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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The Search for Recognition and Social Movement Emergence:
Towards an Understanding of the Transformation of the *Fa'afafine* of Samoa

By

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in Partial Fulfillment
of the

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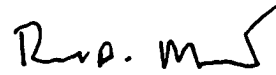
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis en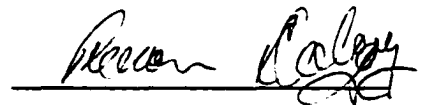titled "Struggles for Recognition and Social Movement Emergence: Towards an Understanding of the Transformation of the *Fa'afafine* of Samoa" submitted by Reevan Dolgoy in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dr. R. Morrow

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Abstract

This is a sociological study of the *fa'afafine* of Samoa. The term *fa'afafine* means "like a woman" in Samoan and refers to men with a range of qualities that are deemed to be effeminate. Traditionally valorized for their performance of women's activities in the home and village, and known for their erotic interest in men, many *fa'afafine* have engaged in activities in the urban community of Samoa that have some of the characteristics of an identity-and esteem-based social movement. Some have also participated in similar activities through ties to other networks of effeminate men around the Pacific. This study examines some of the events and processes through which their movement emerged in Samoa.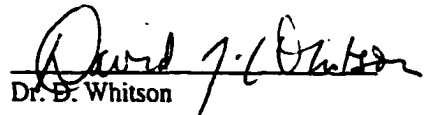 The period examined is from the 1960s to the mid-1980s. The data includes the histories and biographies of *fa'afafine* who were involved, as well as accounts of others who were witnesses to this movement's emergence. Results of the study reveal that urbanization, structural and ideational changes brought on by globalization and colonialism, new forms of agency, as well as traditional motifs played a part in their construction of collective behaviors and gentle, identity-based transformational activity of a fluid and localized kind. This activity differed markedly from the confrontational politics of Western gay liberation movements. In particular, sites and havens in the urban area, the Samoan propensity for utilizing their skills, as well as their attachment to a range of elites, a committed leadership, and the Samoan culture were important to their emergence and accommodation. This study also shows the important role that pre-existing networks played in their transformation in this kinship-based society.

Preface

It is amazing to me that Samoan society has remained so accommodating to researchers after more than a hundred years of systematic probing and poking by "investigators" from the outside. The privilege of conducting this preliminary study of the transformation of the *fa'afafine* in the urban area of Samoa is something for which the government and people of Samoa deserve my most grateful thanks. I am also indebted to the goodwill of the many Samoans who helped with this project, in particular my *fa'afafine* confederates.

For the student, the results of a study are often indeterminate until after all the data has been analyzed and members of one's thesis committee have had their input. This study has been no exception. While theoretical considerations were finally determined after the data had been analyzed in Canada and after committee members had presented their requirements and suggestions to me, all of the relevant areas that finally emerged are true to the literature on Samoa. They derive from what I have observed and what Samoans from many walks of life have reported. In particular, the excursions into the Samoan culture have been vetted by Samoan scholars and experts.

Attempts have been made to provide balanced accounts of events and occurrences. Naturally, one must rely on the accounts given by respondents. These have tended to provide an internal validity to the data as a whole. I wish to say that if any errors or omissions have occurred as a result, these have been inadvertent, and the author apologizes in advance for these and any discomfort they might cause.

In discussing the importance of being mindful of the culture, my supervisor also reminded me of the importance of allowing the data to speak for itself in the context of

social movement theory. Regarding the history of this transformation he said, 'you are a pioneer. Other scholars, Samoan and otherwise, will use your study to either confirm, negate, or expand on the findings. The tack that the ultimate analysis of the data has taken is based on your own understanding, that of others, and the guidance we have given you.'

The quoted data are provided by a range of individuals from elites to "ordinary" Samoans, and what is said is based on their experiences and informed opinions. This is also a preliminary study that came none-to-soon as historical figures were dying off or were scattered to many corners of the earth.

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals deserve mention for their assistance. My committee, of course: My supervisor, Dr. Raymond Morrow for suggesting that the *fa'afafine* transformation had elements of social movement activity in the identity and collective behavior perspectives; Dr. David Whitson for interacting with me on the significance of theories of sociology that deal with sport; and Dr. Michael Evans for suggesting which areas of the Samoan culture might be significant in the context of this topic. Dr. John Gartrell was very helpful in the area of globalization. Dr. Paul Saram vetted the thesis for its structure. Thanks are also due to Dr. Cluny Macpherson, the external examiner and a distinguished Samoan scholar.

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Judith Golec, Dr. Rosalind Sydie, and Dr. Derek Sayer for their support at "crucial" times in this process. Dr. William Johnston is to be thanked for reading and evaluating the social movement section on a number of occasions, both for its relevance and coverage and also for suggesting linkages in that schematic. Thanks are also due Dr. Stephen Kent, my neighbor across the hall during the

writing period, for occasionally listening to my social movement schematic as it developed, and about a year into its development, for suggesting that I read the thesis of one of his MA students, Xavier Catterinich (now a doctoral student), who has made an excellent contribution in his study of right wing social movements in Germany and the United States. This reading helped to confirm a number of the theoretical choices I had made.

There are a number of other individuals who must be thanked. They are Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese, Masiofo Laulu Fetauimalemau Mata'afa, Gatoloaifa'aana Tilianamua Afamasaga, Aiono Dr. Fanaafi Le Tagaloa, Le Tagaloa Pita, Le Mamea Faletoefe Dr. Ata Matatumua, Penelope Schoeffel, Malama Meleisea, Paul Shankman, Randolph Trumbach, Lai Ulrike Mosel, Niko Besnier, Jeanette Mageo, Jocelyn Linnekin, Momoe Von Reiche, Maria Kerslake, Helen Mahajlevich, Denis and Doreen Cronin, Noumea Simi, Rasela Tufue, David Barker, Jim Barnes, and Lynn Van Reade. Thanks are also due Dr. Steve Brown and Funeali'i Ava, both of whom helped make my material existence in Samoa manageable. I wish also to especially thank the Honorable Fiame Naomi Mata'afa, who sponsored my stay in Samoa while the research was being conducted. Also thanks to Pamela Sua for her consistent help as requested. A special thank you is also due to those *fa'afafine* who were particularly helpful over the term of this study. They know who they are and how grateful I am for their support.

Thanks are also extended to Oscar Kightly, David Fane, and "Playmarket" for permission to quote from *A Frigate Bird Sings*; Iosefa Leiataua Iosefa for permission to utilize his poem, *Fa'afafine*; Savea Sano Malifa, for his encouragement to comment on portions of the *Samoa Observer* newspaper relevant to this study; and Sia Figiel for her

suggestion to examine the reference to "Shirley Girl" in her novel, *Where We Once*

Belonged.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

> In reference to the *fa'afafine* heritage ... how can I make it simple? We have this room full of hats, right? And these hats were put in there by *fa'afafines* who've been there before, so it was kind of a collection of hats. New *fa'afafines* come into the room. They pick up [a] hat, they wear it and they walk out, you know. At some stage when they die, the hats ... go back into this particular room and [they're] lined with all the experiences of those particular *fa'afafines*. [So when] you have a declaration of your *fa'afafine*-ness you're actually wearing a hat. A hat that was worn by other *fa'afafines* before you. It's something that's passed down if you like. That's what I meant [by] my *fa'afafine* heritage.
>
> - a *fa'afafine* who came of age in the 1970s

Problem Statement

Although relatively isolated in the Pacific, Samoa has nevertheless experienced an involvement with modernity over almost two centuries of contact with the West (Davidson, 1967; Gilson, 1970; Grattan, 1948; Keesing, 1934; Macpherson, 1994 O'Meara, 1990; Shankman, 1976). More than just a flirtation, European social forms have co-existed with traditional ones since at least 1830. The many interactions between them have produced behaviors, expectations, and transformations that are decidedly novel (Davidson, 1967; Gilson, 1970; Keesing, 1934; Keesing and Keesing, 1958; Macpherson and Macpherson, 1987; Mageo, 1997; Meleisea, 1987a, 1987b; O'Meara, 1990).

One of the most salient signs of change has been the transformation of the *fa'afafine*, the effeminate men of Samoa. With the exception of a central tendency of this

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group to prefer erotics with men and to perform the work of women, the *fa'afafine* represent a continuum of attributes and sensibilities, histories and biographies, some of which are shared with non-*fa'afafine* Samoans.

The *fa'afafine* are a complex reproduction of a more traditional form of male effeminacy that respondents have claimed has always existed in Samoa. Their traditional activities were associated with women's work and erotics with men. However, more recently they have become especially conspicuous in Samoa; in particular in Apia, Samoa's urban area. There, some *fa'afafine* organize drag queen pageants and other entertainments. Some are involved in the arts, sports, and their own support groups. They also raise money which they donate to charities. Some work in high profile employment, and many are members of organizations that network throughout Samoa and into other Pacific countries where effeminate men are found. *Fa'afafine* now partly define the urban Samoan landscape through these activities and their modern effeminate personae. This manifestation of the *fa'afafine* is a relatively new phenomenon that emerged in Samoa between the 1960s and 1980s. Understanding its salience in the urban area during that time period, a transformation that has aspects of an identity-based social movement, is the subject of this dissertation.

The General Literature on Male Effeminacy Across Cultures

Researchers in anthropology have examined a number of forms of male effeminacy in Polynesia and other traditional societies (Besnier, 1994, 1997; Coleman, 1993; Herdt, 1997; James, 1994; Johnson, 1997; Katz, 1976; Levy, 1973; Mageo, 1992, 1997; Nanda, 1990; Poasa, 1992; Shore, 1981; Tcherkezoff. 1993; Whitehead, 1981;

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Wikan, 1977; Williams, 1986). Some of this literature has examined how forms of male effeminacy are accommodated symbolically or how they "function" for, or in relation to, other genders. Other scholars have valorized the "acceptance" of effeminate men in traditional societies (Williams, 1986; Wikan, 1977).

A few researchers have noted the anomalies that appear to be present in the descriptions of some of these men. For example, a short debate on the *berdache* of North America addressed the question as to why they were ridiculed (Greenberg, 1985). A similar debate took place in the early 1980s as to whether the acceptance of the *xanith* of Oman, through their role as prostitutes that Wikan reported, was indeed acceptance (in Besnier, 1997).

Some research examines an etiology of male effeminacy based on alleged cultural predispositions for their accommodation. The major premises are psychoanalytic or structural-functional. Causality is attributed either to the presumed relative instability of male gender roles in these societies or the functions that effeminate males perform (Mageo, 1992; Wikan, 1997). Some researchers have discussed how the identities of these groups are based on indigenous ideologies, myth, or role/task (cf. Coleman et al., 1993; Mageo, 1997; Nanda, 1990; Wikan, 1977). However, as we shall see, even in Samoa, where aspects of gender identity are purported to be constructed on the basis of role/task (Mageo, 1997; Schoeffel, 1979), there are found hints of a "naturalized" identity as posited in the work of Garfinkel (1967) and later Kessler and McKenna (1978). These conceptions historically determined one's ultimate assignment to instrumental and sacred roles and produced gendered expectations based on the body.

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Another theme in the literature also employs a psychoanalytic model. In this perspective, male effeminacy is claimed to occur in societies in which forms of mother salience and father absence correlate. This idea originates in the works of Freud. It is also found in the work of the psychoanalyst Robert Stoller (1968), and has received expression in the scholarship of Munroe and Munroe (1975).

Although the issues for effeminate men across cultures have been discussed in the literature (cf. Besnier, 1997, 1994; James, 1994; Johnson, 1997; Nanda, 1990), little has been specifically written of how relations of stratification have defined the life courses of effeminate men in non-Western societies, although there is potential to do this. One exception, Nanda's (1990) work on the *hijras* of India, does infer that entrance to an effeminate homosexual world and forms of societal accommodation are provided through symbolic and mythical constructions. This accommodation is often conditional, however, upon the acceptance of mutilation through castration. Nanda also discusses some of the issues that the *hijras* face, some of which imply stratification and hegemonic asymmetries. Johnson (1997) notes that the urban *gay/bantut* of the Philippines play a role that can make them the purveyors and disseminators of style and beauty which can lead to certain kinds of independence and esteem.

