (2002, p.14) maintains that the origin of the tatau is Fijian and the ritual was brought to Samoa by conjoined twins goddesses, Taema and Tilafaigā. Nafanua is the daughter of Tilafaigā and therefore the tatau is closely connected to her through lineage. In the koniseti, I reference this connection between tatau, Nafanua and Fiji for two reasons. First, I am genealogically linked to these ancestors through my mother's village of Falealupo. Second, I am also married to a Fijian woman (Vasiti Radekedeke) whose lineage hails from Totoya in the Lau Islands in Fiji. Geraghty (1993) suggests that the beach at Totoya is the geographical location of Pulotu. In the narrative, my ancestor Nafanua guides Naatapuitema to the sacred process of the pe'a and it is she who meets him immediately after his transformation.⁹⁵ The profound nature of the transformation and its Fijian origin are captured minimalistically in Nafanua's lyrics:

Talofa - Bula Vinaka⁹⁶

Pulotu

Transform you

Empower you

Awaken the tama toa

Malaga

Manuia (*Journey with blessings*)

Pe'a (*tattoo*)

Sanctify

Fortify.

In the koniseti, as the tatau process commences, I allude to the location of Pulotu which Geraghty (1993) suggests is around Totoya beach in Fiji. It is in reference to this that I have composed the distinctively Fijian-styled meke prelude. As the ritual progresses we hear the distinctive sound of the au (*handle*) as it pierces Naatapuitema's skin.⁹⁷ This percussive element operates as a precursor for Song 8 *Malo le Taliau* where Nafanua commences the ritual.

Song 8 is a musical interpretation of my experience undertaking a pe'a. The composition draws on physical, emotional, ancestral, and fa'aSamoan aspects of what I encountered.

The work is divided into three sections:

- Pogisa (*Darkness*)
- Au (*the Mallet*)
- Samaga (*the celebration ceremony*).

The opening (Pogisa) interprets the physical and emotional environment of Puluotu. For this I created a realm that is dark, cold and subterranean. Sonically, the composition draws on what I experienced when I was having my left leg tattooed; that is, the disassociation associated with blood loss combined with the strange nature of the blowing fan. In this ethereal environment, we accompany Naatapuitema under the ground and through this, we are aligned with Nafanua and her place of origin. Aurally we experience low-pitched, airy, choral sounds with floating harmonics. This is accompanied by the subtle beating of low, bass drums.

The Pogisa introduction segues into Au (*the Mallet*), which represents the commencement of the pe'a. This is indicated by a voiceover saying Ia manuia le ta'oto. This phrase is what one normally hears from the tufuga. It leads us into the repetitive sound of the au hitting the skin. Accompanying this, we encounter a group chant, sau ia (*come here*). This represents a voice in Naatapuitema's consciousness, pushing him to take up the challenge, while he is simultaneously suffering complex levels of physical and psychological pain. Through this storm of pain, a calm gradually surfaces as his subconscious, melodic voice. This offers reassurance, in its simple melodic lines:

Ia ou onosa'i (*May I be patient*)
Ia ou fa'amalosi (*May I be strong*)
Ia ou tali le au (*May I accept the au*)
Tali le au (*Accept the au*).

Towards the end of this section, we hear an external voice calling out traditional affirmations and acknowledgements. These constitute encouragement that strengthens Naatapuitema's resolve to complete the challenge:

Malo le taliaua (*Well done on receiving the pain*)
Malo le onosa'i (*Well done on your patience*).

The final section, Samaga, is filled with celebration. Here, we encounter traditional drums.⁹⁸ These are accompanied by a distinctive Samoan vocal chant, Che-hoo. This refers to the point where Naatapuitema is blessed at the completion of his pe'a. Conventionally, at this point, his body is oiled with

turmeric and coconut oil and the transformed youth arises to perform a siva Samoa (*Samoan dance*) that celebrates his pe'a. This phase of the composition then transitions into a fa'ataupati (*slap-dance*), that metaphorically represents the tools Naatapuilea will use to battle the galu afi.

THE PERSONIFICATION OF GODS AND LINEAGE

Central to the koniseti's narrative is an intimate connection between the spiritual nature of traditional Samoan Gods and the realm and lives of the physical.

Schmidt (2002, p. 246) observed that in Samoan culture:

Harnessing the realm of the sacred by means of shamanic practices and inverting the social order serve to ensure fertility and wellbeing. Ritualistic activity not only highlights the spiritual dimensions of Samoan life, but also reveals the interconnectedness of the spiritual and physical realms. Adhering to these rituals serves to maintain the spiritual configurations evident in that society.

In the koniseti we encounter three main deities, Tagaloa-lagi, Nafanua and Tuilagi. Each adopts a specific role in the narrative and each is created as sonically distinctive.

Tagaloalagi

In the pre-Christian religion of Samoa, gods and spirits were structured into a distinct hierarchy (Nelson & Andersen, 1925). Paramount among these deities was Tagaloalagi who was considered the supreme God of the universe. Through him, Samoans claimed that they came from the heavens (MacQuoid, 1995). Tagaloalagi was also considered the creator who first located the world as a large ocean of water. Enamoured with the manner in which waves traversed its surface, he created a beautiful obstruction that might break up their movement. This obstruction was the first land, called Manu'a, which was the place where his spirit roamed (Nelson & Andersen, 1925).

Although one might argue in my work a certain tension between the elevation of traditional Samoan gods including reference to Tagaloalagi as the supreme being, and the monotheism of contemporary Samoan Christianity, in Chapter One of *Whispers and Vanities*, the collectively authored book on Samoan Indigenous religious culture, his Highness Afioga Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese, sees no conflict between Christian and pre-Christian representations of the divine in Samoan culture. He says:

... in searching for truth in our religious cultures I find it impossible to believe that the religions of my forebears during pre-Christian times were not invested with the wisdom and divinity of a loving God. I cannot bring myself to believe also that my Christian God, a loving God, didn't speak or connect with my people for all those 3000-odd years before Christianity. It seems a gratuitous insult to both God and my forebears to assume that there was a disconnect between them for all that time (Suali'i-Sauni et al., 2014, p. 67).

My personal position is in harmony with this discourse. I conceive that the God of Christianity and the God of pre-Christian Samoa (that is Tagaloalagi) are one and the same, albeit interpreted differently through a Samoan cultural lens.

Artistic interpretation of Tagaloalagi

Given that Tagaloalagi is the supreme Atua and the creator of all things, including the Vā Tapuia and its tagata, I conceived his speaking and singing voice as a basso profundo. Sonically he has depth and resonance, enhanced by the use of a 'reverb' that creates ethereal space around him. This expansion evokes his vastness as the supreme God, while alluding to the idea that, in a spiritual realm, time is merged with timelessness.

We encounter Tagaloalagi's sonorous voice first in the opening song 1A Fofoaga (*Creation*) where he performs a unique fusion of Samoan oratory and operatic recitative. We then segue into the introductions of his two assistant guiding aitu (*spirits*), Nafanua and Tuilagi. Together they sing melodic song 1B. In this piece they admire the Lalolagi Matagofie (*Beauty of the Earth*). Here, permeating their admiration, we continue to encounter Tagaloalagi's authoritative bass voice.

However, what incrementally emerges is the supreme god's softer fatherly quality, projecting across sacred space. It is this variation of his voice that is used to advise and guide both Nafanua and Tuilagi with the prophecy, and this tone surfaces again when Tagaloalagi shows his sensitivity to the needs of Naatapuilea in Song 4A Persuasion. Here, he empathises with the boy and counsels Nafanua and Tuilagi to treat him like their son. Tagaloalagi re-enters the narrative at its conclusion in Song 12, where he affirms Nafanua, Tuilagi and Naatapuilea, and celebrates the elevation of Naatapuilea to the position of the Sacred Star. At this point the resonance of his basso profundo voice is again enhanced by reverb that suggests the ethereal space that surrounds him as a supreme deity.

⁹⁹ Hamilton, A. (1998). Nineteenth-century French missionaries and fa'a Samoa. *The Journal of Pacific History*, 33(2), p. 164.

¹⁰⁰ This concept of dual motherhood emanates from Samoan tradition where in a village or church setting, children treat all the parents like their own.

¹⁰¹ In the koniseti, Nafanua is an agent of connection; she may be understood as one who weaves mats where, through both narrative and tonal shifts, she creates a character strand that ties together the heavenly and the earthly realms.

In contextualising Tagaloalagi's voice, I have drawn upon distinctive percussive sounds of Samoa, including body-percussion and traditional instruments like the high and low pitched pate (*log drum*), fala (*rolled mats*) and pū (*the conch shell*). These locate Tagaloalagi deeply within Samoan ontology and sonically emphasise his mana and rhythmic connection to both the esoteric and the physical.

Nafanua

Nafanua is a revered spirit, historical figure and legend who is celebrated by Samoans as a warrior princess. Although the Catholic missionary Violette claimed that she was a male and that Tagaloa was purely human,⁹⁹ Nafanua is more traditionally understood in the form described in Schmidt's (2011) doctoral thesis. Here, she is considered the most powerful of the aitu and is the daughter of Saveasi'uleo, the King of Puluotu (*the underworld*). Schmidt suggests that Nafanua is of Fijian origin and is frequently referred to as the daughter of Tuifiti, the King of Fiji. Building on this idea Lesuma (2019), in her discussion of Samoan poets and their narratives, personifies Nafanua as a war goddess and a symbol for Samoan empowerment through cultural revitalisation.

Artistic interpretation of Nafanua

Nafanua appears in each of the three acts and represents a spiritual or heavenly mother figure for Naatapuitema. Narratively, she fills the void left when his birth mother drowns as a consequence of the galu afi.¹⁰⁰

Accordingly, Nafanua adopts different roles in the Koniseti.¹⁰¹ We initially see her as a Goddess in Song 1B Lalolagi Matagofie, where she admires the beauty of the earth. I have conceived her with a dramatic mezzo-soprano voice that alludes to both her origins as a warrior princess and powerful deity. We hear this power distinctively in Song 3A *The Prophecy* where she predicts what will happen. It is in the power of her voice in this song that we are alerted to the fact that something is seriously wrong.

We encounter Nafanua again in Songs 4a Persuasion and 4b Atali'i, where she appears as part of a trio with another deity, Tuilagi, and the protagonist Naatapuitema. As in my treatment of Tagaloalagi, I have allowed for emotional reorientation in the tone of her voice, so she can move from a state of spiritual authority to a state of compassion as she reaches out to the fragile and uncertain boy and adopts an encouraging motherly voice that embraces and soothes his anxiety.

In Act 2, O Le Lu'itau (*The Challenge*) we encounter Nafanua again on either side of Naatapuitema's tatau ritual. It is at this point that I acknowledge her Fijian origins in the composition of a Fijian-styled meke choral work that transits

¹⁰² A meke is the traditional Fijian style of performance that combines dance and storytelling through song. In its more recent form, both men and women perform in collaboration where men demonstrate strong, virile movements and women are associated with those that are graceful and feminine. Friedrich Ratzel in his *The History of Mankind* (1896), notes that the traditional composition of meke was limited to a chosen few, who alleged that when creating the work, they entered the spirit world where deities taught them the song and appropriate dance movements.

Naatapuitema into Pulotu which is understood to be Fiji (Schmidt, 2011 p 14).¹⁰²

In the narrative, Nafanua is positioned on both sides of Naatapuitema's journey into the underworld. Initially in Song 7 Fa'amalosi she encourages him to be strong and introduces him to the underworld. When he resurfaces after the tatau ceremony, her singing is accompanied by more restrained, intimate instrumentation that bears traces of a quiet folksong accompanied by a guitar. This shift in instrumentation moves her empathetically closer to Naatapuitema's Western world, because she must at this point in the narrative connect the elements of his nature (the boy and the new man) as she explains to him how as a whole man he must now step forward, embrace the prophesy and do battle with the galu afi. The approach also renders her tone in this scene more intimate and motherly.

Nafanua then appears in Act 3 where she contributes to the majestic duet; This is your Destiny. Here, we see her with Tuilagi giving Naatapuitema the symbolic tools of manhood and encouraging him to take responsibility. I have composed this song as harmonic and she sings homophonically with Tuilagi, creating a united sense of partnership that alludes to an advisory dynamic between a mother and father. However, in the warm intimacy of this song she is unable to show the boy that responsibility has to be collective and Naatapuitema mistakes the harmonious support as an elevation of his individuality as a singular hero, not as a man who, having reached maturity, must now place the care for others above himself.

After Naatapuitema's death we encounter Nafanua one last time in the finale, Song 12: Ua sau le va'a na tiu. Here she returns to her spiritual, regal self and joins a celebration that elevates Naatapuitema to the state of the bright, sacred star. This shift in tone is necessary because, in this composition, her dramatic voice soars in celebration with that of Naatapuitema's mother Moana and it is important that the two women while linked, are also able to be sonically differentiated.

Tuilagi

The third deity in the narrative is Tuilagi. He is a fictional god who is a creative reflection on the nature of my matai title. In creating him, I considered the character and responsibility of the matai, and asked myself what would a projection of this role to divine status look like? Given that traditionally a matai is very close to the border between the physical and deified, I composed a character who must cross backwards and forwards across this division in the facilitation of service.

The name Tuilagi has many interpretations; one is King of the Heavens which stems from Tui, which means king in Fijian, and lagi, which means sky or

¹⁰³ See Appendix 3: The role of a Matai (*Chief*) living in Samoa. (Aufaga, personal communication, January 9, 2020).

heavens in many Polynesian languages. In my interview with Tuilagi Aufaga,¹⁰³ he explains that the name Tuilagi originates from brothers; one, named Namu'lau'ulu, saw that his brother was so tall that it appeared that he pierced the sky, hence Tui in Samoan also means to pierce, but lagi is sky or heavens.

Artistic interpretation of Tuilagi

I have conceived Tuilagi as a bass-baritone. However, because he is not the supreme deity Tagaloalagi, his voice is less ethereal and sonorous. My aesthetic principle here was that rank might be associated with depth of voice.

Tuilagi is introduced in Song 1 B, Lalolagi Matagofie, where together with the supreme Atua Tagaloalagi and fellow deity Nafanua, as a trio they describe and together admire the tremendous Lalolagi Matagofie (*Beauty of the Earth*).

Tuilagi and Nafanua fulfil the roles of surrogate parents. In Song 3a The Prophesy, Tuilagi's bass-baritone harmonises with Nafanua's mezzo-soprano voice to discuss (in Samoan the fact that, although still a boy, Naatapuitema is destined to face the galu afi and thereby save the world. Although both deities are aware of the death of the boy's mother, their approach is initially one of an authoritative command. In this section we can feel and hear Tuilagi's godly power. However, under Tagaloa's guidance, the deities adopt a more parental, nurturing approach in Song 4b, Atali'i.

In Song 6. The Destruction, Tuilagi transports Naatapuitema into the heavenly realm where he shows the boy the destruction of the Vā Tapuia. Here we experience his voice as more authoritative and aligned with expectations of rule and authority.

After Naatapuitema's transition to manhood via the ritual of tatau, Tuilagi is positioned in a space between the paternal parent and the authoritative deity as he congratulates the young man, handing him the symbols and tools of a matai. In this affirmation of his new status, Tuilagi and Nafanua's voices join those of the local villagers as they urge Naatapuitema into battle with the galu afi. In his authoritative, deified form, Tuilagi returns in the finale to celebrate Naatapuitema as the young man who is elevated to the position of a sacred star.

THE NATURE AND EXPERIENCE OF KONISETI

Precedents and features

Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star is formatted as a contemporary koniseti.

Although koniseti may be seen as a distinctive Samoan phenomenon, the form resonates with a number of traditional, performative storytelling practices recorded throughout the Pacific. Distinctive among these are the Arioi, who

were performers associated with the Society Islands at the time of missionary contact (Claessen, 2000). Cook (1967, p. 218) notes that these performers maintained “an obligation to childlessness”. Cowell (2013, p. 43) refers to them as a “Tahitian class of professional entertainers, musicians, and dancers [...] who flourished in traditional Tahitian society prior to their suppression by Protestant missionaries in the early nineteenth century.” Levy (1973, p. 469) notes that “they seemed to represent in some ways a privileged, institutionalized ‘antistructure,’ which violated many of the tabus and proprieties of old Tahiti”. Henry’s (1928, p. 230) detailed account of the Arioi describes them as “scholars and actors” [chosen] “from all ranks of people”. He documents both their “burlesque” costuming and social role where “the actors flattered or ridiculed with impunity people and even priests, from the greatest to the least, and they often did much good in thus causing faults to be corrected” (ibid. p. 240). Cowell notes that these entertainers held the status of “a separate, liminal social category” (2013, p. 44) and Henry records that “in times of war or other trouble, the Arioi were never molested, and they sometimes safely entertained warriors at intervals of respite on the battlefield” (Henry, 1928, p. 241).

Although the cultural practices of performers somewhat affronted the sensibilities of European missionaries, in traditional Tahitian culture, the Arioi were welcomed visitors. Henry (1928) notes that although each of the Society Islands had its own Arioi group, associated with a specific place of worship, these groups also travelled between islands and special buildings on the Society Islands served as guest houses for visits from performers in other communities.

In a 2021 interview with retired Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete, and from information sourced in the diaries of my grandfather, Ete Migi, it appears that there was a related, although different phenomenon in Samoa called a koniseti. The term koniseti, Ete suggests, was a transliteration of the English word concert. It describes an event presented by a party of performers who travelled from village to village on foot. Props and costumes were carried by the cast and, like the Arioi, members of the party were welcomed and hosted in the villages that they visited. However, in Samoa, accommodation was normally with local families rather than in purpose-built houses.

Although these performances may have very old cultural roots, Ete believes that koniseti possibly developed in Samoa around the 1830s with the arrival of the first missionaries from the London Missionary Society. He also suggests a possible connection between koniseti and Church activities associated with the lotu-tamaiti. He recalls attending koniseti in the 1940s but observes that they went into decline around the time that radio and television became pervasive in Samoan villages. He also suggests that the arrival of cinemas may also have contributed to the decline of these performances.

¹⁰⁴ Literally translated as 'Children's church', White Sunday is a national holiday that falls on the second Sunday of October in Samoa. It is marked by special programmes during church services that typically include scriptural recitations, re-enactments of biblical stories and dance performances.

Although Ete draws a correlation between koniseti and the tala lotu tamaiti (*White Sunday festivities*)¹⁰⁴ organised by pastors in Samoan churches, the content of koniseti performances was distinguishable because it was not based on biblical stories. Instead, koniseti provided a performance realm for secular stories and those associated with traditional Samoan ideas.

When these concerts toured villages they were financed by donations from the audience. They featured singing, dancing, costumes and rehearsed scripts that were used to deliver a central narrative that normally contained a moral theme and often, a gafa o Samoa (*genealogy of Samoa*). Structurally, koniseti tended to have a single narrator, and music played when performers entered. Ete recalls that such works were composed by:

... fai-koniseti (*people who specialised in creating the concert*). They wrote the story, script, music, lyrics, and dialogue. It was like an opera, where they would sing what they were trying to say. There was mix of forms of performing arts. (Ete, personal communication, March 22, 2021)

Last century Ete's father, Ete Migi, was a well-known producer and composer of koniseti. Although he created a considerable body of original work, it appears that he also rehearsed other people's koniseti. When creating his own concerts, he would compose the narrative, then select performers and rehearse them. Their performances could be accompanied by a range of instruments including guitars, ukulele, fala (*rolled mats*), pū (*conch shells*), accordions, mandolins, pump organs and selo.

Naatapuilea - The Sacred Star as a contemporary koniseti

My composition references specific features of this traditional form. In creating the work I adopt the role of fai-koniseti, conceiving, composing, auditioning and rehearsing a staged performance. Like traditional koniseti, my story follows a linear narrative that reflects on a 'moral' issue; (leadership in the face of environmental destruction). The koniseti is designed with a small live cast and extensive pre-recorded material so, like its traditional inspiration, the performance can tour relatively easily. The work is distinguished by an interweaving of group singing, character solos, dancing, costumes, visual imagery, sound design, references to gafa o Samoa (*genealogy of Samoa*) and the narrative exploration of several traditional Samoan values. Although in my work narration is distributed across performers, musical accompaniment introduces and surrounds them and a range of traditional Samoan and contemporary instruments accompany their performances.

¹⁰⁵ Tcherkzoff (2000) suggests that the title matai may be Proto-Polynesian but he proposes that the attributed meaning of ‘chief’ is distinctively Samoan.

¹⁰⁶ Tcherkzoff notes that since the 1970s, in the State of Western Samoa, governmental decisions began “to abolish some privileges of the matai at the level of national politics” (2000, p. 151). He also suggests that an assumed equivalence equivalence between Fa’ aSamoa and Fa’ amatai may have been less true for earlier periods” (ibid.).

¹⁰⁷ The term ali’i title is normally said in English by Samoans.

TULAFALÉ AND THE USE OF FA’ATUSATUSAGA

Given my role as a fai-koniseti (composer, director) of the work, it is also useful to consider the concept of the tulafale (*a talking chief or orator, who composes and delivers ceremonial speeches*). The orator is associated with a specific form of matai status and such leaders fulfil a complex and respected role in Samoan society (Tcherkzoff, 2000).

To understand the complexity of this role we might briefly consider the overall concept of the matai in Samoan culture. According to Lutali and Stewart (1974), the word ‘matai’ is often translated by non-Samoans as ‘Chief’, but they suggest a more accurate synonym might be ‘leader’.¹⁰⁵ They argue that the word may have originated from the combined Samoan words mata (*eye*) and iai (*to or toward*), and propose that matai might literally mean, someone who looks towards or up to another. However, Tcherkzoff (2000, p. 151) suggests the term might be more effectively associated with “the best through personal skills’, a ‘master’ in a craft activity.” These opposing views are indicative of diverse discourse around the nature of the title.