Besnier (1997), in an article on the asymmetrical hegemonic position of the *fakalieti* of Tonga, has recognized the general problematic of stratification in these populations. He has also critiqued a notion that has been argued with respect to other populations (see Herdt, 1994), namely that effeminate men in Oceanic societies are of the order of a third gender (Besnier, 1994). He has further argued that the valorization of

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cultural symbolic systems by scholars obscures how these cultures materially exclude the liminally gendered. Besnier noted that

> ...Recent works on these questions fail routinely to give serious attention to the interface of the material and the symbolic, to problems of agency and structure, and to the relationships among gender, sex, erotics, and power, in sharp contrast with feminist anthropology, where some of these issues reign as central concerns (di Leonardo, 1991). As a result, much remains to be done in understanding how members of sexual and gender-based minorities conceptualize themselves in the context of society and culture, how they are constructed by society, and how they give meaning to sex and gender as sociocultural constructs. (Besnier, 1997:2)

It could also be argued, in addition to Besnier's position, that few of these works have included the transformational role played by competing cultural systems, imported from the West, nor their attendant ideational "packages" (Berger et al., 1974:91) and forms of cognitive liberation (MacAdam, 1994). These studies tend to be synchronic depictions which fail to seriously account for the historical sociologies of these groups, in particular where structural change and specific agents have been involved.

Examples of effeminate men who appropriate, amongst other things, the dress and actions of Western women are found throughout Asia and Oceania (Besnier, 1997; Herdt, 1997; James, 1994; Johnson, 1997; Levy, 1993; Tsoi, 1990). These appropriations also imply histories and transformation, but with perhaps the exception of Johnson's (1997) recent work on the *gay/bantut*, which links aspects of the latter's emergence to American influences in the Philippines, accounts of these groups have been mostly descriptive. Furthermore, globalization has connected many effeminate men to local and overseas networks of similar sensibility and behavior (Herdt, 1997). While these connections also imply the activities of agents and structural changes over time, few if any studies have comprehensively explored the specific historical factors that have been involved in these

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interactions. This study of the *fa'afafine* will partly address this relative lack of diachronic analysis.

Review of the Literature on the *Fa'afafine*

Very little has been written of an extended nature about the *fa'afafine*, with the exception of two articles by Mageo (1992, 1997) and a case history by Poasa (1992). I will briefly review the Mageo articles in this introduction. I refer to other treatments of the *fa'afafine* found in larger general monographs on Samoa in Chapter Four.

As I understand her work, Mageo has posited two basic explanations for the *fa'afafine's* salience in Samoa (cf., Mageo, 1992, 1997). She argues that their current manifestation in the form of their transvestitism is a "novel cultural stratagem" to assist women in playing idealized roles and for "...defusing an increased pressure towards violence in public gatherings" (Mageo, 1992:444). This argument is functionalist and implies that the *fa'afafine* are somehow willing accomplices in this stratagem. In her 1992 article, she states that she found no mention of the *fa'afafine* in any of the early accounts of travelers to Samoa. I was uncertain if she meant that they were not there or simply that they went unnoticed, although I suspect she meant the latter. In her second article it becomes clearer that she means that the *fa'afafine* were indeed there, but were not salient. Mageo (1992) cites the example of an effeminate man in Margaret Mead's 1920s study of Samoa as her earliest example of a *fa'afafine* in the literature. She argues in her second article, published in 1997, that the accommodation of the *fa'afafine* into Samoan life in their "transvestite" form may be predicated upon the presence of the all-

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male *faleaitu* actors, found in Samoan critical comic theatre, who customarily play female as well as male roles.

Regarding the argument that the *fa'afafine* were not noticed, a counter suggestion might be proposed derived from a re-examination of lexical, literary, and scholarly data. The starting point for this re-evaluation is the Samoan dictionaries of the Reverend George Pratt (1862, 1878). First published in 1862, 32 years after Samoan contact with Christian missionaries, Pratt's dictionary represents a period of observation prior to the publication of the first edition. The term *fa'afafine* is found in the first edition. The term is defined as "belonging to women, (as work)"[1] (Pratt, 1862:101). In Samoa it is well known that *fa'afafine* are identified in part by their performance of women's work. This definition and the term *fa'afafine* is one possible clue that they were noticed.

The rest of my argument, although somewhat speculative, may illuminate the question a bit further. By 1878, Pratt's second edition adds a second definition of *fa'afafine* as "hermaphrodite." It seems possible, given the taxonomies of the day, that Pratt, in using "hermaphrodite" as well as "belonging to women (as work)," was not referring to individuals with anomalous genitalia who performed the work of women. It seems more likely that he was referring to men who presented themselves in a manner consistent with the behavior of women, including performing their work.

It must be understood that, until 1869, the word homosexual had not been coined, and then only in German (Herdt, 1997). The word hermaphrodite could be used to describe a man or woman with the qualities of the opposite sex, and not necessarily with anomalous genitalia—a very rare phenomenon, as Dreger (1998) has pointed out. The former connotation occurs in print from the 18th to the 20th centuries (cf., Blake, 1804;

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Dreger, 1998; Herdt, 1997; Katz, 1976; Trumbach, 1994; Whitehead, 1981). For example, the French priest, Font (in Katz, 1976:291), refers to North American aboriginal men who prefer the dress of women as "assumed hermaphrodites." The English poet William Blake uses the terms hermaphroditic and hermaphrodite in 1804. The on-line second edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* notes the following 1834 use of the term hermaphrodite in an English publication: "I beg of you..to discourage this hermaphrodite mode of dress."

Whitehead (1981) discusses how the word hermaphrodite, in the 18th century, was used to describe *berdache* who dressed as and did the work of women (Whitehead, 1981:84-89). She argues that the incidence of anatomical hermaphrodism was very low in North American aboriginal societies. It is unlikely, therefore, that early travelers would be referring to genitalia. Indeed, as Trumbach (1994) argues, the term hermaphrodite in 18th century England was a word for men with effeminate qualities, who also may have preferred erotics with the same sex. Trumbach also notes in a personal communication, that the term hermaphrodite would still have been in use in the 19th century as a synonym for effeminate men or homosexuals, as he also found it used in the early 20th century.

Dreger (1998:135), in her book on the medicalization of the rare phenomenon of anatomical hermaphrodism, confirms that the term hermaphrodite was in use in the early 20th century, and "psycho-sexual hermaphrodite" appeared in the late 19th century in discussions of individuals of both sexes with normal genitalia who were attracted to the opposite sex. It is worth noting that the incidence of anatomical hermaphrodism is extremely rare in Samoa (Le Mamea Faletoefe Dr. Ata Matatumua, personal communication).

I would suggest that the combination of *fa'afafine* performing the work of

women, together with the connotation of hermaphrodite as a man with effeminate

qualities, or perhaps a person with a male body who prefers erotics with men, may

describe the *fa'afafine* of both those days and today. In the introduction to the second

edition of his dictionary, where the definition of *fa'afafine* as hermaphrodite first appears,

Pratt informs the reader that he excluded "immodest" words in his first edition,

presumably for reasons of propriety (Pratt, 1878:v). He implies his embarrassment at

having to include these words by providing a poem of justification:

> "'Tis needful that the most immodest words
> Be looked upon and learn'd; which, once attained
> Comes to no further use
> But to be known and hated." (Pratt, 1878:v)

To a Victorian English missionary who was also a lexicographer, *fa'afafine* as

hermaphrodite, which could possibly also have included the connotation of sodomite

(Herdt, 1997:46), could have been one of those immodest words. If this were the case, it

might be suggested as many Samoans do, that the *fa'afafine* were always present, and

that they would have had to be noticed.

My understanding of the 1997 article, "Samoa on the Wilde Side: Male

Transvestism, Oscar Wilde, and Liminality in the Making of Gender," is that Mageo is

arguing that the accommodation of the *fa'afafine* as transvestites is linked to *faleaitu*,

Samoan critical comic theatre. Mageo uses what appears to be a literary argument,

namely, "…that male transvestism in Samoa developed by way of the "Goethe effect"—

that is, by way of the social fictions proffered by Samoan comic theatre, *faleaitu*"

(Mageo, 1997:590). The Goethe effect may be paraphrased as the notion of "life

imitating art," derived from the English author Oscar Wilde, as opposed to the Platonic

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notion of "art imitating life." This argument suggests that the practice of males taking the part of females in *faleaitu* provided the conditions for the accommodation of the *fa'afafine's* cross-dressing in Samoa. As the *faleaitu* actors, who are not *fa'afafine* also play women's parts, this in turn "...opened the way for a rising incidence of transvestism in everyday life" (Mageo, 1997:591).

Mageo also argues that the *faleaitu* actors appropriated the "dramatis personae" of *fa'afafine*. That is, "... the persona of the *fa'afafine* became the favorite device of *faleaitu*" (Mageo, 1997:592). While some *fa'afafine* that I interviewed have agreed with this argument, it must be balanced by an account of one of Samoa's major *faleaitu* performers who told me that he and his partner play as *fa'afafine* only when they are critically portraying them. For example, the *fa'afafine's* erotics linked to the "corruption" of boys is an issue in one of their skits, and provides the dramatic motivation for a *fa'afafine* being *refused* entry into heaven. This would be a major punishment to many Samoans. The message, directed specifically at the *fa'afafine's* public identity, is very negative. It may reflect undertones with respect to new religious motifs and to the *fa'afafine* as a collective and public presence both of which are current in present-day Samoa. Not only can the *fa'afafine* become objects of *faleaitu* criticism, we will see that they have had other issues that are unique to their collective standing.

The *fa'afafine* cross-dressing as Western women is a recent phenomenon in Samoa as Mageo points out, and it is still a contested area of culture change. However, cross-dressing began prior to the *fa'afafine's* collective public presentations, such as their drag queen pageants. In addition, while mostly confined to the urban area of Samoa cross-dressing has recently be seen on occasion in venues on one of the outer islands,

away from the villages. *Faleaitu*, on the other hand, is said to have existed for hundreds of years and takes place both in the urban area and the villages. It is currently being taught to both Samoan men and women in formal classes in New Zealand.

I suspect that the sociologies of both genres, *faleaitu* and *fa'afafine* cross-dressing, may have differences that would invite comparison in future research. One might consider, then, that the critical comedy of *faleaitu* and its cross-dressers may have evolved on its own, apart from the *fa'afafine,* and the *fa'afafine's* cross-dressing correspondingly did the same for reasons peculiar to the *fa'afafine's* own experience in the urban environment of Samoa and their contacts with the world system. One must not ignore the fact that *fa'afafine* cross-dressing has often been contested and was subject to police intervention in Samoa until the mid-1980s. Technically, impersonating a female is still illegal in Samoa (Samoa Attorney General's Department, personal communication).

I found the Mageo articles, while somewhat reductionist and functionalist, also very interesting, insightful, brilliantly argued, and of considerable merit. Amongst other things, she notes the *fa'afafine's* involvement in culture change and entertainment, and their use of traditional Samoan motifs in some of their presentations. There are hints of the possible problems that they might incur due to teasing, emotional vulnerability, and corporal punishment. Mageo also discusses the *fa'afafine's* association with women, although there are inferences that it is the *fa'afafine* who may enhance the lives of women and girls. While there is certainly some veracity to this notion, this dissertation will show that the *fa'afafine* received their share of support from their association with women. This support was important to their emergence.

Mageo argues that comedy, jesting, and pastiche characterize the *fa'afafine* personae and their presentations to the public. There is, I have found, also a serious aspect to their presentations and their lives. It is also important to note that some of their activities, in particular their drag queen pageants, were integrated into the reciprocal motifs that characterize most Samoan intersubjectivity and sacred exchanges within and between kin-groups. This may in part account for the accommodation and acceptance of the *fa'afafine* in the public sphere. She also mentions their leave-taking from villages and their presumed movement into the urban area of Apia. She also mentions the conditional character of culture change which the *fa'afafine* represent, which this dissertation will explore in more detail.