As a “titled head” of an aiga (*a Samoan extended family*), the matai is responsible to “a group of people who co-operate by preserving the name of a founding ancestor and who respect all the ritual obligations associated to this name” (ibid.). Tcherkzoff notes that in Western literature these names were called titles, “because, in each extended family, this founding name is preserved and given to one member of the family at each generation” (ibid.). This person he notes, then became the matai of the aiga. Contemporary Samoans often use the term suafo matai (literally matai names), whereas English speaking Samoans more commonly use the expression matai titles.

In Samoan life, the matai has considerable influence and both Lutali and Stewart (1974) and Huffer and So’o, (2005) suggest that fa’amatai (*the way of the chiefs*) may be considered one of the most important roles in the fa’asamoa (*the Samoan way of life*). Huffer and So’o also observe that, although changes have occurred in the role and nature of the matai, in contemporary Samoan society this institution “continues to play a pivotal role in governance” (2005, p. 312).¹⁰⁶ This noted, they also observe that associated principles underpinning the matai role like “pule (*authority, power*); soālaupule (*joint decision making*); ‘autasi (*consensus*) alofa (*love, compassion, care*); and fa’aaloalo (*respect*)” (ibid.) have often been missing from deeper considerations of the role.

Tcherkzoff notes that technically, a matai title can be of two types: an ali’i title or a tulafale title.¹⁰⁷

He says:

An 'ali'i title' implies that the founding ancestor was a chief who enjoyed the prerogatives restricted to the ali'i, such as the right to have his own "kava name"... and several other specific rights, all denied to a tulafale. In Western writings, ali'i were usually referred to as "chiefs" or "high chiefs" and the tulafale as "orators". (Tcherkzoff, 2000, p. 152)

My matai title, Tuilagi is associated with the role of the tulafale (*orator*). In other words, I am a person who bears the responsibility of a 'speaking chief', whose role includes communicating in articulate and elegant ways, ideas and principles relevant to Samoan life and understanding. The quality of my communication is expected to reflect my respect for, and contribution to, my family and my community. Being raised in New Zealand in a family rich in Samoan culture and active in the Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano I Samoa (EFKS) (*the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa in Newtown*), my tulafale role has been resourced by diverse influences, including my respect for traditional oratory and my experience as a contemporary composer and choirmaster. From this position I understand that my journey has been different to many conventional orators. I am cognisant that it will take many years to attain the elegance and subtlety of many traditional tulafale whose speaking is steeped in subtle knowledge and allusion. I present myself humbly before them, respectful of the complexity of their accrued artistry and experience.

However, as a contemporary tulafale I am also encouraged by emerging discourses surrounding the role. I am aware that in drawing on Hereniko and Schwartz's (1999) proposal in *Four Writers and One Critic*, Kihleng and Teaiwa have suggested that perhaps contemporary practitioners like film makers and literary critics in the Pacific "should think of themselves as 'talking chiefs' for the region's writers and literatures" (Kihleng & Teaiwa 2012, p. 437).

They state:

We want to take up the challenge of thinking through a talking chief's privileges and responsibilities - not so much as literary or film critics, but as creative writers and performers ourselves - and we wonder, does the Pacific need more talking chiefs? (ibid.)

I am positioned between their view and a traditional appreciation of the inherited responsibilities of a chiefly title. I respect the role of the tulafale as

¹⁰⁸ Tamasese's *The Orator/O Le Tulafale* tells the story about the outcast family of a dwarf, his wife and her teenage daughter. In the narrative the protagonist struggles to overcome his fears to become a talking chief so he can save his family and land.

¹⁰⁹ Given these circumstances I have taken the liberty of accompanying the performed work with a programme written in both Samoan and English that provides translations and explanations in addition to a synopsis of the narrative.

¹¹⁰ Muaiava and Suaalii-Sauni's analysis forms part of Kihleng and Teaiwa's (2012) article, *The Orator/O Le Tulafale*.

something bestowed that carries distinct responsibilities, but I also honour the richness of contemporary cultural voicing that has provided both Samoan and Papālagi (*non-Samoan*) cultures with resonant insights into the grace and beauty of Samoan thought. I refer here to the work of creative practitioners like Albert Wendt, Sia Figiel and Tusi Tamasese, who Kihleng and Teaiwa (2012, p. 437) suggest have:

... taken representations of Sāmoa far beyond the vulgar objectifications of the Mead/Freeman controversy and, most importantly, have done it with the alofa/aroa/aloha/loloma/tangira/limpoak that Wendt [in *Towards a New Oceania*, 1976] deemed imperative for Pacific people's sovereignty over our own intellectual pursuits.

Kihleng and Teaiwa (2012, p. 438) suggest that "to enter into creative cultural production in the Pacific is to become part of a genealogy of thought and imagination." In discussing Tusi Tamasese's 'giving voice' in his feature film *The Orator/O Le Tulafale* (2011),¹⁰⁸ Richard acknowledges the challenge that he, as a contemporary Samoan artist, faces when having to navigate "the distinction between Samoan and non-Samoan audiences in revealing and delivering what [...] are 'universal themes of love, honour and courage'" (2013, p. 101). While these themes she notes are transferable, I am aware that one also has to speak to, and for, a diversifying Samoan world that spans geographies and changing forms of cultural expression.¹⁰⁹ This is a world that draws into itself, ancient traditions and contemporary technologies; subtle narratives and cosmic allusions and the most pressing contemporary social, political and environmental concerns.

In their discussion of Tamasese's *The Orator/O Le Tulafale* (2011), Kihleng and Teaiwa consider how such expression might appear. They note that in his work, the writer/director "simultaneously comforts and challenges the Sāmoan audience - taking us on a provocative, non-judgmental excursion into the icons, nuances, and metaphors of Sāmoa's history and society and into Sāmoan ways of feeling and thinking" (2012, p. 438).

Tamasese's work takes us on a traditional and contemporary journey through the medium of film. His artistic voice is rich in allusion and nuance and he is cognisant of a Samoan audience that is "fascinated by the play between the physical and metaphysical, the sacred and profane, the bidden and forbidden" (Muaiava & Suaalii-Sauni, 2012, p. 440).¹¹⁰ Indeed, Kihleng and Teaiwa (2012) observe that Tamasese's work reveals a repertoire, allusiveness and cultural logic that draws heavily on the nature of the tulafali.

¹¹¹ See Enari (2002, p. 21).

Sjölund (2013, p.1), noting the film’s themes of “courage, love, honour, as well as hypocrisy, violence, and discrimination,” suggests that although the work portrayed an “essentialist view of Fa’a Samoa, in particular the values of the Samoan culture, and how those values should be lived”, it also engaged with a progressive and inclusive sense of Samoan identity. Significantly, she noted that following the film’s release there were:

... significant discussions within the Samoan community on Facebook about Samoan identity and definition of Samoanness and many of those discussions centred on how the film teaches different aspects of Fa’a Samoa and the importance for Samoans living outside Samoa watch the movie to learn about the culture. At the same time, there were allusions in the comments about belonging to two cultures along with how the film could possibly help with this dilemma. The implication was that many Samoans are negotiating their Samoanness in the communities they live in around the world. (ibid., p. 67)

In *Naatapuilea – The Sacred Star*, I give voice to principles through the creation of a fictional work that references certain conventions of oratory. The koniseti reflects upon specific historical, environmental, cosmological and mythological ideas. However, these ideas are interpreted through the lens of a matai who must take responsibility for, and make clear, principles and values including responsibility to the environment and people such as alofa (*love*), tautua (*service*) and fa’aaloalo (*respect*). These wider integrations are supported by specific references to lauga within the work.

Instances of lauga in Naatapuilea – The Sacred Star

The koniseti contains an introduction composed and delivered in Samoan as a formally structured lauga. The structure of this address draws on both Duranti’s 1983 analysis and the structure suggested by Lupematesila Kaio in 2021. As such it comprises the following elements:

- A Kava (‘Ava)
- A thanksgiving to God (Fa’afetai i le Atua)
- Mornings (Taeāo)¹¹¹
- The dignity of the Sacred Names (Pa’ia)
- A formal Greeting (Fa’atulouga)
- The agenda of the Fono (Mata’upu o le Fono)
- A clearing of the Sky (Fa’amatafi Lagi).

¹¹² This is a ritual where the roots of the 'ava plant (*L. piper methysticum*) are dried and crushed into a powder, then mixed with water in a wooden bowl called a Tanoa. This drink is usually prepared by the taupou (*daughter of the chief or the daughter of the local pastor*) and then passed around to people in the group.

This address is followed by a presentation in English that offers a synopsis of the the koniseti's story.

Although a formal lauga has been composed for the opening of the koniseti, aspects of lauga also permeate its narrative. Structurally the first act opens with an interpretation of the foafoaga (*creation*), but it extends the formal pre-performance greeting with upu feiloa'i (*additional words of greeting*). Here I use both contemporary and traditional elements because I am addressing an audience from a diverse spectrum that may include traditional Samoan scholars, young Samoans who might not speak Samoan as a first language and palagi (*audience members of European descent*).

Two other instances of lauga convention appear in parts of the performance where the protagonist meets his ancestors. The first occurs in Song 6, Fa'aleagaina, where just before the pe'a, Naatapuitema meets his ancestors. Here, we encounter a very brief excerpt of a lauga fa'afeiloa'i (*a speech of welcome*) that suddenly switches to the sounds of destruction accompanied by vocal references to asphyxiation.

The second instance occurs when Naatapuitema meets his ancestors in Song 10a Taua ma le galu afi (*Battle with the galu afi*). At this point he is struggling to stay alive, and we encounter references to the ritual ava ceremony.¹¹² During this, he enters the realm of his ancestors, with a distinct vocal acknowledgement that he is entering the tenth heaven. This occurs immediately before he sees the spirit of his mother Moana, who reassures him that he will rise again.

The role of fa'atusatusaga (metaphor)

In Samoan culture, the artistic integration of fa'atusatusaga in the lauga of a tulafale signals both authenticity and skill. However, this skill is not expected of an ali'i (*a high chief*) who does not speak. Johnston (2010, p. 7) notes that the lauga of a tulafale involves a form of mastery where the orator:

... must learn legends, proverbs, and orally passed down historical events. Their artful use of language allows them to form arguments, define relationships, and establish and reinforce social values and traditions, as well as to reinforce their own ethos through their eloquent expression.

The role of fa'atusatusaga in Samoan oratory is well documented (Duranti, 1983; Keesing & Keesing, 1956; Schultz, 1949) and in *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star*, there are distinctive instances where metaphors are woven through the fabric of the narrative. Because fa'atusatusaga are rich in allusion and through them an

audience can make connections and delve into associations and corresponding nuances of meaning, three of these metaphors warrant discussion.

The Galu Afi

While in the narrative, galu afi is referred to as a wave of fire (a direct translation), the contemporary name for this phenomenon is a tsunami. The galu afi is more than a physical force; it is a fa'atusatusaga for revenge visited upon human beings because they no longer treat the environment with the care and respect that it needs for survival. Thus, the galu afi represents an angry punishment for neglect and the uncritical pursuit of consumer culture. In the story, it forces people to experience with tragic force, the cost of imbalance and irresponsibility. Physically the fa'atusatusaga appears as lyrics, dance, imagery and sound.

The Sacred Star

The second metaphor, is the Sacred Star. This star is the apotheosis of tautua, the highest manifestation of service. It represents leadership without an ego; leadership that is devoted to shedding light and leadership associated with wisdom rather than power and aggrandisement. In the production, the Sacred Star first surfaces as the name of the story's protagonist Naatapuitema (Naatapuitema means Sacred Star), but it is also the final image we encounter. In this later form, the star represents pure celestial wisdom. In this form the fa'atusatusaga expands to include the idea of eternal hope.

The Tatau

The third metaphor is the tatau. Although acquiring a tattoo may be seen as a physical experience, metaphorically the pe'a refers to resilience, transformation, tautua and sacrifice that are essential for a leader. These qualities enable a matai to cope with stress at multiple levels and to demonstrate that he is capable of struggling to overcome challenge and pain. In the story tatau is a metaphor for Naatapuitema's first transformation from a youth into a leader. (His second transformation will be from a mortal into a celestial being.)

¹¹³ In addition to these, the country has a number of smaller, uninhabited islands.

¹¹⁴ The authors also note that over 80 per cent of Samoa's land and resources is still collectively owned.

Section Two: Compositional and Design Features Evident in *Naatapuilea – The Sacred Star*

Beyond specific Samoan conventions and principles that have proven useful in constructing the narrative of *Naatapuilea – The Sacred Star*, there are a number of other significant influences that have contributed to its design. In this section, I explain these and discuss their origins and treatment.

INTERPRETING SAMOAN ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES

Samoa is a nation in the South Pacific comprising two main islands, Upolu and Savaii.¹¹³ Being tropical, the islands' climate features high rainfall and humidity and, because of its topography and environment, Samoa is subjected to deforestation, soil erosion and overfishing (Latai-Niusulu, Binns & Nel, 2019).

Latai-Niusulu et al. (2019) suggest that Samoans have a heightened awareness of climate change and are cognisant of changes in temperature, longer dry spells, shorter periods of rainfall, more damaging winds, and rises in sea level that have coincided with El Niño periods. The authors note distinctive ways that Samoan villagers have developed approaches to these changes that include “tighter social connections, new food supplies and infrastructural development and, in some cases, village relocation”(Latai-Niusulu et al. 2019, para. 8). The authors argue that fundamental to these changes is Samoa's closely-knit village structure, with its fono (*village council*) comprising matai from extended family units, which result in villagers being heavily represented in local decision-making. They note that village communities use regular evening prayer meetings to share information and reinforce social networks. These meetings, the authors' suggest, reinforce an approach where Samoans tend to engage in collaborative action against climate change.¹¹⁴

Latai-Niusulu et al. (2019) also note that fa'amatai (*the chiefly system*) has been integral to adapting to change for over 200 years, and in contemporary Samoan society, faamatai:

... is now characterized by the multi-layered arrangement of extended families, villages and churches, as well as government and external agencies, which has helped facilitate responses to climate events and climate change and strengthened local awareness and the capacity to anticipate and plan for future change. (Latai-Niusulu et al., 2019, p. 55)

In an interview conducted for this thesis in 2021, the matai Lupematesila Kaio suggested that climate change is one of the most significant issues facing contemporary Samoan society and as a consequence, it is the responsibility of matai to address the situation. He noted that although much of the problem may be attributed to gas emissions from larger nations, the consequences will be lethal to nations like Samoa and the nation “needs to be protected” (Kaio, personal communication April 13, 2021).

His concerns are echoed by a number of researchers. At the 2017 United Nations Climate Change Conference it was noted that:

The Pacific Islands’ contribution to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is negligible, but, like other Small Island Developing States, they suffer disproportionately the effects of global warming, (and) ... as a group may be the planet’s most vulnerable nations to the effects of climate change, with some facing possible obliteration: (COP, 2017, p. 1)

Currently, Samoa experiences increasing temperatures. According to the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (ABM) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), temperature records from Pacific island observation stations indicate significant levels of warming over the past 50 years, with trends mostly between 0.08 C and 0.20C each decade. In addition, water temperatures are increasing by approximately 0.08 C per decade (Latai-Niusulu et al., 2019).

Compounding these issues, both the ABM and the CSIRO (2011), note that in the 40 years between 1970 and 2010, tropical cyclones have also increased, especially those occurring in El Niño years, which average 16 cyclones per season. These weather events have resulted in significant reef damage and currently the sea level around Samoa is projected to rise between 5 and 15 cm by 2030, and by 2090 it may have risen by as much as 59 cm (ABM & CSIRO, 2011, pp 185-98).

Ohde and Hossain (2004) also indicate a significant impact on fishing and the decreased calcification in coral resulting from the increasing acidification of Samoa’s oceans. Latai-Niusulu et al. (2019) note that Samoan community respondents currently believe that rising sea levels, combined with the construction of sea walls and the impact of increasing tourism, are having an adverse effect on traditional coastal use, resulting in storm surges during cyclones and the increasing level of king tides that are intensifying levels of coastal erosion.

Artistic interpretation

There is a beautiful song, *Samoa Matalasi*, that I remember from my childhood. It is sung by many Samoans and it responds to the idea of a jewel-like, tropical paradise that is their homeland. Indicative of its passionate association with the beauty of land are the following lines from its first verse and chorus:

La'u Samoa, e matalasi	<i>My Samoa, it is amazing,</i>
Si'osi'omia e le sami	<i>You are surrounded by the ocean</i>
Atu mauga lanu lau 'ava	<i>Your mountains are colourful mountains,</i>
E feoa'i fiafia o tagata	<i>People travel happily</i>
La'u Samoa la'u Samoa ea	<i>My Samoa. my Samoa</i>
Le Atua e o lou fa'avae e moni lea	<i>The head of your heavenly kingdom</i>
Le Ao o lou Malo tali'ilagi	<i>Samoa the unified kingdom</i>
Samoa ea i Malo aufa'atasi.	<i>My Samoa is my Samoa.</i>

Divine or euphoric associations between Samoa and a tropical paradise can be evidenced in texts as diverse as the letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, the photography of John Davis and Frances Hubbard Flaherty and the anthropological writing of Margaret Mead. Yet, Samoa exists in a physical world and it faces the consequences of environmental damage and the impacts of both local and global decision making.

In Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star, I have responded to concerns about environmental damage and the nature of leadership and collective responsibility. Like Latai-Niusulu et al. (2019), I perceive a close association between culture and how, as Samoans, we might address climate change and environmental phenomena that impact on ordinary people's lives. In the *koniseti* I construct land as contemporary but under threat from a lack of responsibility and I draw into the creation of the work, specific references to disruption. Two of these warrant discussion.

Global warming and climate change – the galu afi (*tsunami*)

In Song 1C '*Deterioration*' I combine my concerns about the vulnerability of people in the face of environmental disasters and an allegorical event inspired by the tsunami that struck Samoa on September 29, 2009 at 17:48:11 UTC.

The tsunami resulted in a 76 mm rise in sea levels near its epicentre and the waves, reaching inland over 700 metres from the coastline, measured 14 metres above the mean sea level (Field, 2009). In an interview at the time a local villager, Karen Niumata stated, "We saw the reef suddenly, and we saw all the rocks were

shiny, and then the wave filled the sky ... it reached the sky, oh my god, we ran. We thought we would die”.

Samoa evacuated people from its capital city of Apia but the hardest hit areas were Fagaloa Bay, on the east coast of Upolu and villages along the southern coast of the island. The disaster caused landslides near Solosolo and devastation to plantations near Apia (Sagapolutele, 2009). The wave resulted in the deaths of more than 160 Samoans (Giovanni & Alessandro, 2012) and by October 2, 2009, an estimated 3000 people were homeless and seeking refuge in shelters. In remembrance, the Samoan people held a national funeral at Apia Park for the nation’s victims on the October 8, 2009.

In Samoan, a tsunami, Millar (2012) notes, is sometimes called a *galu afi* and literally translated the words refer to a Wave of Fire. Early Samoans used the term when explaining to foreigners why they did not live on the coast. She states:

The term conjures images of a scarred shore, all vegetation turned brown with the deadening salt water. A wave that moves like no other. With impossible speed and ferocity. Devastating everything in its path. Before Sept 29/09, most Samoans had not heard of a ‘*galu afi*’. But today, many survivors of the tsunami will tell you that yes, this is what our ancestors must have been speaking of. (Millar 2012, para. 11).

The Samoan author Lani Wendt-Young noted a similar definition in a New Zealand Herald article on her book *Pacific Tsunami: Galu Afi*. Here, she explained that the Samoan people understood the *galu afi* as “a beast that jumped out of the sea and crept towards us ... It growled like a demon ... It was a thief that came to steal us ... It moved like fire over the land” (as cited in Tapaleao, 2010, para. 6).

The Galu Afi

The *galu afi* appears in the opening Act 1 in Song 1C *Deterioration* and in Act 3 in song 10a *Battle the Galu Afi*. It represents the apotheosis of terror, the ultimate natural and esoteric disaster that brings all physical things to a state of annihilation.

In Song 1C *Deterioration* we encounter the *galu afi* in a historical manifestation. Here, the tsunami wreaks havoc upon the Vā Tapuā. It results in the temporary destruction of the sacred space and it causes the death of the seven-year old Naatapuītea’s mother Moana.

In interpreting the cataclysm, I open the sequence with traditional Pacific

¹¹⁵ Traditional narratives suggest that the fa'ataupati (*slap-dance*) was developed in the 19th century in Samoa and it interprets a person trying to protect their body. It is traditionally performed by a group of men who slap their bodies, clap their hands and stomp their feet in a synchronised manner. The performance requires dexterity, strength and astute timing. The fa'ataupati is said to be the only dance in Samoa that traditionally does not require instrumental accompaniment.

drumming that begins in a slow tempo but gradually increases and eventually crashes towards a frenzy of rushing water and waves that Wendt-Young (2010) describes as a “growling demon”. Musically, the sea bursts forth as fire; as a deathly salt water assault that moves with impossible speed and ferocity, destroying everything in its path (Millar, 2012).

Here, the galu afi is an agent that builds as a growling, thunderous sound that suddenly pounces at the end of the choral piece, with the drums pronouncing its accentuated hits, and the screaming and wailing of the villagers signifying the tragedy wreaked on the Vā Tapuia. From the devastation we segue into the emotional scene of Naatapuitema holding his mother in her dying moments as he sings acapella. This fall into pathos creates a juxtaposition; a stark aftermath that references the bewilderment and grief that surfaced in the news media in 2009 as Samoans and the world sought to make sense of the death and destruction.

We encounter the galu afi again in Act 3, Song 10a, when Naatapuitema prepares to battle the same demon that killed his mother. This event follows Naatapuitema's initiation into manhood and later training by Tuilagi and Nafanua. In this song, the galu afi is represented by eight Samoan performers who siva (dance) using the fa'ataupati (*slap-dance*).¹¹⁵ This traditional body-percussive performance is animated and enhanced by the addition of drums. This creates a sense of increasing aggression and rhythm that builds cumulatively to an annihilating force. Through it we experience the intensity of the battle as we see and hear the percussive ‘hits’ from the wave. Here the galu afi is physical and fast, its speed represented by the style, tempo and complexity of the rhythmic beat. It has a fiery edge, as well as a demon-like possessiveness that is incrementally intensified within the low-chanting from the slap-dancers as they build their assault on Naatapuitema.

As the battle progresses, the tempo and instrumentation intensify, as does the vocalisation and body percussion. These are mixed with sounds of rushing waves and fire that merge into synthesised sweeping ‘hits’ from the music. Sonically, these mark the blows that Naatapuitema experiences in the assault. The accumulation of ‘hits’ injures him severely and he is left exhausted and near death.

Epidemics

The second significant manifestation of disruption draws its inspiration from diseases that have ravaged Samoa (particularly post-colonisation).

Strangely, when I began writing this chapter it was July 2020 and I was in a managed isolation (quarantine) facility in Auckland, New Zealand. My family and I were inhabiting a two room hotel suite and the building was guarded by

116 Some observers have suggested a direct link between the epidemic and the origins of the Mau movement. Tomkins believes “that the epidemic instilled a deep-seated and ongoing mistrust of the New Zealand administration” (1992, p. 194) and Boyd suggests that the situation in Samoa “resembled a dormant but not extinct volcano liable to erupt at the slightest pretext” (1969, p. 123).

police and security officers. We stayed there for 14 days and we needed to test negative for the COVID-19 virus before we could be released into the community. At this time, Samoa has just extended its COVID-19 State of Emergency for an additional month. The Prime Minister, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, had announced that for so long as there existed a threat of the virus reaching Samoa, the country’s borders would remain closed. This decision took a country that had no cases of the virus into an unprecedented four month lockdown.

On the surface this may have seemed a little excessive but, when placed in a historical context, it was perhaps understandable. Samoa has suffered profoundly as a result of global diseases and perhaps the most devastating of these was the Influenza epidemic of 1918-19, that Tomkins (1992) ranks second only to the 14th century plague the Black Death in epidemic severity. She notes that when the 1918-19 Influenza epidemic devastated the Pacific, no afflicted island lost less than 5% of its population. However, Western Samoa lost 22% of its population within a fortnight. Pirie (1972) records that the disease killed 30% of adult men, 22% of women and 10% of all children in Samoa, and losses were disproportionately spread with 45% of matai (*titled members of an aiga*) dying, and only six of the country’s 30 faipule (*councillors*) surviving. Shanks (2016) notes that this loss of leadership was deeply destabilising and the blame is often pointed at the New Zealand administration under the questionable leadership of Colonel Robert Logan, who allowed the epidemic to enter Samoa and refused any assistance from the American navy that was camped in American Samoa at the time (Condliffe, 1930). Following the epidemic and the dissatisfaction expressed over New Zealand’s rule of the Islands, the emerging nationalist movement of the 1920s (Mau) gathered momentum.¹¹⁶

The second influence on my work was the outbreak of measles in Samoa in October 2019. This incident was attributed to multiple factors, one being the negligence of later incarcerated nurses whose malpractice resulted in the death of two babies. By January 6, 2020, the Samoan Bureau of Statistics declared that there were over 5,700 cases of measles in the country and 83 deaths (out of a population of 200,874). Over 3% of the population was infected (Government of Samoa National Emergency update Press Release December 2019). The cause of the outbreak was also partly attributed to declining vaccination rates that had decreased from 74% in 2017 to 31–34% in 2018.

In an effort to curb the spread of the disease, on November 17, a state of emergency was declared and schools across the country were closed and vaccination was made compulsory. By December, the government had imposed further controls by imposing a curfew and cancelling all public gatherings. In an attempt to make visible the potential of the disease, all unvaccinated families

¹¹⁷ The word aiga refers not only one's immediate family, but also to a union of families, even those who (although not related) fall under the care and duty of the family.

were required to display a red flag or cloth in front of their homes so others could be alerted. Kwai (2019) notes that some of these families added messages like “Help!” or “I want to live!”

The 2019 measles outbreak and the 1918-19 influenza epidemic form part of a long and troubled history of infectious diseases that have devastated Samoa following European colonisation. Other instances have included the 1849 whooping cough epidemic, earlier influenza epidemics in 1837 and 1847 and the 1891 ‘Great epidemic of Fiva’.

Artistic interpretation of epidemics

The concept of disruption resulting from disease is referenced in Act 2, Song 6 *Destruction*. In this section of the narrative, Naatapuitema meets his ancestors and is shown how the Vā Tapuia is collapsing into decay. He is alerted to how this decay will result not only in the death of the present but also the future and, ultimately, the erasure of his ancestors, including his mother.

I composed the destruction of the Vā Tapuia using a blend of instrumental and vocal chants and environmental sounds like thunder, ocean waves, wind and torrential rain. Traditional Samoan instruments such as log drums and fala were counterpointed by the sounds of industrial technology to create an unsettled cacophony.

Within this maelstrom, disease surfaces as the sound of suffocation and coughing. These were the symptoms of the second wave of the influenza epidemic that infected Samoa in 1919. This iteration of the illness was extremely contagious and victims sometimes died within hours of developing symptoms. The disease was distinguished by a propensity for the skin to turn blue and the victim's lungs to fill with fluid that resulted in suffocation (Rice, 2005). The sounds of a shortness of breath also refer to the symptoms of measles that include fever, rashes, dry coughs and inflamed eyes (in addition to other health complications). Caught in the convolution of sounds of gasping, we also hear the wailing of bereft aiga (*families*).¹¹⁷

At the outset of this piece, the instrumentation is sparse with only the distraught vocal sounds and the sporadic pulsating beat of the bass drum, indicating the uncertainty and crisis taking place. As the deity Tuilagi continues to speak to Naatapuitema, we hear the interjection of a low, double bass pad when he proclaims:

‘Na latou le va’aia fa’alelei le Vā Tapuia!
(*They did not look after Vā Tapuia!*) .

¹¹⁸ The examination performance will be in Mangare, South Auckland, so the performers will be local. However, I am currently in discussions with directors of other New Zealand festivals, who anticipate staging the work. In each instance, the koniseti will integrate local talent, very similar to what was mentioned by Ete and Ete when they recalled as children, attending koniseti that visited their local villages. (Ete, R. & Ete, F. personal communication August 6, 2018)

¹¹⁹ Under Level 2, people can “socialise in groups of up to 100, [...] sport, cultural and recreation activities are allowed, subject to conditions on gatherings, record keeping, and – where practical – physical distancing. [...] Provisions for contact tracing are implemented. See New Zealand COVID-19 Alert Levels Summary: <https://covid19.govt.nz/assets/resources/tables/COVID-19-alert-levels-summary.pdf>

This percussion device adds a sense of anticipation and tension and builds the intensity of the narrative as Naatapuitema makes his transition into the underground world of Pulu.

KONISETI PRODUCTION

Having considered environmental issues impacting on the design of Naatapuitema-The Sacred Star, it is useful to briefly discuss features evident in the production, composition, and sound design of the work that have discernible similarities to and differences from, traditional Samoan koniseti.

Portability

First, like traditional koniseti, the performance is designed for transferability. According to Ete (2021), Koniseti in the 1940s travelled between villages, being set up, performed and disassembled quickly. Likewise *Naatapuitema-The Sacred Star* is designed as a ‘portable’ performance. Although the work is comparatively complex, most of the music and sound mix is pre-recorded. This lowers costs associated with production, staging, travel and accommodation. This is because the pre-recorded and mixed soundtrack reduces both the number of live performers and the instruments that need to be transported between venues. The soundtrack remains consistent, but new performers can be brought into each iteration of the work, so the koniseti is able to include and promote the talents of local singers and musicians.¹¹⁸

Although traditional Samoan koniseti were performed in open air settings, where a temporary stage was often assembled, my work is designed for a discrete interior that can be blacked out so lighting can be employed to create contexts for narrative events. This said, the design does not require an elaborate lighting rig and costuming is minimal with emphasis being afforded to the beauty of the tatau (pe’a and malu) on the bodies of the key soloists. Thus, tatau is considered as la’ei (clothing).

COVID-19 provisions

Given the period of COVID, during which the koniseti has been completed, the production has allowed for rehearsal and performance inside the regulations of the New Zealand Government’s Level 2 Public Health and Social Measures.¹¹⁹ By extension, the staged performance is designed to operate inside the regulations pertaining to Level 1. For the performance, contact tracing provisions are planned to be in place and QR codes issued by the NZ Government will be displayed in the theatre to enable use of the NZ COVID Tracer App. Performers will be required to self-isolate if they experience any influenza symptoms.

- ¹²⁰ The organisers of the International Festival of the Arts and the Auckland Festival have proposed performances using a mass choir of up to 500 singers and full live orchestra.
- ¹²¹ Such features are evident in episodes like Song 10a *Taua Ma le Galu Afi* where they contribute to the climax of the koniseti.
- ¹²² I use Logic Pro X 10.4.8 to convert compositions on a musical keyboard into digital information that is then applied to virtual instruments.
- ¹²³ The use of live instruments in this scene is important because, with the inclusion of the soloists, it brings the mana or agaga (spirit) of the physicality that literally resonates and vibrates within the listener. The *vā* then, becomes a space that is both physical and non-physical; it is immediately present but also something beyond this.

Because rehearsals are functioning under the provisions of Level 2, the examination version of the koniseti will be a scaled down performance.¹²⁰

Instrumentation

Like a traditional koniseti, the performance features live instrumentation, including *fala* (*rolled mats*) and *patē* (*log drums*). The ‘liveness’ of these instruments complements vocal and body-percussive performances like the *choo susū* (*vocal cry*), vocal chants and the *fataupati* (*slap-dance*). In the koniseti, the unmediated nature of these live elements rises to prominence in battle scenes, rallying battle cries, and at times when people are called together.¹²¹

Ete (2021) notes, that traditional koniseti were distinctive in their blending of indigenous and contemporary instruments including “guitar, ukulele, *fala*, *pū* (conch), accordions, mandolin, *selo* and pump organs” (Ete, R., personal communication March 2, 2021). In the same manner, *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star* complements traditional Samoan instrumentation with a range of contemporary musical devices including virtual brass, strings and percussion instruments that have been processed through Logic Pro X 10.4.8 software. Supporting this digital instrumentation are pre-recordings of live performances of *patē*, *pa’u* and certain vocals, primarily the choruses. This pre-recorded material forms a sonic texture against which live instrumentation (*patē*, *pa’u* and *fala*) and the performances of the main soloists will be delivered.

Sound design

Traditional Samoan koniseti were performed in the open air. Thus, they utilised the natural sound of the environment, the *malae* (*open field*).

However, *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star* traverses both physical and esoteric environments. Because the narrative is mythological it moves through primordial heavens, storms as *fa’atusatusaga* (metaphors), underground realms of pain and transition, and the gasping decay of physical worlds. Because the work is designed to be performed in relatively sound-neutral environments, like auditoriums or event centres, I am able to create complex interpretations of *fa’atusatusaga* and environments through pre-recorded sound design.¹²²

Evidence of this is discernible in the opening work Song 1 *Foafoga*. As the creation story, this aural world is defined by atmospheric sounds fused with live log drums. The pre-recorded sound design in this work interprets the heavens as a timeless texture that is beyond physical definition. The soundscape provides a nebulous, abstract, sonic environment for something physical. In front of this, we encounter the live presence of the singers and instrumentation.¹²³

¹²⁴ It is significant to note here that the last five classical Lexus Song Quest (formally known as the Mobil Song Quest winners since 2009), have all been of Samoan heritage. These include:

2009 Aivale Cole
2012 Amitai Pati
2014 Isabella Moore
2016 Benson Wilson
2018 Joel Amosa.

[The award was not held in 2020 because of COVID restrictions]<https://www.songquest.nz/about/>

¹²⁵ Budden (2021) observes that the number of acts in an opera may vary between one and five. He notes that in early operas, like the French *tragédie lyrique*, five were common. Three act structures however, became more commonly associated with 18th century comic and serious Italian operas. (Comic operas rarely had more than three acts).

¹²⁶ Members of these groups are predominantly of Samoan or wider Pacific ethnicities.

Contemporisation

Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star is a contemporary Samoan work that employs indigenous instrumentation and virtual, western orchestral instruments. The work speaks about, and to, a contemporary world. While the composition draws on certain traditional conventions of Samoan performance, it also pays homage to Samoan's significant contribution to, and engagement with, contemporary opera.¹²⁴ Conventions evident in opera that permeate the *koniseti* include the use of the 'bel canto' western classical style of singing, and the Aria and Recitative format. The narrative's three act structure is also drawn from opera.¹²⁵ Like opera, I use orchestral instrumentation to elevate and intensify emotion. This intensity is at times very dramatic because it alludes to the passion and intensity of traditional Samoan performances like the *poula* dance and ritual, the viscosity of which proved so problematic for the early anthropologists, missionaries, and diplomats (Churchward, 1887; Mead, 1943; Turner, 1861; Williams, 1842).

While there is evidence of operatic conventions in the work, *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star* also exists in a highly mediated, storytelling world. *Fāgogo* (storytelling) for contemporary Samoans is no longer defined by Charlott's (1988) fixed format. Stories appear on mobile tablets, on television, iphones, and cinematic screens. They may take the form of podcasts, narrative music videos or Youtube postings that draw upon contemporary structures and modes of discourse. Yet when I reflect back on Fereni Pepe Ete's (2021) discussion of her grandmother's *fāgogo*, where village children were huddled under mosquito nets listening to stories woven in the night by a single storyteller who drew ancestry and mythology together, I am reminded that *fāgogo* is a condition of knowledge transfer. It can have many structures. Indeed, *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star* borrows structural conventions from diverse musical forms, including hymns and pop music, where verses, choruses and bridges can be commonplace. But it is the concern with mythologies, populated by Samoan deities and characters who navigate the physical and non-physical world that connects past and present. This is what defines my work as *fāgogo* in the form of a *koniseti*.

Samoan choral influences

Influencing my practice as a *fai-koniseti*, is my experience working with contemporary performance. I encounter influences in New Zealand music organisations like the Choral Federation, through its annual Big Sing Choral Festival and I hear young Samoan and Pacific musicians surfacing in orchestral ensembles like Virtuoso Strings and Systema.¹²⁶

But, behind all of this, I acknowledge the role and influence of Samoan

churches, of all denominations, that devote themselves to developing musical expression and technique. This has led to choral work that combines both Western and distinctively Samoan vocalisations.

Samoan church music is comparatively vigorous and it is distinguished by distinctive harmonies, based on Western choral settings of Usu (*Soprano*), Ouloto (*Alto*), Tena (*Tenor*) and Malū (*Bass*). Teaching is normally done by listening and instruction, rather than through the study of musical scores, although there are exceptions. It is very common in Samoan families that during evening devotions, one will encounter songs sung in harmony. In Samoan villages one can also often hear a distinctive phenomenon when evening devotion occurs, where you can hear improvised hymns simultaneously sung from each family house in full harmony, by all ages, from the youngest child to the elders. This collectiveness, harmonisation and the structural use of verses and choruses, all emanate from Samoan choral music, and all are in evidence in *Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star*.

Samoan church choirs are also used in New Zealand to revitalise and maintain the Samoan language. In reference to this, *Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star* is performed largely in Samoan with explanations embedded in the lauga that opens the work and in programmes provided for the audience. While Samoan is the third most widely spoken language in Aotearoa/New Zealand, not all people of Samoan descent are proficient in the language (New Zealand census, 2018). This is why I composed the work, so it could be performed in Samoan, as an encouragement as well as a challenge.

While much of the work is created using very accessible speech, in certain instances I also adopt the formal variant of the Samoan language that we encounter in oratory or when communicating with elders, guests or people of rank. This is called gagana fa'aaloalo (*dignified language*). Gagana fa'aaloalo often incorporates classical Samoan terms and prose, and is associated with the tulāfale role of an orator chief and with failāuga (*speechmaking*). This formal register is also often associated with ceremonial occasions and the discussion of significant issues.

In addition to language, distinctive features of Samoan singing are referenced throughout *Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star*. For example, the pre-missionary vocalisations that were described by Turner as “nasal and unearthly” (1861, p. 429), surface in Song 1 Fofoaga. Here they draw attention to the ancient and esoteric sounds of the lagi. The same references resurface as vocalisations in Song 8 Manuia lou taoto, where I have incorporated the Samoan hymn Lota Nu'u; that utilises this distinctive form of expression as an aural underscoring of cultural identity.

These traditional vocalisations are integrated with contemporary vocal

¹²⁷ The aligning of Samoan singing with culturally appropriate conducting and presentation is a little discussed issue in New Zealand. Currently the country's premier choirs (like the New Zealand Youth Choir and choirs in certain New Zealand Secondary Schools) use Samoan music that is often arranged by non-Samoan composers. This is then presented for recognition and accolades in international choral competitions. This behaviour can be problematic because the translocation of Samoan music away from the communities that generate it, affords little in terms of reciprocation. Our communities need support and recognition and although I acknowledge that there are very positive aspects to choirs presenting Samoan music, having been a part of both worlds, I believe that we need to be more cognisant of how we support the cultures that generate music, so artistic profiling doesn't become a form of unintentional asset picking.

techniques evident in songs sung by Naatapuitema. This is because Naatapuitema is a New Zealand born Samoan youth. He grew up in a fusion of contemporary cultural influences and although he navigates deeply Samoan, mythological realms in the narrative, to which he is both ancestrally and spiritually connected, he is also culturally somewhat dislocated from them. He was brought up in Wellington, New Zealand. At school he spoke English and much of the music that had been formative in his upbringing was in English. Accordingly, his vocalisation does not have the grace and fluidity evident in the composition of the deities. Instead, his modes of expression draw heavily on musical theatre and contemporary harmonies and melodies, that can be evidenced in Songs 3a O Le Valo'aga and 4b Atali'i.

Finally, a distinctive feature of both Samoan choral performance and *Naatapuitema – The Sacred Star* is the nature of the conductor. Unlike Western counterparts who tend to exercise physical restraint when conducting, many Samoan conductors and I count myself among these, are very 'bodily'. By this I mean we not only mark time, but also openly express emotion and power in the way that we communicate with the performers. I think of this physicality as a form of connection. Here, conducting goes beyond technical precision; it is a communicative bridge between the spirit of the composition and the physicality of the performance. The conductor almost 'dances', and in so doing becomes a conduit of the agaga and the physical energy of what is being performed.¹²⁷

Naatapuitema's story unfolds across a koniseti that references conventional and contemporary structures. He navigates a narrative and compositional spaces in which many of our Samoan youth find themselves. Performatively, ancient fāgogo coexist with the spiritual, choral spaces of churches. But expression and identity for young Samoan people is also shaped by contemporary influences from popular and orchestral music, spoken word poetry, festivals, concerts and mediated storytelling.

This is why contemporary fusion is so evident in the work. The story has to be relevant and relatable to contemporary audiences as well as addressing significant issues. I am reminded in this regard, of Lupematesila's interview on the role of a contemporary Matai, (Lupematesila, personal communication, April, 2018) where he emphasises the imperativeness of matai to addressing the fundamental issues of climate change and aganu'u (*Samoan culture*).

CHAPTER SIX

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Positioned as an artistic, practice-led inquiry, this thesis has asked:

What is the potential for Samoan ways of knowing the land,
genealogy and ritual to resource creative fāgogo (*Samoan
storytelling*)?

The study has been structured as three inter-related parts:

First, in Chapter 4 of the exegesis, I present the creative writing underpinning *Naatapuītea – The Sacred Star*. My Composer’s Vision Statement, Structure/Sound Board and bilingual lyrics form part of the exegesis because the material is central to discussions in subsequent chapters and I conceive creative writing in a thesis as something more integral than an appendix.

The second body of creative practice is the koniseti, *Naatapuītea – The Sacred Star*. This one-hour work integrates, pre-recorded choral material, solo performances, instrumental composition, dance, sound and lighting design. Its examination performance will be on September 7, 2021, at 6.00pm at the Manakau Performing Arts Centre in Auckland, New Zealand.

The third body of work in the thesis is this exegesis. The document draws its nature from the Greek word *exegeisthai*, meaning to interpret, guide or lead (Soanes & Stevenson, 2008, p. 498). In this work, I have provided an explanation

and contextualised discussion of a practice that has sought to make explicit how uniquely Samoan ideas can impact, not only on the content of musical composition, but also on the creative processes that underpin it.

Exegesis Summary

Following the exegesis' introduction, I positioned myself as the researcher so the contributions to knowledge and experience that the thesis proposes might be understood in relation to my professional, artistic and cultural contexts. This chapter also made explicit certain values that I hold as a Samoan practitioner that have shaped the way the study is oriented.

In Chapter 2, I offered a review of contextual knowledge. Written discourses were supplemented with seven interviews (appearing in Appendix 3) and personal communications with Samoan scholars, leaders and artists. The review considered pertinent texts relating to *lauga* (*oration*) and the role and nature of chiefly duties. It then moved into a consideration of *fāgogo* and literature relating to the legend of Nafanua before concluding with a discussion of existing Samoan practitioners working in the field of choral design and expression.

Chapter 3 outlined the research design underpinning the study. It discussed my research paradigm as shaped by both *fa'aSāmoa* and artistic practice. From this discussion I unpacked the cyclic methodology employed and considered how *mai totōnu* and *mai fafo* worked within this. In relating this framework to my practice, I then offered a discussion of methods before closing the chapter with a critique of the methodology.

Chapter 4 contained the body of creative writing emanating from the application of this methodology. This pre-figured Chapter 5, where I offered a critical commentary on the *koniseti* itself. Firstly, I discussed key influences on the work, including *tautua* (*service*), *tatau/malofie* (*tattoo*), the personification of Gods and lineage, the nature and experience of *koniseti*, the nature of a *tulafale* (*speaking chief*), and instances of *fa'atusatusaga* (*metaphor*). This discussion were followed by a consideration of compositional and design features of the *koniseti*. First, I unpacked two contexts; environmental destruction and epidemics. This overview and interpretation was followed by an analysis of features evident in the *koniseti*'s production; specifically its portability, adaptation to the limitations of COVID-19 restrictions, instrumentation, sound design, and contemporisation.