In Mageo's 1997 article, the *fa'afafine* are used as an example from which to hypothesize why male effeminacy emerges in some societies and not others, and thus becomes part of the structuralist and psychoanalytic debates on such questions found in the work of Munroe and Munroe (1975) and Monroe, Whiting and Hally (1969). Her articles also contribute to the literature on gender construction and transformation in Samoa.

A New Perspective

The present study will provide a somewhat different account of the emergence of the *fa'afafine* than Mageo's. It will show that the issues of transformation, accommodation, and emergence, which the *fa'afafine* represent is a complex and very human one that requires expanded historical, sociological, and biographical data for its exposition. That is, real people and events were involved. I will demonstrate that the

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emergence of the *fa'afafine* in their most salient forms was in part a political-economic emergent which they themselves produced, with the help of others in the urban community of Samoa. It was based in part on what Taylor (1992) and Honneth (1995) have referred to, respectively, as a "politics of recognition" and "a struggle for recognition." It involved the projection of new notions of identity and solidarity, and the collective desire to be included further in a changing social system that was seen to be both relevant and of value. It depended as much on indigenous cultural factors as it did on transformations in the Samoan culture. It also had a history, which as Fox (1991) would theorize is still an ongoing "production." I will argue that theirs was a "fluid," gentle, esteem-based identity movement in the collective behavior tradition, the emergence of which was indigenously managed and bounded. It was based in part on their culture and personal biographies, on leadership, and on the availability of new spaces and motifs that decades of contact with the world system and independence from New Zealand opened up for all Samoans.

In examining their emergence, I will demonstrate the material agency of the *fa'afafine* in their own development over a period of almost 20 years, beginning in the 1960s. I will also discuss some of the major issues, spaces, figures, political economic factors, and activities that contributed to their current salience in Samoan society.

The Development of the Social Movement Motif

The claim that the *fa'afafine* transformation has aspects of a social movement was derived inductively from the data collection process and from the reading of its results into developments in social movement theory. I had initially intended to use an

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interpretive structuralism as found in the works of Barthes (1973), Bourdieu (1992), Giddens (1979), and Levi-Strauss (1966) to model the *fa'afafine* transformation. However, as the data was analyzed in Canada, my supervisor noted that the *fa'afafine* displayed behaviors and transformations with respect to identity and recognition that we both came to understand had some of the elements of what might be called a fluid, identity-based "new social movement" (Gusfield, 1994; Larana et al., 1994; Melucci, 1989), although for reasons peculiar to Samoa, it stopped far short of the hard politics that occurred amongst gays in the West.

Other factors found in social movements also characterized their emergence. Some had issues and grievances and felt they were not well understood. They created solidarities, mobilized resources, engaged in rather gentle political processes related to identity and impression management, and utilized urban sites and havens in which to both organize and express themselves. They produced emergent norms and collective behaviors that were unique to Samoa. Several respondents have noted that many of their activities were transformational and moved them from a position of being either denigrated or poorly understood to one of further inclusion and accommodation in the public life of Samoa. The social movement literature provides theory that pertains to this sort of activity. It will be examined in the following chapter.

The *fa'afafine* transformation will also be examined in what I call the "spirit" of cultural studies. Theory from the cultural studies perspective often focuses on hegemonic issues in the relationship between actors and structure (Hall, 1992). Using what is at hand to bring social realism to the events or subjects of study is part of the sociological cultural studies genre. As cultural studies bridges both the social sciences and the humanities,

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contributions from anthropology, sociology, literature, and history will be used to model the *fa'afafine* transformation in the light of the social and cultural reality of Samoa since contact with Europeans.

Origins of the Study

Mary Louise Pratt (1984) examined the history of the researcher in "the field." She argued that early "ethnographers" were often tourists, travelers, or missionaries who, from the 17th to the 19th centuries, wrote detailed "impressions" and accounts of lands peopled with custodians of novel cultures and ways of organizing life. The traveler or the tourist was later to compete with professional anthropologists who, with their credentials and typologies, could lay claim to "ethnographic authority" (Pratt, 1986:29).

My introduction to Samoa had elements of two of Pratt's narratives. The first was my reading, in the late 1950s, of the work of the widely-known "ethnographic authority," Margaret Mead, whose *Coming of Age in Samoa* (Mead, 1928) examined the lives of adolescent girls. The second was my role as a traveler and filmic observer.

As I recall, the "Americanization" of Canada was occurring in part through radio and television around that time. Television interviews with Margaret Mead were not uncommon in the 1950s and 1960s. I don't know how many people fully understood what she was saying, but she was a star. I read *Coming of Age* as a teenager, and in effect filed my thoughts about Samoa away for future reference. Looking back, perhaps my interest in Mead's work was a reaction to the sexually repressive 1950s, the decade in which my cohort came of age. It took years, even after visiting Samoa several times, for me to finally erase the "exotic" and "romantic" biases that Mead's writings had instilled

in me and which, as it turned out, had become an insult to the sensibilities of many Samoans.

Serendipity struck one day in 1978 while I was in the Edmonton office of the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), where I sometimes obtained free-lance directorial work. One of the people who worked at the NFB came out of his office and straightforwardly asked me, as I now paraphrase from memory, "how would you like to go to the South Pacific?" I thought at first he was joking. Although it was winter, an ideal time for a Canadian to travel to a warm place, the Edmonton studio of the NFB produced mostly local stories. How could the South Pacific figure into their budget plans for that year? My colleague explained that a film was to be made about the Commonwealth Games being held in Edmonton that year. Five directors would cover five regions of the Commonwealth and I, along with a cameraman/director from another city had been chosen to film in the South Pacific region. In addition to shooting stories in New Zealand, Australia, and Fiji, we were to film some athletes from one of the islands of what was then called Western Samoa. I could hardly wait.

We arrived in Samoa from Fiji one early evening in May 1978. On the way from Faleolo airport to Apia, the capital, I immediately became aware of the many houses, lit by single light bulbs. Most houses did not have walls. Posts placed every few feet held up the roofs, a cool solution to the Samoan heat and humidity. People were promenading along the main road, or sitting out in their yards, on the grass or on rocks, socializing. Passing by some villages, I noticed some people at prayer. As a young man in search of something "of value," all of this "real life" made a lasting impression on me.

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I recall that my introduction to Samoan society was through the children and grandchildren of Europeans, many of whom had emigrated to Samoa before the turn of the 20th century and had married Samoans. They were known in Samoa as the part-Europeans, part-Samoans, *afakasi,* or half-castes, terms of both admiration, power, and denigration. I was to learn of the stratification issues that this social category implied somewhat later. Some of them, a most generous group, were our hosts as part of the Western Samoa Sports Federation.

During a month in Samoa, managing the production, doing a bit of camera work and directing, and finally vacationing, I began to learn things about that society that were contrary to what Margaret Mead's book had led me to expect. For example, I found that the young females we encountered were mostly well-protected and exhibited a propriety that was very Christian and chaste. I also learned that the Samoan system of social organization was not only based on the rule of chiefs, but was also a gerontocracy. In many instances, rank based on these considerations determined one's authority or jurisdiction over others.

What led in part to the present research topic were encounters on the streets of Apia with very effeminate-looking men, in particular in the evenings, and in certain parts of town. They were Samoan *fa'afafine*. At night some could be seen lurking around the bridge that crosses the Vaisigano estuary near Aggie Grey's Hotel. At first I thought them to be rather tall, broad-shouldered women. It never occurred to me, as I initially watched them in the shadows across the street from Aggie's, that these were men dressed up as Western women. I was told that they could lure men into accompanying them, with the attendant risk of being beaten up and having one's wallet lifted.

These warnings eventually became hard data. I was to learn through my research that a few of these cross-dressing individuals engaged in prostitution and that tourists should be wary of them. These *fa'afafine,* by tainting the impression of the town *fa'afafine* population through their antics, had inadvertently contributed something to the movement that I would eventually be studying some twenty or so years later.

I was later to meet *fa'afafine* who were more "refined." Some were well educated; others, part of the Samoan traditional elite and the *afakasi* group. While leading somewhat different lives, these individuals, too, would become involved in the activities of the *fa'afafine* population over time and become supporters and mentors of this movement. I also recall seeing *fa'afafine* in villages where we filmed.

I encountered *fa'afafine* once more during our stay, as we filmed background material for our story on the Western Samoa athletics team. A talent show was being held at a local hotel to help raise funds to send the team to Edmonton for the Games. Fundraising is very common in Samoa. It is part of the Samoan motifs of reciprocity and service to the larger community or the nation. The show comprised various kinds of expression, some traditional and some modern. A *fa'afafine* singing group also performed. They sang a medley of Western show tunes as part of the effort to send the team over to Canada. The group was dressed in beautifully tailored matching *puletasi,* the modest Samoan women's garb that derives from missionary days.

I was to learn years later that part of this group were participants and leaders in a larger network of *fa'afafine* that had its own, informal organizational apparatus and headquarters. This network included tailors, teachers, and members of the *afakasi* community as well as village *fa'afafine* who had moved to Apia or who came to town for

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visits. I was to understand that helping the team in this manner was one of the ways in which the *fa'afafine* fulfilled Samoan collective reciprocal obligations and endeared themselves to the public.

I remember other things very clearly from that performance. The first was the quiet, dignified calm of the performers and their controlled, professional delivery, all in feminine voices. The second and perhaps most significant memory was of the master of ceremonies, a charismatic, well-educated professional who had been trained overseas and has since returned, referring to the *fa'afafine* group, tongue in cheek and in English, and I paraphrase from memory, as "the Samoan chapter of the Gay Liberation Movement." He was only joking, of course, as there was no such chapter, literally, in Samoa, but there was some veracity and sensitivity in his use of that term. I was to learn later that Samoans seldom, if ever, used the word "gay." However, the master of ceremonies' use of the term created the impression that what I was seeing was a phenomenon that was different, organized, and had achieved some recognition in Samoa, the reasons for which I was yet to learn.

The rest of the filming trip covered the islands of Savai'i and Upolu where we filmed boxers working out in their traditional villages and a weight lifter who trained in a plantation behind Chanel College, one of the Catholic high schools in Apia. We also paid a trip to the tiny island of Manono, observing a place with no roads, seemingly timeless. We sometimes stayed in or near villages and were able to sense the rhythm of life in the venues where we filmed.

A second event of some significance occurred when we filmed a tattoo ceremony in a village on Upolu island as background material about the country and culture. It was

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significant for two reasons. The first was the recording of this very serious embodied rite of passage in the life of a young man and the observation of the techniques of the master tattooer. I also noticed the support the young man received from friends who had already been tattooed, who guided and assisted the tattooee through this often-painful journey.

The second significant aspect of this event was our initiation into the filming session itself. We were told that we could not just go into any village of our choosing without following the protocols that govern visits between Samoan polities. We had to have a *tulafale*, a Samoan orator, make representations on our behalf to the village council. We were also told that it was customary to bring a gift to the village. In our case, it was a very large container of corned beef. Reciprocal exchanges were part of all life in Samoa, and if we were to film, we had to be part of it and respect the traditions of the Samoan culture. A government department arranged to have a *tulafale* come with us.

The setting in the village was formal except for the occasional exchanges between the *tulafale*. The high chief, or *ali'i*, and his wife sat perfectly still, dignified, and silent as befits individuals of that standing. The *tulafale* were active, according to the expectations of their role.

The tattooing over for the day, we were given a light snack and then we were on our way. I recall to this day the respectful manner in we were treated; the honor that our presence brought to the village as welcomed visitors; and the dignity (*mamalu*) and respect (*fa'aaloalo*) that encapsulated that encounter. All along our translator, a woman hired for the occasion, quietly filled us in as to what was happening.