¹²⁸ Both Scrivener (2000) and Ventling (2017) suggest that artistic inquiries might present two kinds of contribution; the first to human knowledge and the second to human experience. Ventling proposes that "these may form the parameters by which artistic research doctoral projects are assessed" (Ventling, 2017, p. 110).

Contributions To The Field

This study proposes five contributions to knowledge or experience.¹²⁸ Given that the research is positioned within artistic practice *and* Samoan epistemologies, its contributions are not confined to a discrete academic field.

First, the thesis offers through practice, a distinctive style of performance, inspired by indigenous Samoan fāgogo and the conventions of a rarely discussed structure called a koniseti. As a contemporary work of Samoan fiction, *Naatapuītea: the Sacred Star*, draws into its storytelling considerations of place, metaphor and the nature of chiefly leadership. As a contemporary re-imagining of the koniseti, it proposes a designed fāgogo that is portable, inclusive of local talent, responsive to traditional and contemporary Samoan music and values, and integrative of indigenous deities and characters who navigate physical and non-physical worlds. Like Tui Atua (2016), I see fāgogo as a culturally nurturing undertaking that can embrace diverse contemporary media, without compromising its inner essence.

Second, because the work engages with physical and metaphorical considerations of climate change, the koniseti offers a uniquely Samoan voicing of contemporary concerns with the environment.

Third, the research proposes a conceptual extension of the tulāfale, such that one might rethink the nature of lauga, and function as a fai-koniseti who integrates traditional chants, fa'atusatusaga, applications of pre-missionary instruments, vocalisations, *and* contemporary Samoan music. The work's creative synthesis demonstrates how these elements can be employed by a contemporary matai and composer, to 'give voice' to pertinent concerns of relevance to Samoan people.

Fourth, the study demonstrates the application of a practice-led Samoan methodological framework, based on principles of fa'aaloalo (*respect*), tautua (*service with integrity*), and attaining mālie (*a certain sweetness*). The cyclic structure moves through phases of fesili (*questioning*), foafoa (*creating*), mai totōnu (*inner reflection*) and mai fafo (*external reflection*). As such, the study demonstrates how an Samoan artistic composer might develop and refine work *inside* indigenous ways of knowing and being.

Finally, the study unpacks a relationship between the process of tatau/ malofie (*tattooing*), and artistic inquiry. It suggests that this deeply traditional ritual might provide cultural insight, resilience, and understanding that can resource and influence creative practice.

- ¹²⁹ The Auckland Arts Festival is an annual event. See: <https://www.aaf.co.nz/>
- ¹³⁰ The New Zealand Festival of the Arts is a multi-arts biennial festival that is based in Wellington. See: <https://www.festival.nz/>
- ¹³¹ This ritual was brought to Samoa by conjoined twin goddesses, Taema and Tilafaigā.
- ¹³² This is the geographical location of Puloa that features in Song 7 'Fa'amālosi'

Further Research

PRACTICE

Naatapuitema - The Sacred Star, is scheduled to begin a journey that will demonstrate its ability to function as a koniseti that is flexible, portable and inclusive of local talent. I am currently in discussions with the organisers of both the 2023 Auckland Festival¹²⁹ and the New Zealand Festival of the Arts in Wellington.¹³⁰ Both organisations anticipate staging the work on a larger scale than the iteration presented for examination, which is currently constrained because of COVID precautions. These festivals are discussing a performance featuring up to 300 singers and a greater presence of live instrumentation. In each instance, the koniseti will adapt to a new environment and integrate local talent. There is also a possibility for the 2023 Christchurch Arts Festival, considering the work for staging in that city.

Once COVID restrictions on travel have been lifted, I intend to present the work at the 13th Pacific Festival of the Arts. This event is scheduled every four years, but due to COVID restrictions, it did not occur in 2020, and it has subsequently been postponed until 2024 in Hawai'i. This festival engages with cross-cultural exchange as a way of uniting the Pacific islands through their respective creative and performing arts.

I am also interested in taking the work to Samoa, so I will approach the Samoan Arts Council that is based at the Alafua Campus of the University of the South Pacific, as well as the National University of Samoa. I have presented large works in Samoa before and staging the koniseti will afford an opportunity for Samoan singers and dancers to shape a story that draws deeply on indigenous concepts and gives voice to instrumentations and vocalisations that were formed in the world in which the work will be performed.

There is also potential to travel the koniseti to Fiji in 2023, to stage an iteration at the University of the South Pacific, in the Japan ICT theatre. Again, I am familiar with this venue, its potentials and its limitations. Here, I will be interested in adapting the koniseti technically and narratively so it embraces a culture closely related to the narrative through the history of Nafanua, the origin of the tataua,¹³¹ the geographical significance of the beach at Totoua¹³² and the distinctive instrumentation of the Fijian meke.

¹³³ See: <http://www.journal.mai.ac.nz/>

¹³⁴ See: <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/qrj>

¹³⁵ For example: Ings, W. (2014). Narcissus and the muse: Supervisory implications of autobiographical, practice-led PhD design theses.

PUBLICATION

In addition to the practical component of the thesis, there is also potential to reconstitute and publish work from the exegesis. Specifically, I am interested in reworking material from Appendix Four and Chapter Five, into an article for *MAI Journal*. *MAI* is an open access, online, peer reviewed publication that presents multidisciplinary articles dealing with Indigenous and Pacific issues related to Aotearoa New Zealand.¹³³ Because of its focus on intellectual Indigenous scholarship, and its willingness to publish illustrated articles, I believe that it could be an appropriate location for an article that considers the relationship between my tatau/pe'a process and the agency of embodied knowing inside an artistic inquiry.

I am also considering submitting an article to Qualitative Research.¹³⁴ This is an international journal that publishes original research and articles on methodological diversity and interdisciplinary approaches to qualitative research. While it is primarily concerned with research in the social sciences, there have been instances where it has published methodological discussions on artistic inquiry,¹³⁵ and I believe that an article about an indigenously-shaped qualitative methodology, that employs processes of reflection on and in practice, might make a useful contribution. Specifically, the article would discuss the roles of mai totōnu (*inner reflection*) and mai fafo (*external reflection*) and consider how they draw upon, and function inside Samoan ways of thinking.

In Closing

This Ph.D. has been a long journey. My intention when undertaking the study was not the pursuit of academic accolades, but to find an environment inside which I could think about, and give voice to, complex ideas relating to identity, leadership and the beauty of Samoan culture. On this journey I have changed profoundly. I have discovered a pathway to a future where Samoan art is not a grafted decoration onto exotic ideas of the Pacific, but something that can function discretely, with profound, contemporary, cultural resonance. My very being has been shaped by the creation of a narrative that has demanded an embodied experience of the pe'a, deep questioning about what it means to be a relevant, contemporary tulāfale, and an appreciation of traditional Samoan forms of oration, vocalisation, instrumentation and narrative form. These things have led to the crafting of connections between Samoan and Western academic expressions of knowing and experiencing. The journey has also been one of honouring my parents and family. Underneath all of this lies the Samoan value of alofa (*love*) for my aiga, nu'u, and aganu'u.

This study is also driven by tautua (*a commitment to service*). This has been tautua to beauty of expression, where one's responsibility is to craft the finest voice one can, so that what is discussed resonates in both the mind and the spirit and tautua to knowledge, and through this respect for the conventions and expectations of the academy and Samoan ways of knowing.

... so I return from travelling in a va'a (*canoe*) where I have chartered unknown waters, navigating what is known and what was not yet known. I have been resourced by the wisdom of others, such that this thesis is a synthesis of knowledge that is a measina (*treasure*) and a mealofa (*gift of love*). It is also a gesture of beauty that I hope might contribute something of value to our people.

Si'i pea le vi'iga i le Atua.

I conclude this malaga sã (*sacred journey*) as a humble tautai (*fisherman*), with the fitting alagaupu:

Ua sili ofe le tautai

(*The fisherman has hung up his fishing tools*).

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Indicative Critiques of Iterative Experiments

EXPERIMENT 1

Lauga Mo Safotulafai (*Composed October 1-10, 2017*). The experiment can be heard by clicking on the link below.

Youtube link for the experiment: https://youtu.be/jB_Y1ulUa6I

Concept

This experiment is based on a lauga. The particular lauga (chief's speech) is inspired by my grandmother's (my father's mother's) village of Fatausi that is in the Safotulafai district of the island of Savaii in Samoa. This is where I also received my Chiefly title Tuilagi (King of the Heavens). This title is mentioned in the work.

In this first foray into my thesis I have explored identity, my country of birth (Samoa), and also the westernised culture of New Zealand and its influence while I was growing up, living in Wellington between 1974 and 2006.

As a young boy growing up in Samoa I was fascinated by what I thought to be the sounds of the 'stars at night' pulsating. I would watch the eternity of the heavens in wonderment. As I matured I realised that the pulsation was actually

¹³⁶ The Mau resistance movement constituted a nonviolent drive for Samoan independence from colonial rule during the first half of the 20th century. The movement resulted in a demonstration on December 8, 1929 (Black Saturday), in the streets of Apia, when New Zealand military police fired on a procession. Up to 11 Samoans were killed, including Mau leader and high chief Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III. The Mau movement was integral to Samoa achieving political independence in 1962. However, the movement was most active in the Western Islands in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

the sound of cicadas. This was the sound of the landscape of my birth, and in this experiment it constitutes the fanua and foundation of the work.

Structure and analysis

The opening is a call to action that references the well-known Samoan choral work *Faleula e* (which is a song based on the Mau resistance movement).¹³⁶

The experiment is woven around the speech of the Tuilagi title, (with which I was bestowed in 2012).

In the experiment I have juxtaposed this orated lauga (speech) with a more Western classical (almost operatic) baritone singing the same words. Underpinning this we encounter the sounds of nature (the ocean for what is earthly, and cicadas - in reference to the heavens). Permeating this are traditional Samoan instruments; the Pate (log drum), and the Fala (the rolled-up fine Samoan mat). These sounds are juxtaposed and integrated with the strings and piano Western/classical Instruments. It is this aural paradox that expresses my duality as a Samoan man who has grown up in both Samoan and European worlds.

Structurally, I have the choral elements repeating the first line, creating a percussive and vocal chant *Tulouna e na pule ia te oe Safotulafai 'o Tuilagi ma Namulaulu*. The repetitive chordal motif has been changed to a minor key to suit the mood of the work.

Critique

This is my first experiment. In it I have considered my identity as both a composer and a man between and within worlds. I have creatively interpreted paradoxes within this, but they operate as integrations rather than conflicts. Traditional indigenous Samoan elements of Samoa including the lauga, language and vocalisation (with its brighter chant-like tones), together with references to certain Western influences have been composed to create a fusion/juxtaposition and dichotomy of sound and instrumentation. I am reminded in this regard of Albert Wendt who says “We have indigenized much that was colonial or foreign to suit ourselves, creating new blends and forms. We have indigenized Western Art forms” (1995, p. 3)

EXPERIMENT 2

Nafanua – “Ua sau le va’a na tiu” (*Composed between October 20th and December 6th 2017*). The experiment can be heard by clicking on the link below.

You tube link for the experiment: https://youtu.be/jB_Y1ulUa6I

¹³⁷ I feel a great responsibility to my parents, family and ancestors. This may be understood as a part of being a Samoan, (the fa'aSamoa way). This responsibility embraces the value of tautua (to serve).

¹³⁸ Lo ta nu'u, ua ou fanau ai (*My dear country, where I was born*)

Ua lelei oe i le vasa
(*You are the most beautiful in the ocean*)

Ua e maua, mai luga
(*You have received from above*)

O le tofi, aoga
(*A most important inheritance / duty*)

Chorus:
Samoana
(*People of Samoa*)

Ala mai
(*Arise /wake up*)

Fai ai nei
(*Give /now*)

Le fa'afetai
(*Your thanksgiving*)

I le pule, ia maua ai
(*To the Most High, who gave you*)

O lou nu'u, i le vasa
(*Your island/country in the ocean*)

¹³⁹ This chant was first published by Powell 1887, and provides the origin of known islands, and also introduces the notion of creational activity by the god as an explanation of the islands of Upolu and Tutuila.

Concept

Because my first experiment explored my genealogy through my father's lineage (primarily in relation to my Chief Title Tuilagi from the village of Fatausi), this second experiment explores my mother's village of Falealupo¹³⁷ and arguably the most famous icon and legend from that village, Nafanua.

In this experiment I combined two ideas. The first was a consideration of the prophetic talents of Nafanua and the second (and more pervasive) was the Samoan understanding that there is a coexistence of the past, present and future. I interpreted this idea through musical instruments, environmental sounds, traditional vocalizations and by employing (in the later part of the composition) certain elements of Western classical vocalisation (operatic singing).

Structure and analysis

The piece combines environmental sounds of the ocean, traditional vocalisation and nasal vocal choral sounds, into an interpretation of what is arguably a second anthem for Samoa *Lota Nu'u*. If one considers the lyrics¹³⁸ and listens to the melody it is easy to understand why the piece is so loved by the Samoan people.

The work is structurally divided into three phases representing chronologically the past, present and future. These are connected by sounds of transition while simultaneously held together by a bonding rhythm that permeates the entire piece.

Within the work I have experimented with Western orchestral strings to create tension and conflict as a way of drawing into being, the essence of Nafanua's war goddess aura. In the last phase of the piece I have composed music for a classical soprano soloist, performing the character of Nafanua singing the alagaupu (Samoan proverb) *Ua Sau Le Va'a Na Tiu*, (with the choir depicting the people of Samoa to whom she making the declaration). This is done to highlight the fact that Nafanua famously prophesied that Christianity would enter Samoa.

I have purposefully delved once again into traditional, pre-missionary vocalisations (communication tones that are more nasal). Accordingly, 'tuning' in the work is always fluctuating, as contrasted with Western music where value lies in the importance of "intonation" or staying in tune.

Critique

To give balance to my identity it felt natural that I should present and also acknowledge and honour my mother's side of my identity. In presenting the notion of the coexistence of the past, present and future, I have found it more

140

Solo o le Va
O galu lolo ma galu fati'oo
(*Rollers flooding, rollers
dashing*),

O galu tau ma galu fefatia'i
(*Rollers fighting, rollers
clashing*)

O le auau peau ma sologa peau
(*The sweep of waters and the
extension of waves*)

E na ona faafua ae le fati
(*Surging high, but breaking not*)

O peau taoto, peau tagata
(*Waves reclining; waves
dispersing*)

Peau a sifo mai Gaga'e
(*Waves agreeable; waves that
cross not*)

Ona soa le auau tata'a
(*Waves frightsome; waves
leaping over*)

Mapu i lagi tuli o Tagaloa
'O Tagaloa, who is seated at the
helm (of affairs),

Tagaloa!
(*Tagaloa*)

Tagaloa e ta fia malolo ta lili'ae i
peau o lalo
(*Tagaloa's (bird, the Tuli) desires
to rest*)

Tula'i le papatu, ola papa, pala
ma ma'a
(*The rocks arise, the rocks live,
dirt and stones*)

Ola motu, mauga ma faga,
(*The lands live, mountains and
bay*)

Ola la, masina ma fetu, Ola
Samoa
(*The sun lives, the moon and
stars, Samoa lives*)

Le taulotoa'ina mamana o le
foafoaga
(*The desiring of supernatural
power of creation*)

Samoe ...
(*Samoa*)

challenging than I had initially thought. I am faced with a sequence of events that automatically separates these realms through a chronology of performance (the work has an order that places each phase after the preceding one) and of course this is not what coexistence means. However, I think the forward propulsions of the connective transitions work effectively to explain that each phase relates to and permeates the next. I will continue to work on the piece because as it stands I don't think the future is as clear as I want it (because it may be slightly lost in the phase that depicts the present). I also need to consider the use of Samoan language and how to best present that to a non-Samoan audience. This said, the Samoan language should be heard for what it is and also appreciated for its sound and meaning. Looking further down the line, I am wondering how I might present such complex, indigenous references in a final presentation that includes many cultures. (Perhaps there might be an accompanying catalogue/programme notes that contain translations or explanations. Another option is surtitles.

EXPERIMENT 3

Solo o le Va (*Composed between June 13th – July 18th, 2018*). The experiment can be heard by clicking on the link below – this development – intert.

You tube link for the experiment: https://youtu.be/AZnYL4Q9e_w

Concept

This experiment was a progression from my first work that was based on my chiefly title Tuilagi and its genealogical salutations from my father's mother's village of Fatausi, while my second experiment was inspired by my mother's village and its iconic war goddess Nafanua.

This third work considers the 'vā' or space between. In this instance I have thought about the space between the heavens (Lagi) and the hidden earth (Nafanua). Within the composition I have considered the placement of the chant *Solo o le 'Va O le Foafoaga o le Lalolagi'* (The Song of Contentment of the Origin of That If which is Under the Firmament').¹³⁹

Structure and analysis

The work has three parts The Oceanic opening, the Chant and the Va-Sacred space.

The composition is inspired and opened by the Samoan creation chant.¹⁴⁰ This is positioned aurally inside a figuratively oceanic environment. With reference to galu lolo (flooding wave) we feel huge tsunami waves. At the current time I have used my own voice singing various harmonic parts but I envisage

141

We are the voice of our
Ancestors, TAGALOA

We are here to tell what
was heard from their sacred
tongues

O matou nei o leo o matou
tua'ā - TAGALOA

Matou te ta'u atu le tala mai
anamua

We are Samoa, The Sacred
Centre of the Universe

They spoke in beautiful and
Poetic words

Like every storyteller, Musician
and Dancer hear these voices
and follow

The poets and priests who told
us how the world was made

This is the Creation story of our
people

This is our Vā-Tapuia

Our Culture

Our Mana

Our heritage

We are Samoa, The Sacred
Centre of our Universe

that these will eventually be sung by a choir with Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass voice parts. The work will maintain a very strong repetitive, melodic, yet rhythmic chant pivoting between the two chordal changes. (It is this device that produces the slightly trance-like affect). Early instrumentation in the piece uses timpani, strings, chimes, and reverse cymbals - these help to create a mythical, epic and dramatic ambience.

Critique

I am uncertain about the vocal aspect of the work. Currently, I am leaning towards a more traditional, pre-missionary nasal to sound that might eventually open the final major work. Within this, I might build on this experiment by contrasting the vocal and the instrumental.

This said, the second half of the work transforms into very strong patriotic lyrics¹⁴¹ that are sung in English. This is because I see myself in this space of the vā. I bring to that my multiple dimensions as a Samoan of the diaspora, my technological knowledge and my traditional knowledge. Accordingly, different singing styles and instrumentation populate the vā.

The ocean is very much part of Samoan and wider Pacific ontology, so it plays a major role in how I have interpreted the vā as a space between the 'heavens and the hidden earth'. In this composition the vā is understood as both a very high vibration of chimes and a low pitching of the timpani drums. The ocean is the vehicle that contains these things. However, as I refine the work I believe a more pronounced use of the log drums and fala (rolled mat) may infuse the work with a more resonant atmosphere.

Appendix 2: Documents Relating To Ethics Approval

LETTER OF APPROVAL

7 June 2017

Welby Ings
Faculty of Design and Creative Technologies

Dear Welby

Re Ethics Application: 17/129 'Nafanua' - 'Ua Sau le Va'a Na Tu': A creative exploration of the connection & expression of genealogy through the realms of identity

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 7 June 2020.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTEC grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. If the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all locality legal and ethical obligations and requirements. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,



Kate O'Connor

INFORMATION SHEET



O le Pepa o Fa'amatalaga mo le Tagata-auai i le su'esu'ega

O le Aso na tuuina atu ai le Pepa o Faamatalaga:

Me 2017

O le Igoa o le Su'esu'ega/poloketi

'Nafanua' – 'Ua Sau Le Va'a Na Tiu': O se su'esu'ega-faatinoaina fou ma le faatupu manatu i le fesoota'iga ma faamatalaga auili'ili o tupu'aga ma gafa faa-Samoa, e ala i vaega taua o le faasinomaga o le tagata.

O le Tusi Vala'aulia

E avea lenei avanoa, e avea ai lo'u leo fa'atauva'a e fa'atalofa atu ai i Lau Susuga/Afioga/Tofa i le Suafa Pa'ia o lo tatou Ali'i o Iesu Keriso. Fa'amalo le soifuia manuia ma le lagi-e-mama! Ua ou talosaga atu ma le fa'aaloalo lava mo lou fesoasoani i le faatinoina o lenei su'esu'ega e ala i faatalanoaga. Ua ou faamoemoe o le a e taliaina i sou finagalo malie. Fa'afetai lava mo le fa'aavanoaina o lou taimi taua mo lenei faamoemoe lelei. Ua faia lenei tusi ma le ava ma le migao tele. Fa'amanuia atu le Atua.

Ua uma ona taliaina a'u i le AUT mo le fa'aaloga PhD, ma o la'u su'esu'ega o le a fasino tonu ile foafoaina o le musika e mafua mai ai le agaga faagaetia ma le malosi e maua mai leo masani faale-aganu'u, ma fesoota'iga o gafa ma tupu'aga i pese/siva ma musika faa-Samoa. E moni ua e faaalua lou nofo sauni e te auai i lenei su'esu'ega, peita'i ua avea lenei Pepa o Faamatalaga ma tusi vala'aulia mo oe. O le a fesiligia foi oe e tuuina mai lau ioega, e mafai ai ona ta'ua oe i le su'esu'ega, ma nisi tusitusiga i le lumana'i. E ui i lea, ua iai se faagasologa e ao ina tausisia, ina ia mafai ai ona e taafia pe vaoia so'o se mea e aliali mai i le su'esu'ega, a o le'i avea o se vaega o le faai'uga tusitusia o le su'esu'ega/poloketi.

O le a le faamoemoe o lenei Su'esu'ega?

O le faamoemoe o lenei su'esu'ega ina ia mafai ona maua se malamalamaga/atamai e fesoasoani ai i le foafoaina o se musika faa-Samoa faa-ona-po-nei. O gaioiga faatino ma pesepesega o le a faamalosia ai. O le a fa'aagaina fa'amatalaga ua tu'uina mai ou te fatuina ai ma faatulaga

ni fatuga ma ni pesepesega faatino.