I returned to Samoa in 1986 on a research trip. I was in search of film stories about the Samoan culture that might be of interest to others. During that trip I managed to

visit more villages. Although most were close to Apia, one in particular was remote. It was a place where *fa'afafine* of the district congregated. There I was able to learn more about the life of *fa'afafine* in their families in relation to the type of women's work they did, as well as about their activities in the traditional male sectors of the villages. I learned of their erotics with men and the way in which, like most Samoans, they maintained Samoan dignity displays and motifs of service to their families in their daily lives. I also learned somewhat of their issues.

Another piece of serendipity occurred during that trip that was to prove most crucial to the present work. The owner of a local shop that I frequented was an official of the fourth annual Miss Samoa Drag Queen Pageant that was being held in December. Learning that I was a filmmaker, and thinking that I had the skills necessary to objectively evaluate this type of artistic presentation, this shopkeeper invited me to be a judge at the pageant. That experience exposed me to many of the details of the lives of the urban *fa'afafine* of that era.

My memories of the contest are vivid. I was drawn into a world much different from the drag scene found in larger Canadian cities where I had visited and lived, and in San Francisco, where I had once visited. I met some of the *fa'afafine* organizers of the contest, one of whom befriended me and continued over the years to add to my understanding of the *fa'afafine* and Samoa.

An event of some significance occurred after the contest. One *fa'afafine* invited me to visit his village, located close to Apia. During that visit he informed me that the relationship of the *fa'afafine* to the rest of the community that I had been observing, a relationship that seemed to be so widely accommodated compared to the situation in my

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country, was also a source of difficulty for the *fa'afafine*. He said that they sometimes did not get the respect or understanding they felt they deserved. This account contrasted sharply with the acceptance that I thought I saw, indeed, allowed myself to see with the blinders of the "exotic" that I was wearing. It was during this trip that I heard a translation of the word *fa'afafine* as meaning "in the manner of a woman."

I was also befriended by another *fa'afafine*. On holiday, he was leaving Apia for his village, and he invited me along. I became a guest of the family and I observed him going through the daily activities of his life. I also observed his relationship with his mother and his father, the latter a chief in the village. I was still very naïve and transfixed by all of these new social formations.

It took me another four years to return to Samoa to attempt a film on the *fa'afafine*. However, film budgeting being as it was, I ended up concentrating more on the "hybridized" drag queen contest for a Western audience, attempting as well as I could to illustrate kin involvement. I was later to understand, as I became more academically oriented that various continua of attributes, histories, and family positions described the *fa'afafine* –continua based on Samoa's culture and its historical relationship to the world outside.

With developing critical sensibilities I began looking at the Samoan culture as a system of stratification. Phenomena that I regarded as potential stratification arrangements presented themselves as constructs of shared meaning, hegemony, and historical experience. I tried to make sense of these.

Before I presented my dissertation proposal, our university had no Polynesian scholars. Until one was engaged, I resourcefully began to rely on Samoanists from

outside the university. I was also able to rely on contacts in Samoa and beyond, who were scholars in their own right. Much of this consultation was conducted by telephone.

During the years of my graduate training I returned to Samoa again. I made trips in 1992, 1994, and 1995 for varying lengths of time, each time learning more about the culture, but also noting the rapidity with which Samoa was changing materially. I once again visited Upolu and the outer island of Savai'i. I perceived that young people on both islands were becoming Westernized at an accelerated rate, with an interest in Western goods, fashions, styles, and videos, although this kind of change had been an ongoing process for some time. The number of automobiles in Apia appeared to double every visit. The traffic police, who choreographed traffic movement in their elegant uniforms, hands in white gloves, would soon be replaced by synchronized traffic lights. The countryside was experiencing more motor vehicle traffic. There was a proliferation of businesses and an expansion of tourist infrastructure.

In 1991 came the deaths of a close acquaintance, a prominent *fa'afafine* in the town area who had been a member of an elite family, and one other *fa'afafine* whom I had met, both tragically struck by an automobile in Apia. This occurrence not only left me in sorrow, but also made me feel that I had to work fast if I were to get the history of this movement from the remaining survivors. The former individual had not only been a close acquaintance but had provided me with some insights into the emergence of the urban *fa'afafine*. He was a very circumspect person, but generous, and I had committed only some of what he had told me to memory. However, one cannot rush the academic training process, so it was not until November of 1996 that I was able to commence my formal research in earnest.

Data Collection and Methodology

The locale for this study is Samoa, formerly called Western Samoa. Research in Samoa was conducted during a one-year period. I conducted interviews in both the town area of Apia and in villages. My respondents were individuals who had been part of the *fa'afafine* transformation or had witnessed it unfold. As this transformation had been an urban phenomenon, the urban environs were my main concentration. I visited villages as well, to meet with and interview *fa'afafine*. I also observed and visited *fa'afafine* in the town area and the villages who were specifically involved in a range of activities related to both work and traditional family life. I interviewed non-*fa'afafine* who were central to the *fa'afafine's* transformations. Other interviewees were observers of events related to the *fa'afafine* transformation. I also interviewed experts on the Samoan culture.

The Data

The data that constitutes this study represents six types of collection. The first is from my observations of the Samoan culture over the years, as well as from active questioning of confederates and friends during that time. The second is interviews with individuals who were in Samoa as participants in the unfolding of events throughout the almost twenty-year period of the *fa'afafine's* transformation. The third is the recollections and analyses of key, well-educated, and informed witnesses to events. The fourth is the academic literature itself, which, although produced around specific events or forms in the culture, correlate with many of the personal outcomes in my data. The fifth is the work of Samoan creative writers, which also resonates with some of the themes that this

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research has uncovered. The sixth is aspects of the *fa'afafine's* collective identity and transformation that I have gleaned from my own observations over the years in various venues in which *fa'afafine* have associated individually and collectively. As it turned out, there was a great deal of internal validity between these six levels of data.

The data was compiled from taped interviews recorded in the field in Samoa and New Zealand between November, 1996 and November, 1997, as well as in New Zealand in June, July, and August of 1998. Handwritten interviews were also conducted in a number of instances. A number of interviews were conducted from Canada by telephone. In total 132 individuals contributed to the study. In addition, a number of Samoan scholars, academics and politicians have made contributions through personal communications.

The lines of questioning were initially based on specific research topics. Some developed in the field. These topics included the history of the *fa'afafine* transformation; relationships with families; relationships with men; sport as an organizing motif; the role of the professions and paid labor in defining the new *fa'afafine* persona; the relationship between the *fa'afafine* and the churches; the role of sites, havens, and leadership in the *fa'afafine's* transformation; and the evolution and purpose of their drag queen pageants. Topics such as the history of the *fa'afafine* migration overseas, the effects on Samoa and the *fa'afafine* of the transformation from New Zealand to Samoan rule, and the relationship between "native" Samoans and part-Europeans were also explored. A number of additional topics emerged once the data was analyzed.

On the advice of experienced qualitative methodologists who had worked in Samoa, as well as professionals in the sociology department at the University of Alberta,

open-ended or semi-structured interviews were conducted. The regular insertion of specific, discreet questions was seen, in some cases, to interrupt the flow of recollections and was used sparingly in those cases. As the story unfolded, respondents seemed to move easily from topic to topic when recalling histories without having to be asked. In some instances, one account would corroborate another. In others, it was important to seek further elaboration as more of the story was uncovered, or to insert specific questions that would further inform the topic.

Most of the respondents had a good to excellent grasp of the English language. For a few, their understanding of English exceeded their speaking skills. I later learned that English as a "neutral" language runs less inherent risks of offending and may, therefore, be useful where sensitive topics are concerned. Erotics and aspects of reproduction are perhaps best discussed in English, if at all. St. Christian (1994) and Tcherkezoff (1993) have understood the sensitivity, in some quarters of Samoa, about speaking of these matters.

I did not appreciate prior to the research phase of the study how sensitive a subject the *fa'afafine* could be to some people. Therefore, I found that *fa'afafine* were very forthcoming about themselves, but most were sensitive about involving their families in this research. As a result, I have had to rely, with some exceptions, on the *fa'afafine's* accounts of parenting or on the accounts of others in the community who witnessed and could comment on the parenting that the *fa'afafine* receive. I was, however, able to find some parents who would speak with me. I found others who did not have *fa'afafine* children but who would speculate on how they would feel to have a child who was a *fa'afafine* within the current realities of Samoa.

Translators were used in a few interviews in both the town area and the villages. Despite having decided to engage professional translators, I soon became certain that other measures had to be taken to ensure anonymity and comfort. There could be a reticence in speaking in front of these professionals due to matters of status, family rank, and confidentiality. Once subjects agreed to be interviewed and to have a translator present, I asked them to think of someone whom they would prefer as translator. In each case they requested a peer, someone from their own *fa'afafine* social group, a *fa'afafine* who was close to them and trustworthy. It turns out these peers were well known to me as being competent and trustworthy.

All respondents were told about the nature and purpose of the study. Pseudonyms have been given to all quoted respondents. Specific geographical locations have not been linked to any one individual. Unusual or individual professions that might link a respondent to controversial events or opinions that are not otherwise public knowledge have also been masked in this way. The "Samoan scholar," the Samoan academic," and the "Samoan politician" cited in the text are a composite of a number of individuals who have also made contributions to this study, in addition to the aforementioned contributors.

To ensure the security of the electronic materials during the research period, each respondent received a number that was recorded at the beginning of the interview tape. A separate list of the respondents' names was kept with the corresponding tape numbers and was maintained in a separate location. All tapes and the list of corresponding names and numbers, as well as all written notes and interviews, were kept in secure locations.

The Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into 11 chapters. Chapter One introduces the study.

Chapter Two reviews the main branches of social movement theory.

Chapter Three is a schematic review of parts of the Samoan culture and system of social organization. Some aspects of Samoan culture are contextualized in terms of their utility, or as repertoires for social action. Town and village life and the relationship between the two are described.

In Chapter Four, the history of Samoa is examined as a series of cultural and structural transformations since contact with Europeans, which many Samoans have been able to utilize. Since independence from New Zealand this would include *fa'afafine*. The changes in modes of communication, "ideational packages," lifestyles, life chances, media, material and economic transformations, the emergence of new elites, and the outmigration of Samoans are discussed. This chapter also alerts the reader to the complex reproductions of the culture, since contact with the West, that have become tools with which transformations could be worked and reworked.

Chapter Five is the first of six data sections. In this chapter the identity of the *fa'afafine* is explored in part in relation to some of the notions about the Samoan culture discussed in Chapter Two. This chapter compares *fa'afafine* to the Samoan dimorphic genders, as well as showing the range of designations that they and others utilize to contextualize their gender identity.

Chapter Six explores some of the *fa'afafine*'s persistent issues that have emerged out of notions of gender itself in Samoa. These issues include some that have been seen to beset them collectively.

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The remainder of the data sections concern the material aspects of the *fa'afafine* emergence that began in the 1960s in Samoa. Chapter Seven explores the origins of the *fa'afafine* movement as an informal network of friends and contacts that found a haven in the town area of Apia in the 1960s. There, a group of *fa'afafine* organized activities based in part on elements of their traditional activities within the Samoan family system and in part on new, imported repertoires and feminine sensibilities. Transformations in Samoa at that time will also be discussed.

Chapter Eight is concerned with leadership. Specifically it explores the role of one "heroic" individual (in the sense meant by Sidney Hook). This individual was the *fa'afafine's* main role model and leader over a period of almost fifteen years.

Chapter Nine traces the emergence of the *fa'afafine* movement of the 1970s from the spaces of their haven in Apia into the broader community through sport. Pre-existing networks, alliances with women, and the role of a sporting elite who became a "conscience constituent" will be explored. Because of the centrality of the *fa'afafine's* activities in sport, theory from the sports literature that relates to their transformation will also be utilized.

Chapter Ten examines the *fa'afafine's* further emergence into the wider public sphere through the use of the drag queen form. It will be shown that, while an import from overseas, the drag queen form has produced major identity, organizational and political potential for many *fa'afafine*. In the hands of the *fa'afafine* the drag queen form became a gentle politics of recognition.

Chapter Eleven is the concluding chapter in which the findings are reviewed and conclusions drawn. It is based on observations and data collected of the period between

1986 and 1999. It begins with an epilogue outlining the general status of the *fa'afafine* contemporarily. Theories of social movements as they pertain to the study of the *fa'afafine* are reviewed in relation to the findings. Theories of emotion and struggles for recognition are utilized to further inform the possible motivations for social movement activity of this kind.

Chapter Two, below, presents an overview of the social movement theory which is utilized in this dissertation as a hermeneutic with which to model the *fa'afafine's* collective activities and public actions since the 1960s. A number of typologies are explored. These are revisited in subsequent chapters to interpret the emergence of the *fa'afafine* in the urban area. They are utilized in the concluding chapter as part of a summary of results and a discussion of the implications of this study for future research.

Chapter 2: Theories of Social Movements

> ...that they basically become "the third gender" in terms of Samoan society. ... That's my vision of where the *fa'afafine* movement needs to go.
>
> *– a fa'afafine who came of age in the early 1980s*

> I think the *fa'afafine's* world, if everybody lives their world, would be a peaceful and lovely world. 'Cause you can be a *fa'afafine* from God knows where. If I see one *fa'afafine* I just suddenly become so compassionate, love the person. I don't know whether this is a kind of feeling that all minorities or hardship life goes through, but you know, it's just that somebody may be poor, and when I see them I don't have that same feeling as when I see a *fa'afafine* coming ...
>
> *- a fa'afafine in her mid-fifties*

The question for the rest of this dissertation is how to account for the emergence of the *fa'afafine* in Samoa. One of the individuals above refers to the *fa'afafine* transformation as a movement; the other, in terms that suggest a minority based on unique solidarities. These views are different from those found in the anthropological literature on effeminate men.

As we have seen, the literature has presented several approaches to the question of male effeminacy in traditional and post-colonial societies. These approaches attached the accommodation of effeminate men to local myth (Coleman, 1993; Nanda, 1990), to their role/function in cultures which are implicitly viewed as stable wholes (Wikan, 1977), and to an etiology which ranges from the structural/functional to the psychoanalytic (cf. Mageo, 1992; Munroe and Munroe, 1975).

The behaviors and attachments of the *fa'afafine* exhibit a complexity that cannot be explained in a singular manner. The *fa'afafine* have planned and projected activities

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into the public sphere. For many this has provided an identity that is both "written on the body," as well as on the visual and social landscape of Samoa. The emergence of the *fa'afafine* in this form has a history that includes some social inequalities that have shaped these activities. As they have produced collective behaviors by which they are in part identified, theirs is a history of a sociological kind. Thus, the *fa'afafine* transformation requires a hermeneutic that is both explanatory and provides a sociological structure to their transformation. As has been argued in Chapter One, the social movement perspective has been chosen for this purpose, for in some of its multiple elaborations it provides a range of explanatory typologies for the emergence of the *fa'afafine* as a salient presence in the urban area of Samoa.

Social Movement Theory

Later social movement theory derives from a reaction to two major theoretical sources. One is the mass society/collective behavior theories of Le Bon (1960), Park (1967), and Smelser (1962). The other source is linked to a variation of the Marxian problematic of social transformation found in the European social movement tradition (Melucci, 1989; Touraine, 1985). Although each of these perspectives portrays collective behavior and social movement behavior differently, these differences may form a totality whose parts are yet to be unified by data.

What has become known as the American tradition sees grievance theory, resource mobilization, collective behavior, and the political process perspective as somewhat incompatible solutions to the problem of collective social transformation (Klandermans, 1997). In the European tradition, New Social Movement theory is linked

to forms of collective action that emerge from concerns about identity, or to paraphrase Melucci (1989), it is as much concerned with "being" and "becoming," as with "having."

Social movement theory can also be a contentious and fragmented body of perspectives (Cerelu, 1997; Diani, 1992; Feree, 1992; Klandermans, 1997). Perhaps because much of the literature characterizes these perspectives as competing, there has been a tendency to assume, as one shifts from one to another, that one discretely supplants another (Gusfield, 1994).

Definitions of Social Movements

The main perspectives of social movement theory: grievance theory (Gurr, 1970; Smelser, 1962), resource mobilization (McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987), collective behavior (Turner and Killian, 1972), political process theory (McAdam, 1982; McAdam et al., 1996; Tarrow, 1983; Tilly, 1978) and new social movement theory (Larana et al., 1994; Melucci, 1989; 1994; Touraine, 1981, 1985) have all had a place in helping to model social movements, whether highly organized or informal. These perspectives have tended to produce formalist definitions, which can elide the idiomatic aspects of movement activity as Gusfield (1994) has pointed out.

For example, Turner and Killian have posited a social movement to be a "... collectivity acting with some continuity to promote or resist change in the society or group of which it is a part" (Turner and Killian: 1972: 246)." Of specific importance in the above definition is the notion that this activity has continuity. McCarthy and Zald propose a social movement to be founded on "a set of opinions and beliefs ... which represent preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward

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distribution of society" (McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987:43). This definition is both material and ideational. Both imply the possibility of conflict. The European perspective provides definitions that are linked to struggles of a different kind. Touraine (1981,1985) links social movement emergence to class struggles related to identity. Melucci's main distinction with respect to movement emergence is related to identities constructed regardless of class (Melucci, 1994).

The above perspectives and "definitions" notwithstanding, as McAdam, McCarthy and Zald have viewed the question,

> Understanding the mix of factors that give rise to a movement is the oldest, and arguably the most important, question in the field. Moreover, virtually all "theories" in the field are, first and foremost, theories of movement emergence. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996:7)

In the following sections some key elements of these "theories" will be explored.

Grievance theory

In *The Making of the English Working Class*, E.P Thompson argues that its collective identity emerged, in part, from grievances related to the structural position of labor (Thompson, 1963). The Luddites of eighteenth century England felt aggrieved due to a loss of livelihood and lifestyles that resulted from structural changes brought about by industrialization (Bailey, 1998). The African American civil rights movement that emerged in the 1960s was certainly grievance based. Those who remember the hippie movement of the 1960s and 1970s will recall that it was contextualized in part by issues over the dominance of traditional authorities and the suppression of forms of free expression and lifestyles. Feminist movements have had strong elements of grievance as have gay and lesbian movements. Some of these grievances have been based on material

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deprivation while some derive from the identity imputations of others or struggles for

esteem and recognition.

Theories of grievance attribute causes to structural factors. Smelser (1962)

equates grievance with changes in social structure in the form of "strain." Gurr (1970)

argues that grievances stem from changes in individual expectations based on perceived

injustices related to social position.

Gurr's (1970) relative deprivation theory is useful in a number of ways. Although

derived from the relationship of individuals and groups to material resources, and set in

the context of political violence, he has also included other scarce resources in his

schema, such as symbolic or emotional resources like esteem and respect, in which

aspirations are likewise not met. The beauty of relative deprivation theory is its

simplicity. The problem has been demonstrating how it actually motivates action.

Resource Mobilization

Resource mobilization (RM) theory was a reaction in part to the perceived

deficiencies in deprivation theory. McCarthy and Zald argued that in order for

movements to actually emerge, factors other than grievance had to be shown to be at

work. They attempted to

> ...Move from a strong assumption about the centrality of deprivation and
> grievances to a weak one, which makes them a component, indeed
> sometimes a secondary component in the generation of social movements
> (McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987:41)

Zald (1992), in recalling the development of RM theory points out that what was

required in the study of social movements was a theory of action that could explain how

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social movements mobilize resources in the quest for social justice. McCarthy and Zald chose a theory from economics. This utilitarian theory led to the development of the following considerations which are now associated with RM theory:

1) Movements find and mobilize resources. Money and labor are examples of crucial resources.

2) Movements produce structures for organization and mobilization.

3) Movements access resources in the form of other groups or individuals in addition to participants in the movement.

McCarthy and Zald ([1977] 1987) theorize that resource mobilization is based on supply and demand —a consideration which renders "elastic" the coming in and going out of resources. They apply an explicitly behaviorist costs/rewards model to individual and group involvement in social movements, predicting that participants weigh the costs and benefits of their participation. McCarthy and Zald also argue that the transformations brought about by social movements can result from the use of a society's common resources such as its sites and infrastructures. Also of importance to this model is the consideration of a movement's relation to social structure and stratification systems, in particular to individuals in authority.

McCarthy and Zald refer to "levels of affluence, degrees of access to institutional centers, preexisting networks, and occupational structure" (McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987:43) as important resources. They posit an emotional component to resource mobilization. For example "conscience constituents" (McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987: 42) are an important resource which could, conceivably, provide affective support,

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funding, labor, and sites for social movement activity. The mobilization of resources also

involves strategies for the solicitation of support and the changing of public opinion.

However, in favoring a rational choice theory of action one is faced with a

significant problematic as rationality is not the sole motivation of human action. It could

be argued that the conditions for resource mobilization may also be present in more fluid,

less rationalized movements. For example, in the hippie movement, social actors were

not necessarily utilitarian actors, yet resource mobilization of various kinds did take place

throughout its history. The Civil Rights movement did not originate only as a result of a

series of rational choices. Pre-existing collectives such as church organizations provided

proto-structures for its emergence (Morris, 1984). Resource mobilization theory has not

provided an adequate explanation for the emergence of these kinds movements. Thus, it

should come as no surprise that the RM perspective has been critiqued for erring on the

side of rationality (Ferree, 1992).

Collective Behavior Perspective

If some movements are not highly rationalized and utilitarian, how do they work?

The collective behavior approach of Turner and Killian provides some insights into what

Gusfield (1994) later described as fluid movements. The collective behavior (CB)

perspective is derived respectively from the symbolic interactionist paradigm, which

informed the earlier collective behavior approaches of Blumer, and the collective

behavior perspective of Robert Park (in Turner and Killian, [1977] 1987). Both

approaches were concerned with destabilizing mass or crowd behaviors. Their

contributions, however, may apply to how certain kinds of sustained movements emerge and function. Turner and Killian argue:

> What has endured to characterize the "collective behavior" approach has been the emphasis on the centrality of interaction, the emergent nature of social order, and the normality of collective behavior as the vehicle through which social change comes about (Turner and Killian, [1977] 1987:11)

Thus, the organized rational management of resources is less of a consideration in this approach than in RM theory. In contrast to the resource mobilization school, Turner and Killian posit both an indefinite and sustained aspect to collective behaviors, as well as the presence of a leadership whose selection is likely to be rooted in procedures that are not well-defined, rather than in rationalized organizational procedures.

Fundamental to collective behaviors, whether temporary or sustained, are the key notions of shared meanings, communications, and solidarity. Also important is "the availability of pre-existing social groups through which intercommunication can be initiated fairly easily" (Turner and Killian, [1977] 1987:14). This implies an already existing cultural foundation.

In this perspective, it is argued, new meanings related to social life emerge through the interaction of individuals in these networks. These have been conceptualized as emergent norms. To Turner and Killian, emergent norms apply to novel, sustained, collective, transformational motifs based on "revised conceptions of reality that people feel righteous about" (Turner and Killian, [1977] 1987:13). Gusfield (1994) has contextualized these norms as new notions of fairness, merit, and ethics. Emergent norms can also produce new knowledge claims. These in turn, it can be argued, can be projected into the larger community through networks. Emergent norms, while they can be sporadic and arise in transitory activity, can also be elaborate and presumably sustained. Turner

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and Killian provide the Marxian class struggle motif and environmentalist narratives as examples of the latter (Turner and Killian, [1977] 1987:13). As we shall see, their notion of a collective aspect to social movement activity is compatible with notions of identity-based movements that arose out of the New Social Movements perspective in the 1980s. Turner and Killian remain attached to the relevance of collective behavior theory to spontaneous, mass, or crowd behaviors in their examples, yet their fundamental ideas clearly have broader application.

Gusfield (1994) is a recent exemplar of the re-evaluation of aspects of the CB perspective as they apply to social movements. His notion of movement emergence and persistence specifies the fluidity of movements i.e., their tendency to exhibit both formal and informal aspects as they develop.