O le faamoemoe ina ia faalolotoina le malamalama i le aganu'u masani a Samoa, o ona tupu'aga ma gafa, o pese/siva/musika, e ala lea i le sa'ili i tagata o lo'u atunu'u (Samoa), atoa ma tagata atamamai faapitoa o lo'o i isi matata, e mafai ona feso'ota'i ma la'u su'esu'ega. O le a mafai ona iloa mai totonu o lea faagasologa, e ala i sou manatu ma se silafia e faaopoopo mo le faaleleia atili o lenei su'esu'ega. O se vaega foi o lenei su'esu'ega, ua ou talosagaina ai oe faamolemole mo se faatalanoaga.

Na faapefea ona e iloina a'u, ma aisea fo'i ua e filifilia ai a'u ou te auai i lenei su'esu'ega?

Ua ou fesili atu mo oe e te auai i lenei su'esu'ega, ona e taua olau Susuga/Afioga/Tofa ma lou poto-masani atoa foi ma lou iloalelei o le Aganu'u fa'a-Samoa ma musika, siva ma pese.

E fa'apefea ona ou ioe ma malie atu ou te auai i lenei su'esu'ega?

O le a vala'auina oe mo se faatalanoaga pe tusa e tasi se itula. O le a iai ni fesili autu se 4 pe 5 fo'i. Peita'i, e mafai ona mana'omia nisi faatalanoaga po o ni asiasiga pe a fia maua atili nisi faamatalaga mulimuli ane.

O le a le mea e tupu i lenei su'esu'ega?

Information sheet page 2 of 3

O le a fa'aogaina lelei lenei sa'ili'iliga mo le faaleleia o la'u tusitusiga PhD thesis. O le a fa'aogaina fo'i e faasoa atu ai tusitusiga faapitoa faale-atamai, o fa'aaliga o siva ma pese, atoa fo'i ma ni pepa tusitusia faa-fonotaga. O le a ou faatalanoaina lau susuga e fa'aogaina ai se masini pu'eleo ma

faaliliuina i tusitusiga. O le a fesoasoani faamatalaga e tu'uina mai e fatuina

ai fatuga o pese, ma maua ai se malamalamaga fa'amusika ma le aganu'u. O le a

avea lea ma ala e fa'atupu lagona, pe fesoasoani fo'i e fa'amanino atili

mafaufauga ma manatu o lo'o fatufatua'i i lenei galuega.

O a ni itu lelei ma le aoga e maua ai?

O mea fou uma ma le aoga o le a maua mai lenei sa'ili'iliga, o le a fa'aogaina e faaleleia atili ai ma fa'amae'aina ai la'u tusitusiga mo le fa'ailoga PhD. Ou te faamoemoe fo'i o le a aoga mo le manuia, e le gata o la tatou aganu'u masani fa'a-Samoa (aemaise lava o fatufatuga fa'a-Samoa/Pasefika), atoa ma le lautele o nisi auala e manino ma malamalama ai i agava'a o pese ma siva faatinoina. O ni mea lelei foi e maua mai lenei su'esu'ega o le a faalolotoina ai le silafia o musika masani faale-aganu'u ma tagata-nu'u, atoa foi ma feso'ota'iga i o tatou faasinomaga ma tupu'aga. Ou te fiafia e tuuina atu ia te oe se kopi o faatalanoaga pe a mae'a ona tuufaatasia.

Pe mafai ona puipuia lo'u tagata i lenei su'esu'ega?

O le a fa'aalia lou igoa o se tagata-aui i lenei sa'ili'iliga/su'esu'ega, e ala i faatalanoaga ma fa'ai'uga faamaumauina.

O le a se tau e a'afia ai i lenei sa'ili'iliga?

E leai se tau e a'afia ai i nei sa'ili'iliga ma faatalanoaga. E le tatau ona sili atu i se itula e tasi le umi o se faatalanoaga, ae mafai foi ona fesiligia ma mana'omia se isi faatalanoaga mulimuli mai. E mafai ona tupu lena mea i totonu o le tolu tausaga talu mai le ulua'i faatalanoaga. O le a faataunu'uina lea i totonu o le tolu tausaga maile ulua'i talanoaga, O le a faataunu'uina lea i totonu o le tolu tausaga maile ulua'i talanoaga, ma o le a mana'omia pe na o se itula se tasi o lou taimi.

O le a se avanoa e mafai ai ona ou mafaufau pe talia lenei tusi vala'aulia?

Ou te mana'omia le maua mai o lou taliaina, pe leai fo'i, e avea ma tagata-aui i totonu o le lua vaiaso talu ona maua lenei tusi vala'aulia.

Pe ou te maua ni manatu-fa'asoa-mai e uiga i faai'uga o lenei su'esu'ega?

O le a auina atu ia te oe se kopi o faai'uga tusitusia o su'esu'ega uma, ma o le a mafai foi ona vala'aulia oe i fa'aaliga fa'akoneseti uma o le a fa'aogaina ai lau faasoa mai ma lou sao i lenei su'esu'ega.

O le a le mea ou te faia pe afai e iai ni mea e faapopoleina ai a'u i lenei su'esu'ega?

Mo ni mea e faapopoleina ai oe e uiga i lenei su'esu'ega, e ao ina faafeso'ota'i le Executive Secretary of AUTC, Kate O'Connor ethics@aut.ac.nz 921 9999 ext 6038

Information sheet page 3 of 3

O ai nisi tagata e mafai ona ou fa'afeso'ota'ia faatatau i leni su'esu'ega?

O le tagata ua faia leni Su'esu'ega

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Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on June 7th 2017, AUTEK Reference number 17/129

Appendix 3: Interview Transcripts

These seven interviews are arranged chronologically in order of when they were recorded (between January 2020 and April 2021). Because some were conducted in Samoan and others in English, translations are provided in an adjacent column.

INTERVIEW 1

Title:	The role of a Matai (Chief) living in Samoa
Interviewees:	Fuiono Patolo, Taofinu'u Matālio, Siliala'ei Tuāi'a
Note:	In this instance three chiefs were interviewed together because following a welcome into the village, the researcher and they were seated next to each other in a Samoan fale (house). A fale has no separate rooms, so it was appropriate that the chiefs should be interviewed together so there was no sense of one being valued over another.
Interviewer:	Igelese Ete
Location:	Falealupo, Savaii, Samoa
Date:	January 19, 2020, 10.20am
Time:	00:00:00–13:47:22
Recording device:	Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8 and Iphone XS
Transcribed by:	Igelese Ete
Translation:	Igelese Ete. Translations appear in italics.

QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
00:00:00–00: 24:20	
Igelese Ete: I lo'u ava ma lo'u fa'aaloalo, o le fesili fa'amolemole, po'o ai lou suafa?	Fuiono Patolo: O Fuiono Patolo: Taofinu'u Matālio: O Taofinu'u Matālio
<i>Igelese Ete: With due respect, my question please what is your name?</i>	Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: O Silialā'ei Tuāi'a:
00:25:00 – 00: 29:05	
Igelese Ete: O le fesili lona lua, po'o le a le aso na e soifua mai ai?	Fuiono Patolo: Setema 17, 1956 <i>Fuiono Patolo: September 17th, 1956</i>
<i>Igelese Ete: The second question is what day were you born?</i>	Taofinu'u Matālio: O le aso 19 Ianuari, 1961 <i>Taofinu'u Matālio: It was the 19th of January, 1961</i> Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: O le aso 28 Setema, 1964 <i>Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: It was 28th of September, 1964</i>
01:28:00 – 2 :02:23	
Igelese Ete: O fea la le nu'u na e soifua mai ai fa'amolemole?	Fuiono Patolo: O Vaotupua, I Falealupo. <i>Fuiono Patolo: It's Vaotupua, Falealupo.</i>
<i>Igelese Ete: Which village were you born in please?</i>	Taofinu'u Matālio: O Vaotupua fo'i, I Falealupo <i>Taofinu'u Matālio: O Vaotupua as well, in Falealupo</i> Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: O Vaotupua lava, I Falealupo E lua pitonu'u tetele o Vaotupua ma Avata. O matou uma la sa fanau i Vaotupua. <i>Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: Its Vaotupua also, in Falealupo, there a two big regions in Falealupo, we were all born in Vaotupua.</i>

02:03:10- 02:51:11

Igelese Ete: O le ā le tausaga na fa'ae'e atu ai lou
suafa matai?

*Igelese Ete: What year did you receive your chief
title?*

Fuiono Patolo: 19 Ianuari - O le tausaga 2007

Fuiono Patolo: 19th January It was the year 2007

Taofinu'u Matālio: O le aso 14 Ianuari, 2005

Taofinu'u Matālio: It was the 14th of January, 2005.

Silialā'ei Tuā'i'a: O le aso mulimuli a o le 1999, o le ā me'i lesi senituri,
2000 sa fai ai nofo a le aiga I le aso mulimuli a 31 o Tesema.

*Silialā'ei Tuā'i'a: On the last day of 1999, where we were about to shift
to 2000, the family was sitting for their chief titles, on the
31st December.*

02:52:12 – 04:10:12

Igelese Ete: O fea le pito nu'u e te alala ai?

*Igelese Ete: Which village and region do you stay
in?*

Fuiono Patolo: O Fuiono o le pito nu'u Malaetele, manatua o se pito
nu'u telē, 'ae ai fo'i ala i totonu, o Vaotupua

*Fuiono Patolo: Fuiono is from the region Malaetele, remember it's a
large place, with different paths, with large forests.*

Taofinu'u Matālio: O Taofinu'u o Avatā o Tapusita, o le igoa lenā o
le maota e afio ai le maopu. O le tula feagai o le Maopu of Nafanua
Solia ma foa'imea, o Tapusita la i Avatā

*Taofinu'u Matālio: Taofinu'u is from Avatā in Tapusita, that the name
of the place where Maopu lives. so I am from Tapusita in Avatā.*

Silialā'ei Tuā'i'a: O Vaotupua ia, ei ia vaega laiti ona pito nu'u laiti, auā
e lua ia pito nu'u tetele o Falealupo, o Vaotupua ma Avatā. I totonu
lā o Vaotupua e i ai i vaega laiti, pito nu'u ia oi na lā e nofo ai a'u, e
feagai Silialā'ei ma le aiga Sa Seumanutafa, a'o le 'elelee tonu, e i ai
le igoa lea Silialā'ei o Alo'iava.

*Silialā'ei Tuā'i'a: Vaotupua well it also has its small regions, so it's
there where I live, Silialā'ei is involved with the Semmanutafa family,
but the actual earth is called Alo'iava.*

04:10:00 – 06:17:00

Igelese Ete: O le a lou tiute fa'amatai I mea fa'aleaiga?

Igelese Ete: What is your duty as a chief within the family?

Fuiono Patolo: O Fuiono e tausia le nu'u, le suafa, ona e i ai isi Fuiono e to'afā matou, o le toeaina matua e le o iai nei, ia o i ai na feagai ma le matou nu'u 'ae lagolago Fuiono ma isi Fuiono. Feagai ma le nu'u, ia o le tiute o Fuiono I lona aiga, ia o a'u e fa'amatua i ai o'u tuafafine ma uso ia ma ou aiga.

Fuiono Patolo: Fuiono looks after the village, the chief's name, because there are other Fuiono's; there are four of us, there is an older man who is currently not here. Yes, so he is involved with our village, and Fuiono and others will support him. And the duty of Fuiono to his family, is to be the elder to my sisters and brothers in the family.

Taofinu'u Matālio: O Taofinu'u o lona tiute na te taofiofi le mamalu o le nu'u, po le ā lava le taimi lualuta o le taimi lea e atagia ai le tiute, o le nu'u nei e tofu a le tagata ma lona tiute, tausisi a lā le tagata I lona tiute, taimi nei lā ia e atagia I totonu o le aiga le tausiga o le aiga tulaga o tiute ma faiva, ia ona manuia le ekalesia ma le nu'u.

Taofinu'u Matālio: Taofinu'u, his duty, is to uphold the sacredness of the village. Whatever time this is the time to shine in your duty, in this village each person has a duty; everyone should continue to strive in their duty.

In this time, one should shine in the family, the welfare of the family, where our missions and duty is for the best interest of our congregations and the village).

Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: Silialā'ei e fa'apea le mau 'o lou tou to'afā, ma lau fetalaiaga Silialā'ei, o vaega uma ia, e tausia le nu'u tagata ia e to'alima. O lo'u a lā o le tausia o le oloa taua na aumai I le Atua, tausii le aiga, e ese le aiga ā lea, 'ese le aiga potopoto a le aiga lautele, a fa'apea fo'i e ia i ni mea e tutupu I totonu o le nu'u, ni fa'alavelave ma ni mea ogoogo e fono lā le latou to'afa ma Silia, ona fai ai loa lea o fuafuaga i totonu o le nu'u, ia o le taupulega uma a le fauga o mea tutupu I totonu o le nu'u, e talanoa matou ma toaiina ia.

Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: Silialā'ei says there is a motto - 'You four, and the talking chief', all these groups look after the village, all the five people. Well my own duty, is looking after the treasure which God gave, take care of the family, different from the big wider family. Well, so if there is something that is happening inside the village, any interruptions or anything else - the four will meet with Silia, then they will decide inside the village. We talk with these elders.

06:18:00– 08:20:13

Igelese Ete: O le a le taua o le lauga a le matai ?

Igelese Ete: What is the significance of oration for a chief

Fuiono Patolo: O le taua o le lauga, e folasia toa pa'ia ma le mamalu, e aloa'ia ai fo'i le afio mai maliu mai ma tala mai po se malaga, ia e fa'apena ona fola atu fo'i le lauga le a le to'afā e fuafua lā i ai, aua fo'i tapao ma gafa, ae maise fo'i ni fo'i ni malaga fai mai. Ia e iloa fo'i le aganu'u ma le fa'aSamoa, aua a leai le ana tonu. E leiloa fo'i le mea lea tupu. Ia o le taua na o le lauga, fa'atinoga o le lauga, fa'ailoa uma ai vaega uma, ia o paia fo'i na ma malumalu, na la avatu le lauga.

Fuiono Patolo: The importance of the Lauga; it welcomes the guests, it also affirms and welcomes those present, coming or if there is a trip.

So that is what happens when the speech is delivered, with the four - especially those who are presenting the speech.

You will know the fa'aSamoa, that's the importance of the lauga, to let everyone know about various things).

Taofinu'u Matālio: Ia o le taua o le lauga. e atagia ai le matai, gafa ma tiute o le matai. Ae maise o le va tafatafa ma le mamalu, aemaise o paolo ma gafa. Lua e tausi ai le mamalu a le aiga ma le nu'u ma le ekalesia.

Taofinu'u Matālio: Well the importance of the lauga, is that it involves the chiefs, lineage, and duties for the chief, especially the lineage. Second, to take care of the family, village, and the congregation.

Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: O le lauga fa'aSamoa ia e tele ona vaega 'ese'ese, mai a le amataga se'i o'o ā ina fa'ai'u le lauga, 'ua tu'umavaevae uma ia vaeaga, le taua o le lauga, e feiloa'i ni itū se lua po tolu pe fa, ia o mea sa sau ai toeiina, ua laloma tesā, o le feiloaiga e fa'ailoa ai le vaega uma o le aganu'u, e o'o ā I le fa'afetai I le Atua e I totonu a le lauga, taua la o le lauga e maiomiomia uma ai vaega uma o le aso e feiloa'i ai. O le taua fo'i lea e fa'ailoa atu ai le tagata, ma le 'ele'ele, ma le tupuaga.

Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: The Samoan lauga, has many stages, from the beginning to the ending, it has been split into many parts. It's very important, where two sides, or three or four - this is what our ancestors/chiefs brought.

The encounter, notifies the many parts of the Samoan culture, even thanking God is in the oratory. Therefore it is important, that everything is in the various stages, and it shows to the people, the land, and the ancestors.

08:23:21- 13:47:22

Igelese Ete: O le a se alagaupu taua e te fa'aogaina I lou soifuaga?

Igelese Ete: What is an important proverb you use in your life?

Fuiono Patolo: E malie le – 'E matagofie lou alaala 'ae faigata le ta'iafi, e faigofie lou alaala ma matagofie lou fasauga 'ae faigata le ta'iafi.

E faigofie le alaala a le moli a silia, ae faigata le cash e tologi e ia, ao a ma pō, auā o Falealupo o Tausunu o lona igoa, fa'ato'a igoa nei o falealupo, o le uiga na o le maua mai o le upu le na – e faigofie le alaala, ai faigata le ta'iafi, ona sa la'u mea fo'i o le tulou lava, sa la'u fo'i okoka, e mū ai le nu'u, auā e leai ni moli, o le ala na o le igoa o le nu'u sa i ai, o Tausumu le igoa sa i ai, fa'ato'a fa'aigoa nei o Falealupo.

Fuiono Patolo: I like the Samoan proverb – "It's easy to make it shine. However, it is difficult to find the fuel to light it up".

To make the proverb easier to understand. It's easy for Silia's house lights to shine. However, it's hard for him to get the cash to pay for the power every day.

Falealupo used to be called Tausunu, it's just recently being called Falealupo, and back then, when there was neither petrol nor electricity, they used to get rubbish - bits and pieces, to light up the place. This is why it's called Tausunu - to burn.

Taofinu'u Matālio: O le alagaupu e tāua ia te a'u lea sa 'ou fa'aogā ana nei, e ou te fiafia lava i ai, ona o i e ala ae loa le matai Samoa e manatua le Atua, o le upu la –

'Ua togo lelei malama o le taeao fou, le ala lea sausu fia lele ai le manu na moi i utufeu, 'ae a le taeao lenei, lea ua moe i ufutia, ua fesilafa'i ma gaoioi i mea uma e o'o I le soifuaga o le tagata, ua fa'atino ai tiute.'

La o le alagaupu na e mafua, ou te naunau fo'i lele e momoli ai le fa'afetai ma molimau ai le alofa o le Atua I lea aso ma lea aso. Ia o le tali atu lea ma le agaga fa'aaloalo Tuilagi.

Taofinu'u Matālio: The proverb that's important to me, is the one I used earlier on today; I've always liked it, because when a Samoan chief wakes he/she remembers God and therefore says.

'Ua togo lelei malama o le taeao fou, le ala lea sausu fia lele ai le manu na moe i utufeu, 'ae a le taeao lenei, lea ua moe i ufutia, ua fesilafa'i ma gaoioi i mea uma e o'o I le soifuaga o le tagata, ua fa'atino ai tiute.'

This proverb is chosen, because I strive to give thanks and testify about the love of God every day, so this is my answer, with all due respect Tuilagi.

[†] Silialā'ei Tuāi'a is referring here to the measles outbreak that began in Samoa in September 2019. By January the 6th 2020, there were over 5,700 cases of the disease and 83 deaths. The impact was devastating, considering that the Samoan population at the time was only 200,874. ([Population & Demography Indicator Summary](#), Samoa Bureau of Statistics, 8 December 2019). Over three percent of the population became infected. (Government of Samoa ["National Emergency Operation Centre, update on the measles outbreak: \(press release 36\) 22 December, 2019"](#)). The outbreak was attributed to decreased vaccination rates. A State of Emergency was declared on November 17th 2019. All schools were closed and vaccination became mandatory. On December 2nd 2019, a national curfew was imposed. The government also cancelled Christmas celebrations and public gatherings. In addition, all unvaccinated families were required to display a red flag or cloth in front of their homes, to warn others and to assist with mass vaccination strategies.

Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: O le nu'u nei, e lau i alagaupu, ou te le iloa se isi nu'u i Samoa e tutusa ma iinei. Mafua ai le tele o alagaupu, ei ai fo'i mafuaga na tutupu, e tele na fa'aoga e failauga I latou lauga, ua o'o fo'i luga o le pulela'a ua fa'aoga ai ā. Ia e lē tasi se alagaupu 'ou te fialia i ai, ae ai le mea e tupu i tai.

Ia o le Lutia I Puava 'ae mapu I Fagalele, la ua igoa ai le 'ele'ele tautai ai tagata matutua, o le fa'amatalaga o le mafuaga o le mea lea, e I ai le ala a o'o ina sou ā ma galu ā, e leai se va'a e sao ai, e leasi se tautai e sao ai. E malepe le va'a, ia o vaega uma o le va'a e ave uma e le tāfega a le va'a, ma to'a I fagaogoge ta'u Fagalele, o le uiga la e feagai a ma faigata o le soifuaga, e lutia I puava ā, ae ai a le taimi e to'a ai, e aumai le finagalo a le Atua, fa'ata'itaiga maua I ma'i o le tino. Lea sa feagai nei le atgunu'u ma le fa'ama'i sa le mautonu ai tagata, leiloa po'o le a le mea la fai, ao le a mea ua iai, na to'a I le filemu, na to'a I le filemu le agalelei o lea Atua. E ala mai I foma'i ma vaila'au ia lea sa' fememea'i i fa'ama'i ae na to'a I le agalelei o le Atua.

Silialā'ei Tuāi'a: This village, I know no other village that can compare to it. Many Samoan proverbs are used by chiefs for their oratory speeches, even in churches. But, I don't just like one Samoan proverb.

Okay, so the proverb is:

*E lutia i Puava, 'ae mapu i Fagalele
Distress at Puava, but rest at Fagalele!*

It's also the name of the ground where the old people's home is, in Samoa.

So the explanation of the origin of this proverb: There is the path, that will be rough, where no boat can get through. There's no one that can get through.

If the boat breaks, well, all of the parts will be taken to Fagalele, (meaning rough times will come and tribulations), but there will also be peace, through God.

The country was in turmoil with the kids' measles, there eventually will be peace with the kindness of God, through medicines.[†] That's why I chose that proverb.

INTERVIEW 2

Title: The role of a Matai's (Chiefs) living in Samoa

Person interviewed: Tuilagi Aufaga

Interviewer: Igelese Ete, with assistance from Rev Elder Risatisone Ete and Fereni Ete

Location: Fatausi Village, Savaii, Samoa

Date: January 9, 2020, 8pm

Time: 00:00:00–13:00:00

Recording device: Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8

Transcribed by: Igelese Ete

Translation: Igelese Ete, Risatisone Ete. English translations of the interview are presented in *italics*.

Appendices

Appendix 3

00:00:00–00: 11:09

Igelese Ete: O le fesili muamua fa'amolemole, I lo'u ava ma lo'u fa'aaloalo lava, o le fesili fa'amolemole, po'o ai lou suafa a le'i maua le suafa matai?

Igelese Ete: The first question please, with due respect, what was your name prior to you receiving your matai title (Tuilagi)?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O Vaefaga Lanelota Tagokaisa

Tuilagi Vaefaga: It was Vaefaga Lanelota Tagokaisa.

00:45:23 - 00:52:00

Igelese Ete: O le fesili lona lua, po'o le a le aso na e soifua mai ai?

Igelese Ete: The second question is what day were you born?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le aso 14 o Aperila, o le 1971. Ou te iloa ke matua ia a'u pe a?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: The day I was born was the 14th of April, 1971. You're most probably older than me?

Igelese Ete: O au la o le 68 (1968)

Igelese Ete: I was born in 68 (1968)

01:09:09 – 01:11:21

Igelese Ete: O fea la le nu'u na e soifua mai ai fa'amolemole?

Igelese Ete: In which village were you born please?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O Fatausi

Tuilagi Vaefaga: In Fatausi

01:20:21 - 01:23:02

Igelese Ete: O le ā le tausaga na fa'ae'e at ai lou sufa matai?

Igelese Ete: What year did you receive your chief title?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le tausaga o le na tatou fa'atasi, ma'ua le na nonofo fa'atasi

Tuilagi Vaefaga: It was the same year we sat together for the (Tuilagi) title in Fatausi. Which was 2013.

01:36:12-01:49:01

Igelese Ete: O le a lou tiute fa'amatai I mea fa'aleaiga?

Igelese Ete: What is your duty as a chief within the family?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O a'u lea feagai ma le tausiga o le aiga, o fa'alavelave ia ma le vā feagai ma le nu'u, o a'u fo'i o le sui o le nu'u, po'o le pule nu'u - I le vā ma le malo.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: I am involved in the pastoral care of the family, any family matters that involve the various spaces of the village. I am also the representative of the village or the leader of the village, liaising with our government.

01:20:21 - 01:23:02

Igelese Ete: O le a sou silafia I le mafu'aga a le suafoa a Tuilagi?

Igelese Ete: What's your knowledge on how the chief name Tuilagi came about?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le suafoa, o le igoa na mafua mai le, o le auso tama, na malaga mai ō, tama e o mai tama o fa'atu le malo, na fa'amatala ai sesi le tala lea?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: The name, originated from two brothers, who travelled from there. They came to establish a government. Has anyone ever explained this story?

Igelese Ete: Leai, taimi muamia la lea.

Igelese Ete: No, this is the first time.

02:48:02 - 03:03:06

Tuilagi Vaefaga: E o mai tama o fa'atū le malo tagata e igoa ia Letufuga, o fa'atū lona malo i uta Limu'ula o le malo Letufuga, o le taimi o Letufuga.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: The brothers came through whilst there was someone named Letufuga who established his ruling/government in a place called Limu'ula. At the time of Letufuga.

3:03:15 – 06:55:05

Tuilagi Vaefaga: Ia o ina la lea na o mai a loa lea fa'alogo tama ia to'alua o lo'o i ai le malo Letufuga i utā le mea igoa Limu'ula. Ia o i gā sa faatū ai le malo o tamaloa lea o Letufuga. O Letufuga lea e le o sa'o i ai le itū o le nu'u I Fusi.

Fa'alogo loa lea o tama ia to'alua i le mea na, ia ō loa lea o tama e taumafai e pulea ma fāoa le malo o Letufuga

Ia o tama ia o to'alua, na mafua ai, o le igoa o le isi tama o Oloipola, a'o o le igoa o le isi tama o Pakolo.

Ia o tama ma fai le lā fale i ga utā I le fanua e igoa Se'ēga, ia na fai ai lea o le lā fale, la fale sa nonofa e ato i le mea o le laupola.

Ia fai atu o lesi tama, ia ali'i ua maua lo'u igoa, ioe o le a faaigoa a'u ia laupola, ia a'e lea ua alu a Oloipola.

Ia – ona alu loa lea, e pā le fale i mea o kolo, kole e ai, ia o i gā fai mai lesi tama, ia ua mau lo'u igoa ali'i, o le a fa'aigoa a'u ia Pakolo.

Pakolo la lea ma Oloipola, o igoa ia o tama e to'alua, lea na mafua ai le igoa o Namulau'ulu.

Ua maua le igoa Namulau'ulu I le tama igoa ia Pakolo, a'o Tuilagi ia Oloipola.

Tama le ia e to'alua, ga o kalepe le malo Letufuga sa fai utā I Limu'ula. Ia ma fāoa le malo Letufuga ia lea la ga maua ai loa le fa'alupega e tama ia to'alua Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu, ia o la'ua na pule ia Safotulafai. Ia pea o ina na maua mai ai le igoa o Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu o la'ua na pule ia Safotulafai

E o fa'atasi a le auso, Tuilagi ma Namula'ulu. O le o mai o tama I tai e sa'ili se la mea'ai, ae fa'alogo atu ai tama o nanamu mai le sau o le 'ulu, ae ua fai atu ai loa lea o le si ali'i – se ua namu lau'ulu mai le mea, ā ia fai atu foi loa lea o le si ali'i lea, ia ua maua fo'i lā lou igoa, o lou igaga ko, o le i gaga ko 'oe, o le ā fa'a suafa 'oe ia Namulau'ulu.

Ia o mai o le savaliga a tama se 'ia pa'ia mai iinei, e iai le la malae ta'ua o le 'malae fono'. O iinei la e o mai savaliga a tama, ae va'ai atu le si ali'i lae mulimuli mai tua, fai mai sole se 'ua kua e umi tele ali'i toetiti tuia le lagi I lou tumua'I ia lea na toe maua ai lea loa, fai mai loa lea o Namulau'ulu ia ua maua fo'i lou igaga ko ali'i Oloipola, o le ā fa'asuafa 'oe ia Tuilagi, aua o lea toetiti tuia le lagi I lou tumua'I, o ina le mafua'aga a lana o igoa o tama ia e to'alua o Namulau'ulu ma Tuilagi, le auso tama. Tutusa lelei tama. Ioe.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: Well then, it occurred when the brothers heard that there was a government of Letufuga at a place called Limu'ula. It was there where he established his government. It was because of Letufuga that the village was not straight.

When the brothers heard of what happened, they went to try and take over the government of Letufuga.

Well it was these two boys, the name of one of the boys was Oloipola, and the name of the other brother was Pakolo.

The boys made a house on the land called Se'ēga. Their house was covered by woven coconut leaves.

So, one said to the other, I've found my name – Yes, I'm going to name myself Loipola or Oloipola.

Then they fenced their house with Kolo (sugar cane) and then the other brother said, I have found my name, Pakolo.

Pakolo and Oloipola, is where they got the name Namulau'ulu. Namulau'ulu was given to Pakolo and Tuilagi to Oloipola.

These two gentlemen went to break the government in Letufuga in Limu'ula. And also, to overthrow the government in Letufuga. So, that's where you get the lineage for Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu; these are the two that ruled Safotulafai.

These brothers always go together, Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu. It's when they came from the inland in search of food, when they smelled freshly cooked breadfruit leaves that one of them said to the other: "Wow this place smells like cooked breadfruit leaves", and the other replied: "Well I've found your name, o igaga ko, I will give you a title name - Namulau'ulu." Yes.

Eventually, the boys walked all the way here (Fatausi). They had land called the 'malae fonu' (field meeting); so, it was here they were walking to. Then someone at the back, said, like, 'Hey bro! Wow you are so tall that your head is almost piercing the sky.' That's when Namulau'ulu said, 'Well we have found Igaga ko chiefly name Oloipola, I will bestow you with Tuilagi, as your head almost pierces the sky.' So that's the origin of the name of the two men Namulau'ulu ma Tuilagi, they were brothers, and they were exactly the same).

06:58:08-07:54:23

Rev Elder Risati Ete: A iai la se tatou aiā i Namu'lauulu, pe i ai fo'i se aiā o Namulau'ulu?

Rev Elder Risati Ete: So, do we (Tuilagi title) have any say when it comes to Namulau'ulu, or does Namulau'ulu have a say (when it comes to Tuilagi ?) in terms of conferring the respective titles?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: E leai se aiā, a osi le nu'u, o I nei le mea o Safotulafai e I ai Fusi, Fatausi ma Fogapoa , e fa'aigoa le itu o le ō le nu'u lea of Fusi ma alu fa'apea, o le itū vai o Ali'i, o le ituvai o le Ali'i e afio ai Leilua ma le toa lima ioe, a o le ituvai i nei e ta'ua le itu vai i nei of Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu o itu vai o Tama Pule. A fono la Safotulafai, na'o le tolu a gutu, na o le to'afā e aumai ia Leilua, ma le fa'autaga ia Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu, ia na uma loa lea o le mea o Safotulafai, e leai a sesi a, ioe, so'o se mea a fo'i lea fai, ia o le mea oi iai nei.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: No, each title (Tuilagi and Namulauulu) acts independently, when it comes to the conferment of the respective titles on candidates and when the village is convening here in Safotulafai – which includes Fusi, Fatausi and Fogāpoa. They call that side, in Fusi and its sub-villages the Ituvai O Ali'i, where Leilua and his five chiefly sons reside.

However, the ituvai here, this part of the village here of Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu it's the ituvai of the Tama Pule (Ruling Men)

When Safotulafai meets, only three mouths/voices; the four from Leilua, with the guidance from Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu, and then Safotulafai is complete.

There is nothing else so, whatever is done, that's what happens.

08:01:00-08:36: 18

Rev Elder Risati Ete: O le mea sili o le matou fiafia, o lea o fa'atoa fa'alogo atu ā lea o matou, I le tala lea pei na e taua, ma le mafuaga of suafa, e leai ma sesi e iloa ai le tala lea. Ua ou iloa lea e le to'atele nisi latou te silafia

Rev Elder Risati Ete: The best thing that we are happy about, this that this is the first time I've ever heard of that story, and the origin of the chief titles. There is no one who knows this story. I know not many people are aware of it.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le taimi muamua lea ua ou fa'amatala atu. E lauga o i pito ia, pe a fai nofo, e lē talā se nafa, e leai sesi latou te iloa o gafa o tama, e mamao atu i tua, le gafa o tama ia, le to'alua lea, o tama ia e lea e taofi a le autu

Tuilagi Vaefaga: This is the first time I've explained this. When speeches are done at title bestowal ceremonies, the lineage is not explained, as no one knows their lineage, it goes way back. These two men, these two men hold the crux of the matter.

08:37:00 – 10:00:12

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le teine fo'i lea sa nonoa i Tutuila ae fui e pe'a, lea na ta'ua o Togumaip'e'a o le tamā o tama ia, o le tama o le teine a le nā, na usu mai ai le tagata e igoa ia Folasā i o i Falelima, lea lae maua ai le tinā e to'alua o Tonumaip'e'a, e fa'avae mai e fo'i lā le lo'omatua o Nafanua, lea na tau mai le taua i tuā, e i ai le masalomia o le talitonuga, o tama ia o le aiga na e o mai ai tama ia to'alua, e leai se la fa'alupega i nei, e fe ita l le ituvai pe a matou vevesi, Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu o fea te lua o mai ai? Fai atu aua, aua tou se su'esu'e a'u, tou iloa tou le mea o le pule, o le pule a o'o na 'ula le tagata le pule, e tight la i le ua. O le pule le na sa ula le tamaloa Letufuga lea ga fai lona malo i utā i Limu'ula. E matua tight e lelei i i. E fa'afefea na ave'ese tama ma ave ese le pule, ia nonofo loa, o le pule le na, seiloga e ave ese le mea, o le mea lena na atu tama aumai le pule, e mata'utia.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: The girl was tied to be burnt alive in Tutuila but was saved by a swarm of bats urinating on her, who were known as Togumaip'e'a. The daughter of that lady, was espoused by a man named Folasā from Falelima and begat the mother of these two men (Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu). That is where we find the mother of these two men. It is from Tonumaip'e'a.

It's also been suggested that the legend of Nafanua who fought her wars back then is closely related to these events historically. There is a belief that these men are from that family. Not that many people know this these days, as if the titles have no historical lineage. That is why they keep teasing and asking, especially when we are in disagreement, Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu, where do you come from?

I said, don't try and test me, you know when it comes to absolute rule/reign, the ruler wears the power tight around his neck. (Meaning: in order for that reign to end, the wearer has to be beheaded) Such was the case with the chief Letufuga that had his kingdom in Limu'ula.

It was really tight right here (Indicating around the neck). How did the men take the ruler/ruling away? Well they just sat there.

The ruler, only when it was taken away, that's why the two men (Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu) went to get the ruling. It was amazing.

10:04:03 – 11:36:22

Igelese Ete: O le a le tāua o le lauga a le matai?

Igelese Ete: What is the importance/significance of the chief's speech?

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le lauga a le matai, e leai se ese'esega ma le fa'amanuia a le Atua i tagata, ona o le matai o lona gafa o le matai, o ia o le tausi mea a le aiga. Lona lua – o ia na vaelua i ai le Atua lona suafa, totonu o le tusi pa'ia e le sesē lena mea, lae ta'ua matai sa vaelua ai le Atua lona suafa, ioe o le mea moni la, a fa'amanuia le matai i tagata e manuia, ioe aemaise i faisa'o o aiga ma mea fa'apena. O le taua la na o le lauga o le mea o le matai. E lauga le matai, e na te talagoa le matai i le paepaega o lona ulufanua, e iai o lona si'osi'omaga, o pa'ia o lona aiga, o pa'ia o le taeao, aemaise fo'i o le feiloa'iga i ava fa'atupu ma ava fa'atamali'i, ia pei o le tiute lea a le matai o ia ona paepaeina.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: The speech of the chief, there is no difference between the speech of a chief and the blessing of God to his people.

Because the chief and his lineage, they are the guardians of the family.

Secondly, he is given by God his chief name. Inside the bible there is no mistake, it's named right through, where God, so really if the chief blesses the people, they will be blessed.

That's the importance of the speech of a chief. He makes a speech, so to speak about the paepaega layout of hidden land, and its surroundings, his respected family, the respected mornings, and especially the greetings/salutations, and especially the ceremonial rituals of encounters, the ava ceremonies. So, that's the duty of a matai.

11:40:00 – 13:00:00

Igelese Ete: O le a se alagaupu taua e te
fa'aogaina I lou soifuaga?

*Igelese Ete: What (Samoan) proverb do you use in
your life?*

Tuilagi Vaefaga: O le alagupu e masani na ou talanoa au i ai – e
fa'apea 'Sa tu i fagalilo le tapa'au o le alataua, pe tua manuia le asō.
E fa'apea lo'u talitonuga I lena o le fa'ailoga fesili matamata tele
lena, o le soifuaga ma le olaga o le tagata, lana o la iai le isi so'oga
I luma – a I le alagaupu lea, sa tau mate pe aulia be leai, a'o le Atua
pulapula tetele I lona alofa ma lona agalelei ia ua mafua ai na maua
le taeao 'ua ula, ia ua tatau maua lena afiafi ua tatou feiloa'i fiafia I le
alofa o le agalelei o le Atua, ioe sa tau mate e le Ete le outou soifua,
e leai fo'i sesi na manatu o le a tatou feiloa'i i se itula fa'apenei. Ia a o
faiga o le Ali'i e fa'apena.

Tuilagi Vaefaga: The proverb I usually talk about is:

*'Sa tu i Fagalilo le tapa'au o le alataua,
pe tua manuia le asō*

The Chief of the important path stood in Fagalilo.

*This is my belief. There is a great question. It is the life of a person.
Because there is a link ahead, yeah, in this proverb, life trying to
guess if we make it through today or not.*

*But it's God who looks upon us in his love and kindness. This is why
we have the morning 'ua ula – and yes, we have also caught up this
evening we have met with happiness, through the love and kindness
of God. Yes, who would have guessed that we would meet tonight.
And that's how God works.*

INTERVIEW 3

Title: The role of a Matai (Chief) living in Samoa
 Person interviewed: Tuilagi Siaosi and his wife Koleti
 Interviewer: Igelese Ete and Reverend Elder Risatisone Ete
 Location: Apia, Upolu, Samoa
 Date: January 9, 2020, 10.20am
 Time: 00:00:00– 13:00:00
 Recording device: Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8 and Iphone XS
 Transcribed by: Igelese Ete
 Translation: Igelese Ete. Translations appear in italics.

Appendices

Appendix 3

00:00:00–01: 13:20

Igelese Ete: O le fesili muamua fa'amolemole, I lo'u ava ma lo'u fa'aaloalo lava, o le fesili fa'amolemole, po'o ai lou suafa a le'i maua le suafa matai?

Igelese Ete: The first question please, with due respect, what was your name prior to you receiving your matai title?

Tuilagi Siaosi: O lo'u igoa la o Tuilagi Siaosi, o lo'u tamā o Maifala. A'o lo'u igoa sa ia i, o lo'u igoa taule'ale'a o Siaosi Maifala.

Tuilagi Siaosi: My name is Tuilagi Siaosi, my father's name is Vaifaga. My name prior to my matai title is Siaosi Maifala.

Risatisone Ete: O ai la le tinā?

Risatisone Ete: Who is your mother?

Koleti: O Mesepa le tinā, a'o Maifala le tamā

Koleti: Mesepa was the mother and Maifala was the father.

01:36:00 – 01:50:0 7

Igelese Ete: O le fesili lona lua, po'o le a le aso na e soifua mai ai?

Igelese Ete: The second question is what day were you born?

Tuilagi Siaosi: O le aso na 'ou fanau ai o ia Aperila le aso 26, 1953.

Tuilagi Siaosi: The day I was born on was April the 26th, 1953.

01:52:09 – 02:21:12

Igelese Ete: O fea la le nu'u na e soifua mai ai fa'amolemole?

Igelese Ete: Which village were you born in please?

Tuilagi Siaosi: O le nu'u na 'ou ola mai ai, o Tafua tai, i Sava'ii, soso'o ma Salelologa,

Tuilagi Siaosi: The village I grew up in was Tafua tai in Savaii, next to Salelologa

Risatisone Ete: it's between Salelologa and Palauni (villages in Savaii).

01:20:21 - 02:48:07

Igelese Ete: O le ā le tausaga na fa'ae'e at ai lou sufa matai?

Igelese Ete: What year did you receive your chief title?

Tuilagi Siaosi: Ua galo la

Tuilagi Siaosi: I have forgotten

Koleti: Valu sefulu i Fatausi

1980 in Fatausi

02:48:00 – 02:56:00

Igelese Ete: O fea le pito nu'u e te alala ai?

Igelese Ete: Which village/region do you stay in?

Tuilagi Siaosi: O Fatausi

Tuilagi Siaosi: It's Fatausi

02:56:13-03:34:06

Igelese Ete: O le a lou tiute fa'amatai I mea fa'aleaiga?

Igelese Ete: What is your duty as a chief within the family?

Tuilagi Siaosi: O lou tiute fa'amatai fa'aleaiga, a fai la tupu se fa'alavelave, o a'u ou te logo a uma le aiga potopoto, e ō mai e fai se talanoaga fa'atasi foi gale ia mo se fa'alavelave 'ua tupu mai.

Tuilagi Siaosi: My duty as chief, if there are any problems, I am the one that notifies the whole family, to come and have a group discussion about the problems that have arisen.

Koleti: Tusa e tausia le aiga, fo'ai gale ga o le fa'asa'o fo'i lele

Koleti: So, he takes care of the family and straightens/corrects anything.

Igelese Ete: E tusa ia e pei e ō fa'atasi ma le tiute fa'aleaiga?

Igelese Ete: So, it's very similar to what he does within the family matters as well?

Koleti: You know – 'Cos e laga le sua fa Tuilagi lea oi ia tatou, so o ga ia, pei o ia e lead ina, you know o Tuilagi ia i Fatausi atoa, e leai ia sesi e sili atu I le sua fa Tuilagi, o ia faia le tonu o le nu'u, plan ina uma se mea, that's the only tulafale in our village.

Lai i ai le mea na'o le to'alua a tulafale, na'o Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu, o le toa ga ia Savaii.

Koleti: You know – because the title which is ours (Tuilagi), he is the only one that will lead; you know Tuilagi in the whole Fatausi village. There is no one higher than Tuilagi. He is the one who decides for the village, plans everything, that's the only talking chief in our village. So, there is that thing that there were only two prominent talking chiefs, na'o Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu, who are the brave warriors of Savaii.

03:29:17- 05:22:22

Risatisone Ete: A ka'u aku kama ia, ia ua ao Savaii.

Risatisone Ete: If you name these men, well Savaii is supreme.

Tuilagi Siasosi: Luga lava lea o le gu'u akoga pe ā fogo le gu'u, fa'atasi le gu'u, e leai lava sesi ga ke fai mai se konu, Tuilagi ā ma Namulau'ulu.

Tuilagi Siasosi: They are the head of the village when the village meets, unites the village, nobody else makes a decision, only Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu.

Koleti: Tausiga o le aiga, tausi le nu'u.

Koleti: Taking care of the family, taking care of the village..

Risatisone Ete: Ma le itumalo fo'i , 'upu o le itumalo o Tuilagi e va'aia.

Risatisone Ete: And the region, the word/speech from the region, Tuilagi looks after that.

Tuilagi Siasosi: E o'o na fono le nu'u ia o Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu e fetuna'i po ai o la'ua e lauga I lea mea ma lea mea.

Tuilagi Siasosi: (So, when the village meets, Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu decide between them who will make the speech for this or that).

05:25:24 – 06:01:12

Igelese Ete: O le a sou silafia I le mafu'aga a le sua fa'a Tuilagi?

Igelese Ete: (What's your knowledge on how the chief name Tuilagi came about?)