Gusfield argues that collective behaviors are not necessarily signs of abnormalities in social life, but rather can be everyday occurrences with varying degrees of salience and coordination (Gusfield, 1994:67-68). He suggests that the CB approach is necessary to understand movements that may be apolitical or based on identities and shared meanings. It could be argued that these movements would tend to be characterized by internal structures that are flexible and that are subject to modification as forms of agency or ideas change, a notion that Turner and Killian's theory would also support. Gusfield (1994) also critiques the emphasis in the literature on the political as a necessary defining characteristic of social movements.

Political Process Theory

Gusfield's insights notwithstanding, political activity and political/structural opportunities of one sort or another are often necessary for social movements and collective behaviors to both emerge and persist. McAdam has named the branch of social movement theory that deals with the politics of emergence, "political process theory" (McAdam, 1982). Political processes have been most often linked to "hard politics" and insurgency, including the use of the law, the formation of alliances, and formal, planned "actions" (McAdam, 1982; Tarrow, 1983). Tilly (1978) had earlier been associated with notions of a politics of contention and confrontation.

In reviewing earlier theory, McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996) noted that scholars from within the political process perspective had initially "... sought to explain the *emergence* of a particular social movement on the basis of *changes in the institutional structure or informal power relations of a given national political system*" (McAdam et al., 1996:3). An expanded view of political process theory has since been developed

The Notion of Political Opportunity

Political process has been more recently linked to notions of political opportunities or what Tarrow has referred to as "opportunity structures" (Tarrow, 1996:41). McAdam et al. argue

> ...That both in their timing and form social movements bear the imprint of the specific opportunities that give them life (McAdam et al., 1996:11)

They also suggest that one of the important opportunity structures to movement emergence are mobilizing structures: "...those collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam et al.,

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1996:3). It could be argued that proto-political collectives, with various levels of organizational coherence, including networks of a more informal variety, may also determine movement emergence. Thus, with the concept of mobilizing structure, one finds a link between this perspective, the Resource Mobilization perspective, and with the notion of informal mobilizing structure, a link also to the collective behavior perspective.

McAdam proposes a number of broad structural dimensions in which social movements can be constrained or enabled, two of which have application to this study. These are "the presence and absence of elite allies" and "the state's capacity and propensity for repression" (McAdam, 1996:27). As we shall see, some of the positive aspects of these dimensions exist in Samoa. They are important to the understanding of the emergence of the *fa'afafine*.

McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996) note that some scholars have tended to account for movement success in the differences between national cultural metaphors (Kriesi et al.; 1992; Ferree, 1987, in McAdam et al., 1996). This idea has implications for the cultural components of movement activity, and the sort of politics that emerge which can be effective in a specific cultural milieu. They also argue that "... the impetus to action is as much a cultural construction as it is a function of structural vulnerability" (McAdam et al., 1996:8). That is to say, cultural forms can provide opportunities for certain kinds of action.

Culture and Movements

In later manifestations of social movement theory, culture has increasingly become a factor in the analysis of social movement activity where political opportunity is

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concerned. For example, implied in the informal organization of social movements are the already shared meanings and sensibilities found in culturally pre-existing settings (Evans, 1979; Gould, 1991; McAdam, 1988).

Two well-known studies on how Western social movements developed in this way are Moriss' (1984) and McAdam's (1982) accounts of the local resources which became available to the Civil Rights movement in the United States in their political struggles through pre-existing cultural forms, such as the churches. McAdam (1982) earlier accounted for the effects of wider cultural changes on political activity in his notion of cognitive liberation (McAdam, 1982). Cognitive liberation implies cultural, structural, and agency transformations.

There is, at times, little to distinguish between culture and politics in McAdam's later but valuable examination of the role of culture in social movement activity. In an article in which he discusses "the cultural roots of social movements" (McAdam, 1994:37), he notes with respect to one form of resource:

> It is extremely hard to separate these objective shifts in political opportunities from the subjective processes of social construction and collective attribution that render them meaningful (McAdam, 1994:39)

Thus, cultural changes as resources and motivators for action can also be viewed for their political relevance.

Culture and Political Opportunity

McAdam (1994) provides a number of examples of political opportunities which, when they emerge, can become culturally widespread. "Suddenly imposed grievances" may galvanize collective action or lead to or enhance the moral or activist position of

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social movements. McAdam (1994:40) cites two studies that analyzed the effects of such occurrences. The Three Mile Island nuclear accident and the Rodney King beating incident are examples of "suddenly imposed grievances."

McAdam (1994:41) argues that "dramatizations of system vulnerability" may result in the mobilization of action or in the encouragement of movements to press the system when they feel opportunities for change may exist. McAdam cites the demise of the Communist system in Poland as such an occurrence. The demonstrable vulnerability of a system can result from the winning of a court case that has ramifications for the entire system. The legal case, Brown vs. the Board of Education of 1954, which encouraged and provided a resource to the American Civil Rights movement is one example. Such a victory can give impetus to other groups to proceed in similar directions. Post-colonial nations may also be left with destabilized forms of organization when formerly traditional forms of social ordering have been replaced or circumvented.

"Framing" as Political Opportunity

McAdam employs the notion of framing in his analysis. He argues that it is simplistic to view social movements simply as unrelated occurrences. Building on the work of Snow and Benford (1988 in McAdam, 1994), who derive their ideas from Goffman's (1974) notion of framing, McAdam (1994:41) suggests that the availability of "master frames" can situate social movements opportunistically in the relative space and time within which other movements are occurring. In fact, politics may be linked to larger issues and societal narratives. He earlier cited the Civil Rights movement as an example of the provision of a master frame of protest that was appropriated by

succeeding groups (McAdam, 1988). It could be argued that the very dynamics of globalization and the post-colonial experience can provide new master frames for emerging societies. The *fa'afafine* movement, although fluid and long-standing, would use to their advantage individuals who had been part of master frames that were to emerge later in their development.

Cultural Motifs and Political Process

McAdam also notes that cultural motifs are useful in gaining allies or influencing public opinion. He refers to Martin Luther Kings' appropriation of both biblical and patriotic discourses as an example of an "act of cultural appropriation" (McAdam, 1994:37). The Civil Rights movement and the identity of its supporters were encapsulated in a wide-reaching set of discourses which were shared with the dominant culture and which became meaningful to both.

"Expanding cultural opportunities" (McAdam, 1994:39) that may be seen initially as tangential to the movement are another important resource. Some of these opportunities may be cases or acts of unforeseen serendipity that become available for further use. "Ideological or cultural contradictions" (McAdam, 1994:39) may present further opportunities for social movements to engage in political activity. For example, the implanting of western notions of merit in post-colonial societies can render obvious the contradictions between traditional discourses and the new meaning structure (see Keesing, 1934; Shankman, 1984, on Samoa). Similarly, the American notions of "freedom" and "equality" were in tension with the realities of a dominant "grass roots" ideology that had placed African Americans at a structural disadvantage.

Social movements do not simply emerge out of vacuums. McAdam (1994:43) argues that there is a role for "long-standing activist subcultures in movement emergence." For example, social movement activity of a specific or more fluid variety may be present in a society for years or generations before conditions become suitable for its emergence or re-emergence through certain forms of agency.

McAdam argues that social movements eventually produce their own cultural forms. He writes:

> Not only will the movement bear the imprint of the broader cultural context(s) in which it is embedded but insurgents are also likely to develop a distinctive movement culture capable of reshaping the broader cultural contours of mainstream society. (McAdam, 1994:45)

He also suggests that:

> Social movements tend to become worlds unto themselves that are characterized by distinctive ideologies, collective identities, behavioral routines and material cultures. (McAdam, 1994:45-46)

As Clarke (1976) has observed, cultural emergents generated by fluid, loosely defined activities can result from structural changes. However, as was the case with the hippie movement, it is when these emergents are co-opted by other aspects of society, such as their commoditization by capitalism and "its" media, that they became salient (see also Gusfield, 1994).

McAdam argues that "shifts in the social locus of the movement" (McAdam 1994:46) can occur over time. Such shifts depend largely on changes in culturally-shared meanings and material considerations "... that reflects the new class, regional, generational, or other social loci of the movement" (McAdam, 1994:46). These shifts may provide motifs for further transformation. The potential for these kinds of shifts may be highly probable in societies in which structural change occurs rapidly.

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McAdam further proposes that "contact between previously segregated groups" (McAdam, 1994:53) may also be essential to the development of social movements. He draws on the work of Harrison White (1991, in McAdam, 1994) in arguing that two "value streams" have the "...potential to produce a new cultural hybrid based on two subcultures present in the movement." White cites early Christianity as an example of the hybridization "...of a rural ascetic Jewish tradition with that of Hellenized Jews and Romans throughout the Mediterranean" (McAdam, 1994:53). This notion has some relevance for understanding the *fa'afafine* movement. The new forms that this movement has taken on and the identities that it projected through activities of its own will be seen at the most fundamental level to be a combination of a number of distinct other forms.

McAdam (1994:47) also argues that the "perceived effectiveness of the movement's dominant core" will tend to frame the movement positively in the eyes of outsiders. Here he is referring to leaders and activists. There is an aspect of impression management implied in this notion, as well as the possible relationship of the "dominant core" to society's elites. Impression management in a kinship-based society can be based on closely shared discourses and ideologies. It might also have a political aspect. The dominant core of a movement would have to manifest enough of a society's allowable display rules[2] to be contextualized as effective and therefore legitimate. Thus, a reading of the McAdam (1994) typologies reveals that culture and political opportunity are part of an all-encompassing web of ideas, discourses, and processes that may become motivations for action.

Culture, Kinship and Politics

Cultures and kinship can provide their own forms of opportunity from which agents can draw. As Swidler has argued, cultures can provide what she calls "repertories" or "toolkits" from which action strategies can be constructed (Swidler, 1986:273). She observes in a later article that actors can

> ...Use culture in creative ways to forward their own interests in a system of unequal power, but the effect of that struggle is to reproduce the basic structure of the system (Swidler, 1995:30).

However, there is culture and there is culture. Fantasia and Hirsch have argued that if the notion of culture

> ...Is to yield real insights for sociologists studying collective action and social movements, we cannot rely on the classical anthropological conception of culture as a seamless, integrated whole, an overarching web of meaning that minimizes discontinuity or rupture (Fantasia and Hirsch, 1995:145).

Fantasia and Hirsch also feel it is important to understand and explore the contested areas of culture that produce practices that are novel, in addition to assumed shared meanings (Fantasia and Hirsch, 1995).

Culture in traditional or post-colonial societies often implies kinship. In kinship-based societies, toolkits or repertoires would be expected to be found in the ideologies surrounding the family system and would be utilized in or become in part the source of transformational activity. One can see from the Fantasia and Hirsch (1995) article that kinship considerations were a factor in organizing the activities of women in the Algerian resistance against French colonial rule. In the present study we will see that kinship provides a dominant organizing principle in Samoa, and therefore the *fa'afafine's*

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collective behaviors and movement activity can be examined in the context of Samoan kinship motifs.

Dramaturgy as Politics

Political processes embedded in theatricality or spectacle have been evident throughout the history of 20th century social movements. Common examples that remain in Western sensibilities pertain to the labor movements of the 1930s and 1940s. These were significant for their theatricality, as was the fascist movement in Germany and the right wing Social Credit Movement in Canada in the1930s. Gusfield (1994) has discussed the potential of the dramaturgical in communicating a movement's message. Dramaturgy, in a sense, can be one of the delivery mechanisms of movement's message.

Theatricality as an indigenous, gentle politics of recognition and inclusion has characterized some aspects of the *fa'afafine* emergence. As one playwright respondent put it, the ritual interactions between Samoans have some aspects of the dramaturgical in the playing out of the roles of various social actors, or in interactions within families. The notion of the dramaturgical motivates another question that has arisen in social moment theory, that of identity.