Tuilagi Siasosi: Tuilagi, sa 'ou manatua i taimi na, fa'amalie atu ua tau galoalo atu fo'i.

Tuilagi Siasosi: Tuilagi, I did remember in those days. My sincerest apologies I have forgotten.

06:02:21-07:011:10

Tuilagi Siaosi: O le mea sili ona tãua o le lauga 'a, o ã tulaga uma o le nu'u tele ma totonu o Fatausi, e leai a sesi e failoto I le leo le o Tuilagi la avatua. A fai fo'i ona tauaimisa nisi a, o Tuilagi teua uma mea uma na, ia ona o lo ia fa'apea ia oe, saili mai se mea e fai se taumafutaga o le nu'u ia fa'ate'a ai na mea. O le teuteuina, fealofaniga o le nu'u, o Tuilagi iã ma Namulau'ulu mea 'uma. Lã tiute le na.

Tuilagi Siaosi: What is the most important in the chief's speech whatever is happening in the whole village of Fatausi, there is no one else who has a say above the voice of Tuilagi.

If there are any disagreements, its Tuilagi who will mediate everything, and they will go and find some food for the feast, so we can forget about those things. The mediation, unity of the village, its Tuilagi and Namulau'ulu's duty.

Risatisone Ete: Tausi le filemu ma le manuia.

Risatisone Ete: Maintain the peace and well-being of the village.

07:06:00 – 07:59:03

Igelese Ete: O le a se alagaupu taua e te fa'aogaina I lou soifuaga?

Igelese Ete: What is an important proverb you use in your life?

Tuilagi Siaosi: Ia o le alagaupu fo'i gale, pea o le sailigã, fo'i lea, lea ga alu ai ia Malietoa toe sa'ili malo ia Nafanua, ae fai mai Nafanua 'Tali le lagi se ao o lou malo', o le mea lena, o le filemũ lena, a e sili le matau e tatou ò I le agaga o le loto maulalo, e fai ai fa'aiuga uma, pei o le mea fo'i lena saili malo ai ia Nafanua, I lou a talitonuga ga, na'o a'u a ia, maua na o le filemu ma tulaga, auã e leai se aoga tatou te o e fai lea ma lea, ae leai se filemu, ae lae fai mai Nafanua 'Tali I le lagi sou... ia lea ua tatou fai ai nei, tatou pepese ma alleluia I le alofa o le tamã I le lagi, I lea taimi I lea taimi.

Tuilagi Siaosi: Well that proverb - like the search, where Malietoa tried to find the ruling power with Nafanua, and Nafanua told him:

'Wait for the title of your kingdom from heaven.'

So, in that case, it is peace. It is best that we proceed in the spirit of humility when making our decisions. I believe that is why he (Malietoa) went to seek it from Nafanua. In my opinion, it was to achieve peace in different aspects, because there is no use in what we are doing (this and that), without peace. As Nafanua says:

"Wait for the title of your kingdom from heaven"

...and that is what we are doing. We are singing hallelujah for the love of our father in heaven, in this time and that time).

08:02:15-09:40:15

Igelese Ete: O ā upu e te fa'aogaina I taimi e te fetalai ai I le gagana fa'afailauga?

Igelese Ete: What words do you use, in times you have to deliver your oratory speech?

Tuilagi Siaosi: O le gagana fa'afailauga ā latou o le mea muamua, o le gagana fa'afetai muamua I le tamā I le lagi, I lona alofa mo lona agalelei, ave'a'i lea 'ua uma, afai o le ā se mea o fa'alavelave lae tupu, e famulimuli a'i ā le gā, a um loa le fa'afetai, fa'afetai fo'i ina ua tau aofia uma lava ia tagata, pei ona i ai le fa'amoemoe lea, a 'uma, ia na fola loa lea o le mea u iai, ma avatu sa'o ma le fa'aiuga, tatou maua le fealofani sili.

Tuilagi Siaosi: The language of the orator, the first thing, is the language of thanking God in the heavens. For his love and kindness, then we improvise - then when that's finished, if there is an interruption happening then that will be the last in the speech. When thanksgiving is finished, thank everyone present who were at the event; when finished, then lay down the conclusion and your decision, and say 'May we continue to be united'.

Koleti: Po'o ā lā ou upu? Se'i fai mai sou fasi-lauga !

Koleti: So, what about your words? You should recite a piece of your oratory speech!

Tuilagi Siaosi: (Sample of an abbreviated speech) Atonu o lea ua tatou feiloa'i i le alofa ma le agalelei o le tamā I le lagi I lenei taeao fou, fa'afetai o lea 'ua tatou feiloa'i e leai se fa'amoemoe o tupu I totonu o le tatou nu'u. Fa'afetai o le ua, ta'ita'iina mai ma le filemu le tatou nu'u, pei ona i ai lenei taeao I lone alofa ma lona agalelei.

Ae le paia e o le aiga ma le tatou nu'u, ia tou alolofa I le tatou nu'u, sili na ma taua, aua nei fa'apea ta te tu'u foua le tatou nu'u, ina ia leifa I totonu tutupu mai, a o le fa'amoemoe lava o Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu mai ia le laititi se'l pa'ia le ulumatua ia manu teleina nei aso ma fuafuaga fai. Ia manuia fo'i le tatou nu'u I le fa'atasi mai le tatou tamā I le lagi. Ina uma lea.

Tuilagi Siaosi: (Sample of an abbreviated speech) It is likely - we have fellowshiped by the love and kindness of our heavenly father this new morning. Thank you that we have met and there are no hardships happening in our village. Thank you that our village is being led in peace this morning, through his love and kindness.

So, our beloved family and village, thank you. Please love our village, that is the most important, don't think less of our village, the hope of Tuilagi ma Namulau'ulu that our village is united from the youngest to the eldest, your duties to do. May our village be blessed with the presence of our father in heaven. Then it's finished).

INTERVIEW 4

Title: Getting Your Pe'a as a Young teenager in Samoa
Person interviewed: Lepaga Karl Partsch
Interviewer: Igelese Ete
Location: Massey University, Old Dominion Building,
Wellington, New Zealand
Date: March 10, 2021,
Time: 00:00:00 - 00:46:04
Recording device: Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8
Transcribed by: Igelese Ete

00:00:00–00:06:0 9

Igelese Ete: Why and when did you get your pe'a ... and how old were you?

¹⁴² This is literal name given to someone who is brought into a group who are getting their pe'a so as to even up the numbers. This is because traditionally the pe'a should always be done in pairs or even numbers. Thus, the 'chasing' refers to catching up with the rest of the group, so that the additional person is tattooed at a similar level of embellishment as the rest of the group before the collective process can continue.

Karl Partsch: ... I was really young and small, I was around 11 to 12 years old, around that area, the reason my father has a pe'a, [is that] the old man was a sogaimiti. Because back then it was said a (pe'a) should be passed on to the eldest brother. That's the fa'aSamoa way. If the older brother doesn't want one, then the next in line can receive it. And that's part of the reason why I went to have a look around my village, and saw there were people doing pe'a tattooing and I went along and teased the boys. I was cheeky and they chased me around. Then on another day I went to visit the elders and they asked the reason why I wanted to get a pe'a? And another thing is they were tattooing (a group) pe'a in the neighbouring village, so they were looking for a 'tuli-tatau' (chasing – tattoo)¹⁴² someone that would even up the numbers, that would get an even number of soa, because there were nine men, they were looking for a 10th member, as in fa'aSamoa tradition there should always be an even number. So the elders said they would ask my older brother because the pe'a comes with other responsibilities, tautua (service) and things like that. Yes, so after talking to my brothers, my dad and mum called me home and explained to me about the confirmation of the pe'a. So, I went to see my dad.

00:05:48 - 0:06:52

Igelese Ete: So in which village did you have your pe'a done?

Karl Partsch: My mum's village is Saleimoa -Gogo'a, and the place where we had the pe'a done is Lotoso'a, because they are neighbouring villages. So, we went and saw the tufuga, and he told me that I'll be the tuli-tatau – the one to catch up with the rest of the nine men. So, I was the first one to be tattooed that day, then the next morning, so I can catch up to where the others were and then we were tattooed together. Because those days, there wasn't a price, all the ten people who were getting their pe'a on what their contribution would be, like how much money, and food, and gifts for the tufuga. These days the tufuga charges a fee. Back then it was the fa'aSamoa style, as many of the group were matai and elders, and I was the youngest, small and skinny, and the naughty one - back in the days everybody knew. Cause I just roamed from village to village. Wow I loved staying in one village, then the next village, then back home. I enjoyed life.

00:06:54 – 00:08:00:00

Igelese Ete: How did you prepare for the pe'a and how did you cope with the pain?

Karl Partsch: I was young, thinking, "Man keep going". When I lay down, when the au hit me – I was thinking oi kafefe (oh I am afraid). No turning back. Yeah I was just crying, moaning. I wasn't worried about pain – I was patient - onosa'i (be patient) because the elders were encouraging and calling out saying 'malo le onosa'i'. I was blocking the pain. I didn't think about the pain.

00:08:00 – 00:09:30

Igelese Ete: What was the first part of your body to be tattooed?

Karl Partsch: The first part was the va'a - my back, then gradually to the sides, and then the knees. The most painful part for me was the knees, and then the sides, and around my bones because I was really skinny. It was like a saw. So, I had to be patient, and listen to the songs, and the nice thing is that we were in a faleo'o (traditional Samoan house) and people walking around, and passing by saying encouragements and affirmations malo sogaimiti, malo Karl, onosa'i. Being patient is important, because nothing in this life is easy.

00:09:39-00:13:00

Igelese Ete: Did you feel different after the pe'a? Could you feel a difference? Did you feel stronger?

Karl Partsch: As soon as the pe'a is completed, the elders say, this is the key (pointing to the belly button) for life. So, as soon as I finished my pe'a, my mother said, "Have a think". She asked where should I go to get a matai title. Because my father was a matai from Saleimoa – Gogo'a name Aukilialo, that's the name of the big chief. The chiefly name for my dad is Tautua, so my dad said to think since I have my pe'a, where I should get my title ... if I should go to the village of Faleālili (where my mother is from). So, the name I have is Taloollemanao Lepaga. The meaning – I know the Tau – but I am not sure on what Manao means. But the other name is Lepaga and the other name is Kalo o le magao, from the Faleālili district- Tafatafa is the village, the other part. Each of the villages have their own titles, for us it is the 'au kilialo.

00:14:41 – 00:15:08

Igelese Ete: How long did you wait after your pe'a to get your title

Karl Partsch: I got my matai title about a year and a half after I got my pe'a. We went to Falealili to get our titles. So, I was around the age of 13 o14, whilst my parents were still alive.

Appendices

Appendix 3

00:20:20 – 00:21:20

Igelese Ete: When you became a chief
did the pe'a assist you and did it make you feel
confident/proud?

Karl Partsch: Before the pe'a I was rowdy, but after, I became responsible. People looked at me differently, with respect. Even here (in New Zealand) because people look at it differently. The reason why I got it, was to honour my father, and I will also ask my son, and maybe take him to Samoa for a title. People look at me with respect, I am very proud of it as well, as well as my family. My whole family was so proud.

00:40:04 – 00:42:04

Igelese Ete: What were the rules for you during the
pe'a?

Karl Partsch: Those days we weren't allowed to walk at night, because of the evil spirits around during that time, and I believed it. And we all lived together as a group of 10. We were not allowed to have any women with us, just the young men and older men; they would come to massage our legs. For this they mix the moso'oi (perfume tree) flower and coconut - they extract this oil by leaving it in the sun. This is where the oil is extracted. Come early morning, 4am – 5am, we would walk, be walking naked. Each person would then prepare.

00:43:04 – 00:46:04

Igelese Ete: Did you have a special diet/food?

Karl Partsch: We had our village, so when we had our pe'a' done, one tufuga was too heavy-handed. The older ones, would sometimes urinate, which didn't matter, and understandable because it's so painful.

Which is the reason why I hardly go to any of pe'a process because it's traumatic, my body remembers the pain. I've never had this kind of pain. And I would never want to go back there. I can't explain it to anybody. Even my dad was asking me? Can you do it? Until I lay down, no screaming, no yelling ... walks in the morning. We were oiled up, the egg, the key for life which is the last part to be tattooed (which is the belly button). It is one of those pains that no one knows.

INTERVIEW 5

Title: Knowledge relating to koniseti in Samoa.
Person interviewed: Retired Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO):
Interviewer: Igelese Ete
Location: 21 Dominica Cres. Grenada Village
Date: March 22, 2021,
Time: 00:00:00 – 00:15:50
Recording device: Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8
Transcribed by: Igelese Ete

Appendices
Appendix 3

00:00:00–00:16:00

Igelese Ete: When did the koniseti commence in Samoa?

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO): As far back as I know. I was born in 1938, so somewhere around 1945/1946 when I was eight or nine years of age, when I saw a Koniseti. However, I think they existed before then.

00:01:26 - 0:05:09

Igelese Ete: Is Koniseti a translation of the English word 'concert'?

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO): Yes, the transliteration of the English word 'concert' is Koniseti. It talks about tala (stories) and is related to what pastors were doing from the Samoan churches with the tala lotu tamaiti at that time (literally – Stories of the kids' service). The only difference was that the content in the church was obviously based on biblical stories. These were concerts, they had costumes, scripts were written, and children had to learn their lines. So, maybe it was the influence of the missionaries, where they brought their koniseti which was religious, and the Samoan community created their own secular versions, depicting more relevant stories. And also, for the sake of the community, the Koniseti were toured around all of the villages. It was also a way of fundraising for the touring group, because the local village would give a donation. And they would be hosted by the local village, who would provide accommodation and food for the performers and team. In the evening the koniseti would be held.

00:05:30 – 00:06:20:00

Igelese Ete: Your father Migi Taito Ete was involved in 'koniseti'

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO):

Yes, that's right, he was a part of the koniseti process. He really enjoyed the process of creating/making koniseti. He was involved in rehearsing other people's koniseti (composition of the koniseti) as well as creating his own koniseti, where he would also teach it.

00:06:30 - 00:06:50

Igelese Ete: What year was he active in koniseti?

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO):

I think I was around ten years old when he was active in koniseti, so around the late 1940s and early 1950s.

00:07:20-00:09:28

Igelese Ete: Do you have some of his writings of songs from a 'koniseti', which he recorded in his diary?

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO)

Yes, he has lyrics which were a 'gafa o Samoa' (genealogy of Samoa) written by a well-known writer at that time Pesetā. (I think this is a chiefly name from Pu'apu'a) ... Siō, from the Siō family ... a very musical family.

So, he composed the lyrics and melody, and then Ete would select performers, and rehearse them. And that time, locals were working off the land, so time was flexible, and they used various local areas, malae (open field), or any house that was available.

00:11:16-00:11:50

Igelese Ete: When and how did the koniseti recede?

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO)

I think around the time that radio and television became part of the local community, as well as the movie theatre at a later stage. However, the church koniseti continues right up to the present time.

00:13:16-00:15:50

Igelese Ete: What was involved in the koniseti?

The Rev. Elder Risatisone Ete (QSO):

Were there any musical instruments, staging or props?

They had singing, dancing and acting. They were not religious koniseti so to speak, however they had a moral story, and there was a storyline throughout. And there were also different themes throughout. And to note that there were people who were specialised in fai-koniseti (creating the concert). They wrote the story, script, music, lyrics, and dialogue. It was also like an opera, where he would sing what he was trying to say. There was mix of forms of performing arts.

There were musical instruments: guitar, ukulele, fala (rolled mat), pū (conch), accordions, mandolin, selo (an indigenous, a stringed instrument) and pump organs. There is always a narrator, and the music played when they enter. And they used to carry their instruments and props from village to village. Kerosene lanterns were used at night to light up the village, and curtains were drawn up to create a stage set.

Appendices
Appendix 3

INTERVIEW 6

Title: My personal experience with Fāgogo
Person interviewed: Fereni Pepe Ete (QSM)
Interviewer: Igelese Ete
Location: 21 Dominica Cres. Grenada Village
Date: March, 22, 2021,
Time: 00:00:00 – 00:07:20
Recording device: Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8
Transcribed by: Igelese Ete

00:00:00–00:02:02

Igelese Ete: What are your thoughts with regards to koniseti?

Fereni Pepe Ete (QSM):

Well I personally didn't witness or see koniseti, but I feel that fāgogo was a form of koniseti. It was through my grandmother 'Fa'atuai Lefono' that I heard fāgogo, because my mother was very busy looking after our large family - (a total of 14 siblings).

And there was an interactive process – we the kids would ask 'E aue pe leai ? (Will you say 'aue' or not)?

If she says 'Aue – then yes, and we the kids would respond by saying 'Aue, indicating to my grandmother that we were still awake and this would continue throughout the night before she felt that it was our bedtime. Then she would recite for a very long time, and when she finished she would say "Tomorrow we will continue the story."

So, we would visit my grandmother. Before we went to sleep, she would use it as a form of bedtime story which we call fāgogo. All of the kids would lay down on the floor with a large mosquito net to cover all of us, and she would tell different stories, like Samoan myths, but she would also like to tell stories about our family genealogy. Which is where I got my passion to read and write.

00:00:00–00:02:02

Igelese Ete: So, did you ever watch a koniseti?

Fereni Pepe Ete (QSM):

No – But I do remember around 1948 where the radio became evident in Samoa, that each village received one radio, and the whole village would go to the place where the radio was and listen in the evenings. And there were two men who were well known as radio commentators - Fuiono and Lavea. People loved listening to them on the radio.

The other people who were active with storytelling were the pastors, where in the evening we would be doing bible reading in Samoan. There was also a church (EFKS) church bulletin sent out monthly, and I would read and be inspired by those biblical stories as well.

Appendices
Appendix 3

00:04:47 – 00:05:00

Igelese Ete: Do you think there is a link between fāgogo and koniseti?

Fereni Pepe Ete (QSM):

Yes, I think so – My grandmother's stories, and also at the church where a lot of stories were told as well.

00:06:42 – 00:07:20

Igelese Ete: You were prolific in writing Christmas scripts for around 35 years. Was that due to your exposure to your grandmother's fāgogo and also church ministry?

Fereni Pepe Ete (QSM)

Yes, most definitely. Also my dad (Dr Toto'a Auva'a), would encourage me to write plays for our family because as a 12 and 13 year old, I was the eldest. He would tell me to write a play to be performed at the church.

But my grandmother (Fa'atuai) would share traditional Samoan songs because she was a Taupou from the village of Letogo.

INTERVIEW 7

Title: Role of the Contemporary Matai
Person interviewed: Lupematasila Kaio So'oalo:
Interviewer: Igelese Ete
Location: Johnsonville Mall
Date: April 13, 2021,
Time: 00:00:00 - 00:06:50
Recording device: Logic Pro X Version 10.4.8
Transcribed by: Igelese Ete

00:00:00–00:1:26

Igelese Ete: What is the role of a matai in a contemporary society especially in New Zealand?

Lupematesila Kaio So'alo: Thank you for the question. There is a slight difference because of the situation that there is a mix of the Samoan culture and with others here (in New Zealand).

Remember the leadership of the matai is directed towards the 'au-aiga (family circle), which are his children, who are then involved in other communities and societies, where they are highly influenced by a different environment.

The other aspect, the leadership of the matai, in Samoa its highly focused on his surroundings. His fanua (land), for example, on a usual day, he directs who should be going here, who should be attending the plantation, who should be staying home to look after the cooking, who should be looking after the land and all those things.

However back here (New Zealand) it's about working, church and family. These are the roles that are similar to other cultures, and I think about things that will make things better, so the difference is the environment.

So the leadership of the matai, is dependent on who he's leading, his family, his community, the children who head to their schools and are influenced. This is different from Samoa where we are very strict in our culture, we wake in the morning, you go to your chores, there is no mucking around, you have to be back home for evening devotions precisely at 7pm. Here it probably never happens. On Sundays one should wake up early to prepare the umu (traditional Samoan cooking using heated stones, covered by Banana leaves) and one should attend church. Here (in New Zealand) that hardly happens; one has to work if a palagi comes to you to work, the matai can't do anything.

00:01:26 - 0:05:09

Igelese Ete: What are the key values of matai?

¹⁴³ Pratt's Samoan dictionary states it as the word for eating, so I'm not sure whether it covers both.

Lupematesila Kaio So'oalo: The key values of a matai, even before the missionaries arrived, personally I felt like Atua (the Christian God) was there before the missionaries arrival. They arrived in Samoa, but I feel that the value of 'alofa' (love) was already present prior to the missionaries arriving, which is why Christianity and aganu'u were so easy to marry, and I feel like goodwill was always in Samoa. Like in the old days in my thinking, I've heard like the origin of the 'ta'i o le sua', (giving of the gifts of thanks by the host families at funerals, weddings, birthdays etc) was the travelling of people, especially by sea. Where the matai would say 'fa'aafe le malaga lea (turn this travelling group) where the 'ta'i le sua' is then instigated. Thus, the formal presentation is held, then there is what is called the sua taute (a formal word for drink¹⁴³). So, if you're walking a long distance, what happens when you arrive? You become thirsty, so after you've chatted it is followed by the ta'isi, (usually chicken, taro, yams, food).

So, the matai is like the architect, which is where the word when the 'sua' is done which is fa'atamali'i (absolute integrity).

So, the matai follows the path of his predecessor, values like alofa, amiotonu (uprightness), lead with love, and also be disciplined and strict to lead his community. Not to be harsh and mean, but to have tough love, encouraging them to be tough, teaching grit, those key principles. If these values break down the family suffers as well.

So, there are temptations, for our matais, such as money, mismanagement, abusing of power. But I do thank Atua, like if we look at our Samoan government, they are getting democracy in.

So yes love, truth, honesty, resilience.

00:05:30 - 00:06:20:00

Igelese Ete: Is there an age restriction that one becomes a matai?

Lupematesila Kaio So'oalo: There's no age limit; I am aware that there are children that receive matai titles at the age of eight to 12 years of age, especially if there are no other persons in the family. So, the mea-sina (treasures) are the titles and land. And the Samoan government should not dictate that, each family should be able to look after their treasures – titles and lands, and government should not meddle with them.