New Social Movement Theory: The New Centrality of the Notion of Identity

The more recent addition of identity to social movement theory, attributable to Alain Touraine (1981) and Alberto Melucci (1989), has helped to address the problem presented by a body of theory which favored emergence embedded in class. This contribution is found in what has been called the New Social Movement (NSM)

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perspective (Melucci, 1989, 1994; Touraine, 1981, 1985). The notion of identity was initially linked to contagion theory and its emergence as crowd behavior. The later contributions of Touraine (1981, 1985) and Melucci (1989, 1994), a myriad of articles in anthologies such as those produced by Morris and Meuller (1992), Larana et al. (1994), Johnston and Klandermans (1995), McAdam et al. (1996); and a monograph by Klandermans (1997) have recognized the usefulness of this perspective. These writings address the notion of identity as a projection of both the meanings and messages of social movements, as well as a link to cultural production. As Klandermans has argued, "creating and defending new identities, a social movement organization is, to its members an end in itself" (1997:121). Melucci (1997) has understood identity to include notions of the body. For example, feminist movements have emerged and produced an identity politics based, in part, on anatomical difference that transcends class.

Scholars subsequent to Touraine and Melucci have taken up the theme of identity. Amongst them, Cerelu (1997), J. Gamson (1997), W. Gamson (1992), Gusfield (1994), Hunt et al. (1994), Klandermans (1997), and Taylor and Whittier (1995) have specifically linked social movement activity to aspects of identity. Through the study of post-war social movements of various kinds, as well as some that have arisen in emerging post-colonial societies, it has become apparent that collective behaviors, movement activity, and associated identities can take on many forms (Hunt, Benford and Snow, 1994). Gay identities in North America have been linked to a range of characteristics and attributes that have been the subject of more recent study (cf. Butler, 1990; Weston, 1991). Taylor and Whittier (1995), for example, theorize the lesbian movement's emergence as an identity movement. Gamson (1997) analyzes the transformations of collective identities

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in the gay movement through the organizational shaping and reshaping of gay film festivals, as they became increasingly mainstream. Implied in a notion of identity are the idiomatic processes by which selves and collective identities are constructed, reconstructed, and grouped in a hegemonically constituted world (see also Gamson, 1997).

As Melucci has written, by and large the emergence of new social movements is characterized by a replacement of the notion of "the freedom to have"… with the notion of "… the freedom to be" (Melucci, 1989:177-78). The notion of "the freedom to be" has produced numerous instances in the literature, some of which have preceded New Social movement theory as a perspective. For example, Clarke (1976) earlier found the emergence of the "skinheads" of Great Britain to be attempts amongst post-war working class youth to recapture identities that had been embedded in communities that collapsed after breakdowns in the family system. Klapp (1969), in an interpretation reminiscent of Jameson's (1984) notion of the waning of affect, theorized that the rationalism of modernity was inadequate in providing satisfactory individual identities and therefore resulted in searches to find or re-capture them (see also Hunt et al., 1994). The women's, gay, and lesbian movements are based on notions of being or becoming accommodated and esteemed identities.

Kinds of Identity

Some scholars have elaborated on the identity problematic in terms of its variants. Zaretsky (1994) introduced a binary distinction with respect to identity. The first distinction is the identity of a polity based on broad cultural or ideological considerations.

He argues that the growth of right wing Republicanism in the United States would characterize those kinds of identities. The second distinction is exemplified by identities that have the characteristics of visible minorities (see also Ujimoto and Hirabayashi, 1980). Among these would be gay men, women, lesbians, Asians, aboriginal Canadians, and African Americans. While both types of groups produce struggle based on conceptions of identity, which they may in fact hold, the latter are more likely to be characterized by individuals who attempt

> ... To reclaim a stigmatized identity, to revalue the devalued pole of a dichotomized hierarchy such as white/black, male/female or heterosexual/gay" (Zaretsky, 1994:199)

Zaretsky's notion is compatible with the Goffmanian construct of a spoiled identity (Goffman, 1963).

Within these broad types of identity lie other distinctions. Johnson et al. (1994) have demarcated three kinds of identity: individual identity, collective identity, and public identity. Individual identities are the constructions, developed through interaction, that tend to accompany the individual into a like-minded compatible milieu, which are affirmed or transformed through various forms of intersubjectivity.

The construction of individual identities as Honneth (1995) has theorized, can produce problematic issues, played out along Meadian lines, in which individual struggles for recognition and esteem with a "generalized other" that is not supportive of an individual self-conception, can become the basis for identity problems and social movement emergence. To Honneth, identity, recognition, and esteem, which are deeply psychological, are interrelated. The amount and kinds of societal reinforcement and esteem one receives during the construction of one's identity will determine the need to

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be recognized as a developmental issue in later life. Such need, then, can translate into the emergence of action.

Johnson et al. (1994) similarly argue that the search for identity commences as a youthful activity. Citing Erikson's (1968) fifth developmental stage with respect to the solidifying of identity in adolescence, Johnson et al. note that

> An individual's identity becomes consistent when it is built in a common ideological orientation that renders it meaningful and gives it coherence (Johnson et al., 1994:14).

Collective identity had been rather simply defined in the early literature. It was contextualized as an aggregate of participants performing as a singular actor (Blumer, 1955 in Johnson et al., 1994). The Durkheimian (1976) "collective conscience" has also been cited as analogous to collective identity (Johnson et al., 1994:16).

More expanded expositions of collective identity have since been developed. Johnson et al. propose that collective identities are agreements (sometimes implicit) between individuals as to what constitutes "... membership, boundaries, and activities for the group" (Johnson et al, 1994:15). This suggests that rational choices take precedence over more interactionist kinds of participation. However, they also argue that collective identity is often indeterminate, a "moving target" (Johnson et al., 1994:16) where, for example, identity considerations may correlate with the various phases that characterize a movement's emergence.

Friedman and McAdam (1992:160) argue that there is a relationship between identifiable collectives and the histories of the individual identities that are found in them as the basis for embedding the latter in the former. Participation in movements can be based on collective identities linked to previous networks, attachments, and sympathies.

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They also argue that rational choices regarding participation can become part of an actor's options within these more personal pre-existing networks. The interactionist notion of fluid movement activity, developed by Gusfield (1994), while not excluding rational choices, where the costs and benefits of participation may indeed be measured, would lead one to suspect that identities based on previous loyalties and attachments may simply become the vehicle for a rather easy slip into more organized activity in some instances. As we shall see, already established networks and emotional attachments of the interactionist variety characterized much of the history of the *fa'afafine* emergence, and yet some actors undoubtedly made rational choices regarding participation and activities.

Cerelu (1997:393), borrowing from the work of Charles Taylor (1985, 1989) notes that collective identity can also be viewed as being enacted within a specific "moral space". That is, "a collective pursues the freedom to be because that which frames the collective's identity defines their existence as right and good" (Cerelu, 1997:394). Collective identity can also "... include a conscious sense of the group as agent" (Cerelu, 1997: 393). She also argues that identifiable collectives

> ... Consciously coordinate action, ...develop defenses, ... insulate, ...differentiate, ...mark, ...compete, ...persuade, and coerce (Cerelu, 1997:393)

While this notion is a valuable insight, it is yet to be determined the extent to which, what is also unconscious, motivates action, identification and identity.

Finally, the notion of public identity captures the reaction that outsiders have to collective or individual identities. Public identities presume an interaction with the public in ways in which collective identities can become contended, supported and redefined.

These are often based on the participants' relationships to societal institutions and individuals who are not members of the collective (Johnson et al., 1994:18-19).

Identity and Identity Framing

The notion of framing that we have examined earlier has also been utilized in the analysis of identity. Hunt et al. (1994) examined the processes by which opposing identities structure collective action. Like McAdam, they also analyzed the work of Snow and Benford (1988). To reiterate, framing is a process of how situations are defined, interpreted, and organized (Goffman, 1974). Snow and Benford (1988, in Hunt et al., 1994) were concerned with how collectively held ideas became transformed into social action via a Goffmanian processes of framing.

Snow and Benford (1988, in Hunt et al., 1994) view movement actors performing three types of framing tasks in order to define situations. The first is "diagnostic framing" by which the problem or situation that requires transformation is identified. "Prognostic framing" is the plan that may lead to the steps that will affect change. These two frames alone, however, may not lead to collective action. A third aspect of the schema, "motivational framing" based on "compelling reasons" for righting the problem, must also be in place. These notions all assume rational, utilitarian choices.

Hunt et al. (1994) have added to Snow and Benford's schema. They propose that for social movements to emerge, the framing of three kinds of identity fields are also necessary. These they call protagonist, antagonist, and audience fields. The protagonist versus the antagonist fields can be contextualized as one group's identity vs. another or as "in-group/outgroup distinctions" (Hunt et al., 1994:193). Implied in these distinctions is the assignation to others of "ideological, geographical, and tactical 'turfs'" (Hunt et al.,

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1994:193) that differ from those of the members of the social movement. The corollary

would be those members' assignment to themselves of their own turfs. Hunt et al. also

note that

> Such attempts to situate one's own organization in time and space in
> relation to other groups can be thought of as boundary framing." (Hunt et
> al., 1994:194).

According to Taylor and Whittier (1992), boundaries may also be signs and/or

signifiers of identity based on physical space, identity projections, or we/they opposites.

However, it will be shown that boundary markers may be structured such that allowances

are made for allies, sympathizers, and friends who are only somewhat involved in

collective behaviors and movement activities.

According to Hunt et al. (1994:198), the diagnostic process of framing constructs

the protagonist and antagonist identity fields.

> By specifying who is responsible for particular social ills, movement
> actors make explicit character claims about themselves, their organization,
> and others. (Hunt et al., 1994:198-199)

Each of these fields has an action component. One example of how this schema

works can be found in their third construct, "audience identity fields." They write:

> A common characteristic of all imputed audience identities is that they are
> capable of receiving and evaluating protagonist messages in a favorable
> light (Hunt et al., 1994: 199).

Thus, the action component of an audience field implies that transformations in the target

audience are possible, given the right message. The relationship between audience

identities and movement actors suggests that calculable agency (Giddens, 1979) of

various sorts is probable where audiences are concerned.

A further aspect of identity framing deals with what Hunt et al. (1994) refer to as the "outsider's identity imputations." That is to say, what outsiders consider to be the identity of the members of the collective. Members of a movement must themselves frame these identity imputations in relevant ways so that they can be dealt with and answered. Hunt et al. propose "...at least four ways in which outsiders' identity imputations are framed"(Hunt et al., 1994:201). The first is to falsify the identity imputations of outsiders, to show that they are not accurate or that they are incorrect. The second is to claim that these imputations are "... accurate positive portrayals of collective and individual protagonist identities" (Hunt et al., 1994:201). This may be the case with respect to leadership; leaders may be viewed as a positive representation of the collective. The third is to claim that responsibility for the identity imputations of others in fact arises from the inability of the members of the movement to better manage the impressions that others have of them.

> In other words, the imputed identities are not due so much to a faulty reading of the movement but to adherent behavior that lends itself to such a reading and is therefore indicative of poor impression management (Hunt et al., 1994:202).

Suggested in this argument is the notion that the organization requires some kind of remedial initiative to rework impressions that others interpret as negative.

The fourth is to not dispute the claims of outsiders at all, but to agree that the identities of members are indeed imperfect or flawed. They suggest that dramatic remedial action to transform identities would then be necessary. In conclusion, Hunt et al. argue, borrowing from Blumer (1969), that "for movement participants, frames and identities are part of an obdurate "reality" that conditions, constrains, and enables collective action." It might be suggested however, that how this reality actually conditions interpretive work may

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depend on how agents perceive history, social structures, and cultural arrangements as fitting into their action repertoires, and to which other networks or protagonists they are linked. It is equally important to note that framing activities need not necessarily be related to discrete, utilitarian, political activities but may also arise out of more informal encounters with antagonists and audiences. As such, identity imputations may also have important political consequences in terms of impression management in traditional societies

Sites for the Expression of Collective Behavior and Social Movement Activity

Another important consideration with respect to social movement activity that applies to political process, collective behavior, identity movements, and resource mobilization is the notion of "sites" where movement activity can take place. Fantasia and Hirsch (1995) speak of "havens" as being necessary for social movement success. Gamson (1992), Magnusson (1996), Melucci (1989), and Taylor and Whittier (1992, 1995) also stress the importance of spaces where movement activities can emerge and flourish outside of mainstream social relations. The sociological literature contains examples of playing fields becoming sites where emergent norms, collective identity, and solidarity can be both constructed and acted out away from "the gaze" of critical audiences (Birrell and Richter, 1989; Prendergast, 1978). We will see that "sites" or "free spaces" (Evans and Boyte, 1992), including those related to sports, were essential for the development of the *fa'afafine* movement.