00:06:30 - 00:06:50

Igelese Ete: Standing in the world right now?
What do you see as the big issues?

Lupematesila Kaio So'oalo: Apart from the COVID – 19, the unstable economy as it fluctuates. Climate change is also another for us - Samoa and Pacific islands, especially with the ozone, and the gas emissions from other bigger countries, and I hope nothing lethal happens in the next two hundred and three hundred years. This is our way of life, and it needs to be protected. Obviously the others would be loss of traditional knowledge and the influence of the Western world, politics and the greed for power, and also the aganu'u, the influence of internet, violence, cyberbullying, and youth suicide.

00:06:50 -00:07:20

Igelese Ete: What are the structures to the lauga?

Lupematesila Kaio So'oalo: From my experience living and growing up in Samoa. The lauga is derived from the meeting of two groups. Which is usually the malaga (the travelling group) and the tali (the host). The lauga has two elements – the Lauga usu and Lauga Tali.

And there are seven sections. So for the Lauga usu. The first section is the folasaga. This part is usually very metaphorical and poetic, and beautiful.

A lauga with a great folasaga, that's where the audience will say this is an outstanding tulafale, because they can incorporate the environment in a very beautiful language; they literally take you on that journey that you're almost transported to what they're describing. By the same token, you can tell who's not up to par.

After that is the second part the Fa'afiti le 'ava. So, remember the village has got together to bring the ava together, and they reject the ava.

Then the pa'ia section, which are honorifics to the particular village, then this transitions to the Fa'afetai I le Atua, where we thank God, and then the Faiā or the relationships, then the Taeao, and then the Fa'amatafi lagi (literally "clearing the sky"), where you are giving out good wishes, and farewells.

So, for the lauga tali (the reply) its more or less saying thank you, and does not have as many sections.

Though there is what you call 'seu le lauga' (correcting the orator), so if there is an incorrect lineage, or if there is lineage 'faiā' - that may bring shame to the family, the tulafe can seu the lauga which literally cuts off the orator, to cut short his speech, which protects the integrity of the family. In the more contemporary setting here, it's done more for special occasions weddings, funerals, birthdays etc.

Appendix 4: Account Of The Tatau/Pe'a Process



Figure 1.
The 'au being struck by the tufuga ta
tatau (*Master tattooist*) Su'a Suluape
Peter at the Taupou Tatau studios
in Wellington (January 27, 2021). ©
Igelese Ete.

¹⁴⁴ The ceremony that acknowledges the completion of the tatau. The ceremony requires that sama, also known as lega (turmeric) is mixed with coconut oil and massaged on the new pe'a and malu. The ritual also involves the cracking of an egg on the head of the pe'a and malu. This is accompanied by speeches and the exchange of gifts. All of these elements have specific meanings, and mark a new beginning for the new sog'a'imiti and malu. (Natanielu, 2020, p. 260).

¹⁴⁵ When my pe'a process was confirmed on September 24, 2020, I deposited 50% of the tufuga's fee.

¹⁴⁶ The word refers to the stretching of the skin.

¹⁴⁷ This motif he designed in reference to the treble clef and pu (conch shell).

¹⁴⁸ The word is a combination of the names of my two eldest children, Aria and Naatapuitema.

¹⁴⁹ Personal Communication with Tufuga Suluape's manager via email August 30, 2020.

¹⁵⁰ Walking was encouraged to support effective blood flow.

Introduction

This appendix offers an account written nine days after the samaga¹⁴⁴ that occurred on January the 30, at the Taupou Tatau private room reserved for the pe'a tatau. The account is divided into two sections. The first offers a chronological documentation of the physical process and the second is an internal reflection on what I experienced.

The physical process

On January 26 I commenced my journey to acquiring a pe'a.¹⁴⁵ This process was enabled by the tufuga ta tatau (*Master tattooist*) Su'a Suluape Peter, from the line of the Master tattooist of the Su'a clan at the Taupou Tatau studios. This facility is owned by the renowned Samoan contemporary tattooist Tuigamala Andy Tauafiafi, who also assisted in the process as a Koso.¹⁴⁶ As an assistant to the tufuga, he also tattooed the sleeve on my left arm and my company logo Ariatea.^{147, 148}

The pe'a, according to Natanielu (2020), usually takes 12 days to complete. However, in my case the process was able to be completed in four days.

Prior to the commencement of the pe'a, I was emailed a list of rules from the tufuga's manager.¹⁴⁹ I was aware of some of these traditional considerations because I have grown up in the Samoan community. The regulations were partly concerned with minimising the impact of evil spirits. I took careful note of these proscriptions because I respect tradition and the prohibitions also ensured physical safety and protection. The rules stipulated that I should not wear any form of cologne, body spray or jewellery. I also had to avoid alcohol, recreational drugs and sexual congress. In addition I had to stay away from the beach and out of the sun. The rules also stipulated that there should be no flowers and if I walked at night, then I must be accompanied; always walking in front of whoever attended me (never behind).¹⁵⁰

DAY 1. TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021

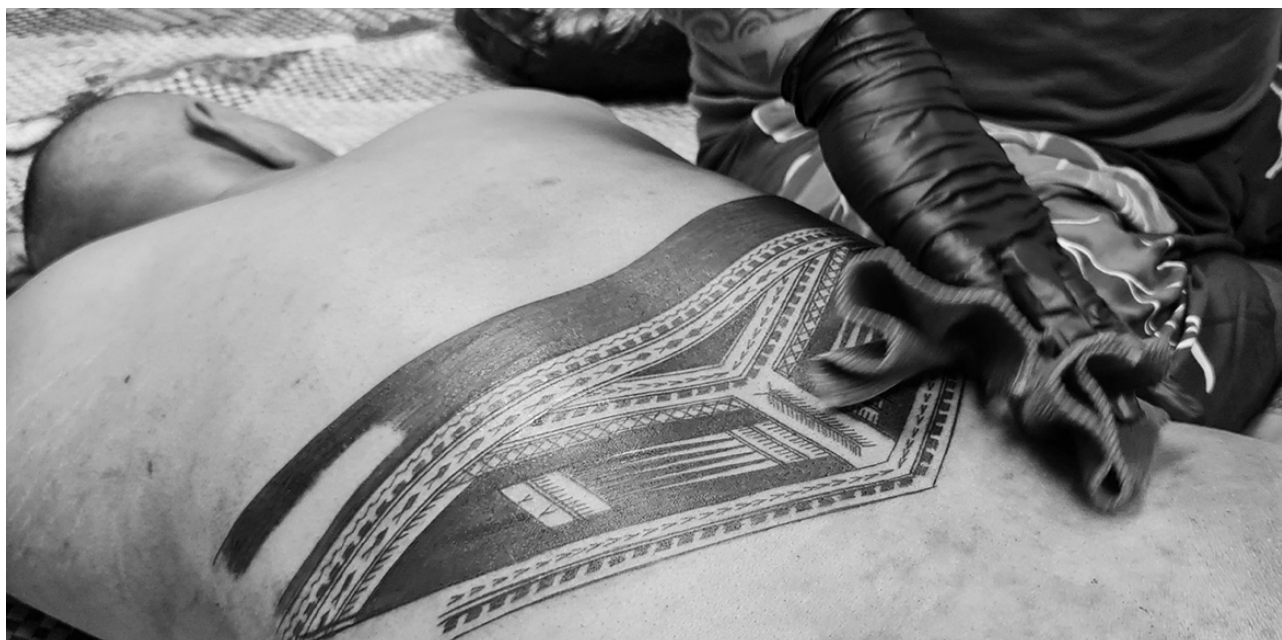


Figure 2. Tattooing around the dorsum region with a design that references the va'a taumualua. © Igelese Ete.

¹⁵¹ The Va'a taumualua is a double-bowsprit sea vessel: (va'a – sea vessel, taumua - bowsprit, lua – two). The va'a taumualua is peculiar because both ends of the va'a have a taumua, and the vessel uses a "shunting technique for sailing upwind" (Natanielu, 2020, p. 77).

The first, two hour session commenced at 11.00 am. It occurred after much discussion and personal research into the pe'a, its processes, significance and nature.

This session focused on tattooing around the dorsum region. The design referenced the va'a taumualua,¹⁵¹ the pula tama (also known as the tama'I pe'a) and the pula tele (the larger part below the small black triangle) (Figure 2). This initial sequence marked the commencement of a journey where one begins to travel into the underworld, Pulotu (Mallon & Galliot, 2018).

DAY 2. WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021



Figure 3.
The tufuga and the koso's in
sync, tattooing the lower buttock.
© Igelese Ete

My second session was concerned with the lower back and the upper buttock ('aso laiti, the saemutu and fa'apecu), and the tattooing of the 'aso fa'aifo on the left and right flank. This 6 hour process began at 11.00am.



Figure 4.
Blood seeping through the cuts that mark the asofa'aifo (curved lines), the va'a (canoe), the tafani tapulu (the dark border) and tafani teu (the decorative border).
© Igelese Ete.

¹⁵² By the final day I was encouraged to drink a can of Coca Cola. I hadn't consumed any effervescent sugar drinks for over two years, but the high concentration of sucrose in the beverage proved beneficial.

DAY 3. THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2021

The third session focused on tattooing the left side of the lower buttocks, the hamstring and knees (fa'amuli'ali'ao, ulumanu, and atigivae). This was an extended day that finished at approximately 7.00 pm. Given the extensive nature of the tatau, I could feel the blood loss and I became quite cold. While I wasn't conscious of it, I was bleeding a great deal but blood was constantly wiped away by the kosos. To deal with the loss of blood, I was encouraged to consume food with a high sugar content during breaks in the process.¹⁵²

Figure 5.
The tufuga ta tatau Su'a Suluape
Peter tattooing the asolaiti.
© Igelese Ete.



I had been pre-warned about the drop in my body temperature and in retrospect I realise I should have taken more care to keep my upper body warm.

The legs are the largest part of the body to be tattooed and the knees are the most painful. However, I mentally and spiritually prepared myself for the pain during these parts of the process.



Figure 6.
In discussions with tufuga Su'a
Suluape Peter during a break after
the completion of the back and
lower back tattoo. © Igelese Ete.

During the process I was visited by my father and this gave me added strength during the final two hours of the tattooing. Earlier, I had also been attended by my workmates Belinda Weepu and Mike Bridgeman and others who I can't recall. These people are known as au-tapua'i (*moral supporters*). However, such support transcends physical company and well-wishing. When one considers the nature of the word, 'au means 'group' and tapua'i is the Samoan word for 'worship'. There is a connection in such support between the prosaic and physical and a respect for and connection with what lies beyond this.

Given the severity and duration of this session, after I left the building, I struggled to walk to my father's car because of the pain in my leg and the fact that I was shaking from the cold due to blood loss. When I arrived home, I was in considerable pain and I struggled while standing, to wash the newly tattooed area. I also felt very dizzy so my wife brought me a mat to lie down on. She also covered me with blankets as a way of addressing my low body temperature.

DAY 4. FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2021



Figure 7.
My father supporting me during the process. His presence was empowering because it afforded a physical, emotional and spiritual connection to family that helped me to embrace the pain. © Igelese Ete.

The final session was dedicated to tattooing the right side of my body, the lower buttock and hamstring, the knees and finally the navel (tuli, the punialo and the pute). The ritual began at 11.00 am with a break at 3.30 pm, and then a resumption and conclusion to the process between 4.00 pm and 7.00 pm.

Realising that this would be a day when again I needed to endure considerable pain and potential blood loss, I came prepared with a warm hat and hoodie and a double-layer of socks. This provision kept me warm during the tattoo. Day 3 had been difficult because my upper body had been shaking, because the cold I was experiencing was being exacerbated by a large fan in the room.

The final part of my body to be tattooed was the navel, which is significant as it symbolises the umbilical connection to life.

During the process I was comforted and encouraged by being revisited by my

work colleague Belinda Weepu, Herbert Bartley and his husband Kavika; as well as my church elder, deacon and treasurer Muagututi'a Tauafiafi. In the afternoon my older brother Eteuati Ete and his wife Mele Wendt also visited and at the end of my session my younger brother Risatisone Ete Jnr and my father joined us. Having family and friends present gave me added strength.

My brother Risatisone was kind enough to give me a ride home, and once again I was exhausted from both the day's tattooing and the cold, even though I had prepared myself. Having learned from my experiences the day before, I knew that I would be feeling faint after the pe'a. Accordingly, rather than washing the remnants of the ink, blood and plasma off my body, I was immediately assisted by my wife to a fala (*Samoan mat*). The traditional protocol of immediately lying on a mat had been stipulated by the tufuga. Apparently it assists in cooling the pe'a/body and maintaining adequate blood circulation.



Figure 8.
Performing the Samoan siva at
the samaga, where the pe'a was
celebrated. © Igelese Ete.

¹⁵³ This is a pescovegetarianism diet where one is largely vegetarian but food intake can include fish. However, one excludes the consumption of red meat, pork and poultry.

¹⁵⁴ The method is based on relational connections between three ideas. The first is called Cold Therapy. Hof proposes that cold can be used to burn fat, boost one's immune system, improve sleep, reduce inflammation and enhance natural mood boosters. His Cold Therapy is combined with attentive breathing techniques that are designed to improve one's energy level, detox the body, reduce stress levels and rebalance the nervous system. Cold Therapy and breathing techniques are connected to a form of conscious commitment where one is prepared to journey into one's physiology and to move out of one's existing comfort zones in the pursuit of increasing potential and inner power. (Hof.W, 2020, The Wim Hof Method: Activate Your Potential, Transcend Your Limits)

DAY 5. SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2021 SAMAGA

Day 5 was concerned with the Samaga. This is the ritual celebration of the completion of the pe'a process and is performed to signal the end of the tattooing and to present the new body and beginning for the *soga'imiti* (Galliot, 2015; Mallon et al., 2010).

This event commenced at 11.00 am, at the same venue where I had undergone my pe'a. It opened with a *tatalo* (*Samoa prayer*) and then progressed into formal proceedings. First, the *kosos* brought the *sama* (*a mix of turmeric and coconut*). This is understood as a sacred oil that comes straight through the gods. (Mallon & Galliot, 2018 p. 27). This mixture was massaged over my pe'a and the whole body in general. Next the *tufuga* gently massaged the egg yolk into the top of my head. This symbolises a new beginning.

Afterwards, the *tulafale* *Lupematesila* spoke on behalf of my family, thanking the *tufuga* and his assistants. Food and fine mats were then handed over and envelopes containing money were given as tokens of thanks for the work done.

At the end of the celebration I was requested to perform a *siva Samoa* (*Samoa dance*) to display and celebrate the new pe'a.

Internal reflection

A 'e mana'o i le pe'a tali le tiga
(If you want the pe'a you have to accept the pain).
(Mallon & Galliot, 2018, p. 26)

The pe'a is both physical and non-physical. In preparation for the process I carefully considered dimensions of my general well being. I undertook a regime of intermittent fasting for 6 to 7 days a week in conjunction with the maintenance of my pescetarianism diet.¹⁵³ I reduced my intake of sugar and maintained regular, early morning exercise (between 2.00 and 4.00 am at my local gymnasium). The preparatory training focused on cardio and resistance development supported by the implementation of Dr Wim Hof's breathwork training and cold shower methods.¹⁵⁴

I also prepared mentally and spiritually for the pe'a; meditating daily on the significance of the process to my family, my identity and the resourcing of my doctoral research. During this process, I decentred myself and began to distribute my thinking across wider contexts. Knowing that there would be physical pain and stress on my body resulting from the intermittent fasting, early morning resistance training, cardio, and cold showers, meditation and *tatalo* (*prayer*), I saw this decentring as a form of strengthening my purpose for undertaking the procedure.

On Day 1, I had prepared for the initial strike of the au (*mallet*). When Su'a announced that we were about to commence, I took a deep breath, lay face down on the fala (*mat*), closed my eyes, and listened to his instructions. The tufuga announced "Manuia le ta'oto" (*May your lying down mean that the pe'a is blessed*).

Vocal affirmations from all parties are a key part of the process. From me they took the form of statements like:

Malo le silasila (*Well done on your vision*)

Malo le sausau (*Well done on your tapping*) This was in reference to the tapping stick that drives the au.

Malo le koso (*Well done on stretching the skin*)

Malo le tapuia'i (*Well done on your support*)

and at the conclusion of the process:

Malo le taliau (*Well done on accepting the pain*).

The last statement was especially important in helping alleviate anxiety attacks and claustrophobia. On the first day of the pe'a, I found that when I called out the traditional acknowledgements, my anxiety attacks, that normally last between 30 seconds and one minute, dissipated and I ended up with little recollection of physical pain.

Initially I focused on my son Naatapuitema, after whom the doctoral production is named, and the struggles he navigates and seeks to transcend, including his anxiety and depression. I connected his emotional pain and the pain of his character in my artistic work, with my physical pain. I drew on a belief in his ability to handle these things as a motivation and assurance that I could also transcend the pain that I was experiencing.

I also dwelt on the strength and love of my wife and children, as well as that of my parents and ancestors who I had the privilege of honouring with my pe'a.

The first strike of the au may be described as a burning sensation, that I then had to embrace throughout the pe'a journey. This burning sensation immediately caused me to flash back to a time when our family home (the church manse at 122 The Ridgeway street in Wellington) caught on fire. I was nine years old and I remember vividly waking up in my parents' room. The room was consumed by flames and my father burst in to rescue me. My family tells me that they almost forgot about me being inside the blazing house and I could easily have lost my life that day.

The burning pain also connected me to a spiritual place, (this may have been Pulotu). This is difficult to describe, but I was joined to this other, non-physical location into which I was able to channel the pain. To reach into this, I lay with

155 In this regard I was inspired by a chapter in David Goggins' 2018 audiobook, *Can't hurt me: Master your mind and defy the odds* where he discussed overcoming significant physical pain in his navy seal training through a process of channeling pain.

my eyes closed and I let my body relax. As I deflected the pain, I also thought of my family members, their significance and importance in my life. I visualised and meditated on things that would inspire and motivate me, especially as the process continued towards the more challenging parts of my body (the tattooing of my legs and when the 'au was hammering directly on my kneecaps). During these times both my body and my 'essence' could feel the hammering. By this I mean the hammering became both physical and more than physical. But as the pain rose, it also called up determination to overcome pain; so the two things became connected.

The pain that I was experiencing connected me to moments of pain in my life. This pain was physical, emotional or psychological but it was also the pain that my loved ones experienced. So, pain became something no longer focused on the immediate – it was something absorbent. My focus drew in dimensions and instances of pain. I experienced a sense that I was taking pain away from my loved ones and from events in my life. Paradoxically, this became a comfort because I felt that somehow I was channelling past and existing pain into my body, mind and spirit and in this action I was embracing the profound living essence of both alofa (*love*) and tautua (*service*).

This pain was directly related to Puluṭu. What I experienced is difficult to translate into words. Puluṭu is both a place of pain and part of my lineage, through the atua Nafanua on my maternal side. It is a place into which I descended, where both physical and spiritual pain was present. Here, I came to understand that pain is something more expansive and transformative than the physical experience of having my body cut and pigmented. In Puluṭu I acknowledged that pain is spiritual and such pain transforms into a form of power.

While I was in this state I was aware of a creator, whether it be Atua or Tagaloalagi or God (which I believe are one and the same). So, I was aware of the vā or space around me but it was not significant that it might be conceived of as either Puluṭu or the 10th Heaven. What I experienced was a realm of transcendence that traversed time and space.

During the striking of the 'au, I directed the pain through my power to absorb and channel.¹⁵⁵ This was important because the traditional regulations surrounding the pe'a emphasise that you should not take any pain killers. This is so you can experience the journey of your mind, spirit and body in an embodied way. I also meditated on the visualising of water or feathers on my body and knees.

Throughout the pe'a process, the tufuga, kosos and staff at Taupou Tatau talked about the speed of my healing; I healed quickly compared to many

156 These values became the core of an address that I gave only weeks after the pe'a, when welcoming the College of Creative Arts first year students at Massey University's Great Hall on February 19, 2021. Here, I framed some key values of my pe'a to encourage these students on their study journey.

1. You are resilient
2. You belong
3. You are loved
4. You are more than enough.

others they had seen. They also noted that I was very relaxed, apart from one moment when they were hitting at a nerve in my left leg hamstring which caused an involuntary reaction. At one point I recall Tuigamala asking me if I was meditating, and I replied "Yes" because I was attempting to ensure the maintenance of a relaxed state.

Although preparing my body, mind and spirit for the pe'a journey was tied to the ability to transfer pain elsewhere (through the intensity of meditation, affirmation, and silent, self-talk), I also invoked the lifeforce of my family.

Family members either attended my pe'a in person or supported me in spirit. Their presence brought strength that reached through my immediate family, out across my ancestors and engaged with God/Tagaloa. The support was indescribably profound. It was greater than I was. It reached across space and time. I think perhaps this is what Tupua Tamasese was describing when he noted:

Tattooing is about the thesis of creation. It's the link with the God Tagaloalagi and the tenth heaven sending out the tuli (plover) to identify land. (Mallon & Galliot, 2018, p. 26)

The pe'a is not simply a physical experience, it is a deep, internal, emotional and spiritual journey. When the pe'a is completed a verbal or written acknowledgment is usually offered by family, friends and community members who have seen me in person or are aware via social media postings, that I have undergone and completed the pe'a. In such instances people traditionally say *malo le talia* (*well done on accepting or receiving the pain*). Such affirmations are moving because, in the statement, people acknowledge that I had to accept and process pain. They knew that the pe'a was far more profound than simply acquiring bodily adornment.

On reflection I realise that it's not just the pain that is the transformation. The journey changed the priorities I perceive in the world. I realise that as a leader, I am expected to reflect on what I experienced. In subsequent discussions and presentations about the pe'a, I have begun to understand the greater significance of respecting our traditional knowledge, resilience, preparation, overcoming adversity, having a sense of belonging and identity, self-determination, and maintaining a deep and abiding commitment to service. 156