Types of Social Movements

Although different kinds of social movements have been alluded to in the above review, a brief reiteration of their range is in order. As Gusfield (1994) notes, social movement activity has produced a broad spectrum of exemplars. Movements can be well organized, with direct goals aimed at specific transformation; based on rational choices, using well-developed and differentiated movement organizations; and include a hard or conflictual politics. Some labor and political movements have been examples of these. In the middle have been more fluid movements, such as those based on gender and ecology, with some organizational activity, involving a less specified arrangement of organizational mechanisms, but characterized by wide-ranging constituents with degrees of attachment to the movement. Politics in these cases have ranged from hard to soft. At the other extreme are movements such as the identity-based hippie movement (see also Gusfield, 1994). Rather than having a highly coherent organization, it was characterized more by emergent norms and collective behaviors, embedded in a series of networks that expanded globally. In the first two examples, leadership, politics, and organizational structure were often formal, discreet, and centrally located. In the latter, a few "political" actions aside, the hippie movement was defined more by the interactionist notion of role models, collective behavior, shared ideologies, the construction of new identities based on lifestyle, and ideas and behaviors conveyed dramaturgically through speech, text and music, often via the media.

It is obvious that the emergence and structuring of movement activity is not captured by all examples nor by all theory. As Gusfield (1994) argues, theory applies in different ways and with differing degrees of salience. Each case is an idiographic field. It

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is this notion that contextualizes the following discussion of how social movement theory will be used in this study.

Social Movement Theory and the *Fa'afafine*

As indicated in Chapter One, the *fa'afafine* have projected various collective behaviors and activities into the larger Samoan community over a number of years. Their emergence has not been characterized by protest or formal politics. Their activities played out in a rather gentle, fluid manner that both sought and discovered opportunities for recognition, inclusion, and accommodation. Probably because of the nature of the individuals involved and the society in which they were embedded, the *fa'afafine* movement has been characterized by activities of a more interactionist variety. These included networking, attachment to the kinship system, the production of emergent norms, and eventually, specific actions in which certain forms of meaning and identity were projected into and ultimately embedded in the general community. There were also times when it was well organized. The politics they engaged in were based on indigenous forms of impression management, the attempt to change the opinions of others, and the desire for inclusion in certain societal motifs.

Concepts from social movement theory are being employed in this study as a hermeneutic to help interpret the *fa'afafine* emergence. As a result of the *fa'afafine's* unique historicity, as in all studies, only certain aspects of theory will be emphasized. For example, the specific ideas derived through the scholarship of McAdam, McAdam et al., Freidman and McAdam, and Hunt et al. appear to be particularly useful because of their application across cultures. Their ideas inform and provide metaphors for the *fa'afafine*

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emergence in a manner that avoids this transformation being contextualized strictly by the conflictual relations found in the West. At the same time they will help to illustrate how social movement activity has in fact taken place within the unique cultural and structural context of this emergent.

Some ideas and concepts from the general theories of emergence and transformation found in the major branches of social movement scholarship also appear to coincide with *fa'afafine* case. They are not incompatible with the "toolkits" and "repertoires" for action and transformation that are used within most societies, including a kinship-based society, like Samoa, that contains both traditional and Western structures.

As the story of the *fa'afafine* movement unfolds, some of these concepts and theories will be utilized and alluded to, or sometimes modified to accommodate the peculiarities of the local situation. Although they are being employed interpretively, their use may also produce results that further validate these theories and constructs in a manner that could support their use in a deductive capacity in future research.

In the chapter that follows, aspects of the Samoan culture, the *fa'aSamoa*, will be explored. The *fa'aSamoa* will be reviewed schematically as both a symbolic and material system which has produced its own social structures and recipes for action in which Samoan intersubjectivity takes place. This chapter will provide a description of part of the cultural milieu in which the *fa'afafine* emergence occurred.

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Chapter 3: How do we understand Samoa? Samoan Culture and Social organization and Samoa's Place in Time and Space

> It's not the fa'aSamoa, but what
> is the fa'aSamoa, anyway?
> -Samoan academic

> I found myself insisting that Samoans value community
> over the individual, or that Samoan women give up their
> children for adoption without psychological distress,
> because of a value system that placed emphasis on diffuse
> family ties rather than on exclusive attachments. While
> statements like these contain some truth, they also squeeze
> the life out of the reality of a people by treating human
> action as if it proceeded from a simple activation of
> unilateral cultural models. Instead ...real life often involves
> the problematical and always partial resolution of dilemmas
> proposed by the existence of competing models, or models
> that are incompatible with key experiences.
> – Bradd Shore, in *Culture in Mind*, 1996

We have seen in more recent social movement theory that cultures provide structures, motifs, and relationships that can nurture or constrain transformational activity in the hands of the right agents. This fact should be taken into account with respect to the *fa'afafine* transformation. Cultures may have built in their own resource mobilization structures and indigenous kinds of political processes, as well as constraining and enabling effects that depend on an individual's place within the structure itself.

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Embedded within cultures may be found both the motifs for their coherence and dissonances, as well as the toolkits for their transformation.

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. The first is to locate Samoa geographically and to provide a Samoan account of its origins. The second is to describe some of the dominant traditional discourses of Samoan culture, the *fa'aSamoa*. It is within the *fa'aSamoa*, a set of rights, obligations, stratification arrangements, and display rules, that Samoa has been organized and that the vast majority of Samoans, including *fa'afafine*, live their lives.

The chapter is divided into a number of specific themes. The first is the hierarchy of the Samoan stratification system, including the *matai* system and how it operates. The Samoan kinship system as a system of resource mobilization and political processes is discussed. Changes in the *matai* system are also presented. Some of the ordering principles of Samoan culture will be examined. A discussion of gender and sex is followed by a section on the traditional Samoan village and the manner in which its social relations are ordered. Emphasis is placed on the stratification implications of its various spaces, and changes in village life that have resulted from contacts with the world system. The next section is an account of Samoan socialization. The themes in this chapter will provide the reader with a background to the lives of Samoans as children and adults and will help to ground later chapters on the identity of the *fa'afafine* within this overarching system.

Samoa in Space

Samoa can be described in a number of ways. First of all, it is an archipelago made up of fifteen small islands. The Samoan archipelago is partitioned into two political

entities. These are the independent country of Samoa, the site of this study, and American Samoa, an American protectorate. On a map one would look for this archipelago south of the equator at approximately 14 degrees south latitude and between 168 to 173 degrees west longitude (Gilson, 1970).

The Samoan archipelago has been inhabited for approximately 3000 years, and its people have had contact with neighboring Polynesian societies for at least part of that time (Gilson, 1979; Meleisea, 1987b). The people are Western Polynesians and are related to the Polynesians of Tonga, parts of Fiji, Tokelau, and Niue. Samoan is part of the Austronesian family of languages (Bellwood, 1978).

The islands of independent Samoa, the western portion, are about 2926 square kilometers in area. Four are inhabited. These are Upolu, Savai'i, Manono, and Apolima.

American Samoa, to the east consists of the inhabited island of Tutuila, and four tiny islands in the Manua group. Together they total only 197 square kilometers. Although both Samoas are separated politically, the traditional cultures are the same.[3]

The climate of the entire archipelago is tropical and the geography varied. Samoa consists of high volcanic mountains as well as some broad gently sloping coastal plains (Kear and Wood, 1962). Sandy beaches are found in some of the traditional villages. Most of Samoa's islands are surrounded, at least partially, by coral reefs within which swimming and fishing take place. The climate is hot and often humid. The months from June through August are the most temperate. Tutuila, the main political island in American Samoa is mountainous except in the southwest corner of the island.

Apia is the capital of Samoa. Pago Pago is the capital of American Samoa. Government buildings, businesses, banks, hotels, resorts, private homes, health care

facilities, institutes of higher learning, and office buildings can all be found in both urban areas. Apia is also the site of foreign embassies and Commonwealth high commissions. The population of the entire urban area, which includes Apia and surrounding villages, is approximately twenty percent of Samoa's total population of approximately 169,000 (Samoa Department of statistics). However, many villages that are not included officially as part of the town area are proximal to it. The population of American Samoa is approximately 60,000 (Government of American Samoa, personal communication). Much of its population is composed of people from Samoa who have migrated to American Samoa.

There are approximately three hundred villages in Samoa. Many villages have shops that sell staples, processed food, cigarettes, bread, and beverages. On the island of Savai'i, the short strip of road from the ferry at Saleleloga to the coastal road has shops and some light industry.

Samoa also has ideal conditions for tropical agriculture. The climate is moist and warm and the volcanic soil, fertile. Crops such as *taro*, *ta'amu*,[4] bananas, vegetables, coconuts, cocoa, pineapple, and various melons are grown. However, its location has left it susceptible to devastating cyclones. Lately it has experienced an equally devastating *taro* blight, which eliminated a valuable cash crop in some demand overseas.

The only indigenous mammal is a species of fruit bat, the flying fox. There are a number of species of reptiles and birds, including the world's only tooth-billed pigeon. Domesticated animals include pigs, chickens, and cattle.

In spite of its isolation, Samoa is readily accessible to the world system. The international airstrip at Faleolo was first developed during the Second World War. There

is another airstrip at Fagali'i, near Apia, for inter-island flights and flights to American

Samoa. The harbor and wharf facilities in Apia handle freighters and occasional cruise

ships. There are also international courier companies and two local airlines, one an

international carrier, as well as regular service by other international carriers. Samoa has

two television channels and can receive additional fare from American Samoa. Samoa

has a government-owned telephone company as well as a privately-owned cellular phone

company. Samoa is also accessible via the internet.

Samoa in Time

It has been estimated that Polynesians occupied the entire archipelago around

1000 BC (Bellwood, 1978). Lapita pottery provides evidence of a pattern of migration

from insular South East Asia, through Papua New Guinea, the Solomons, Vanuatu, Fiji,

Tonga, and Samoa, where remnants of this pottery have been found (Bellwood, 1978).

Tongans conquered and ruled Samoa for several hundred years until around 1400, when

the Tongans, having been gradually driven out, left (Meleisea, 1987b).

Samoans have their own account of their origins. In their creation myth, Samoa is

the center of a universe created by Tagaloa. After surveying the entire earth for a resting

place, he created a rock called *Manua'atele*. From pieces of *Manua'atele* he created Fiji

and Tonga. Then he created the islands of the Western Samoa group (now known as

Samoa) and, finally, Tutuila in what is now American Samoa.

Tagaloa then created a sacred vine whose fallen leaves decayed. The vegetation

attracted worms or maggots. Gods came down and provided the worms with arms, legs,

heads, and beating hearts. The worms were then human beings, males and females. They

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had will or intentionality. Tagaloa placed a male and a female on each of the islands.

Thus, Samoan myth recognizes only two dimorphic genders. The islands that he created

received their names from the names of the male and female that he placed on each of

them. For example, To and Ga became Tonga. U and Polu gave Upolu its name. Fi and

Ti combined to give Fiji its name (Holmes and Holmes, 1992; Mead, 1930; Shore, 1982).

Some Samoans still believe Samoa to be the center of this universe created by Tagaloa.

The Rule of *Matai* - the *Matai* System: an Idealized Description[5]

> Political power lies mainly in a title and is conceived as external to the
> person who might happen to bear it. Without a title, as many talented and
> otherwise distinguished Samoans have discovered, one is – in an
> important sense – nobody. With it, even the most unprepossessing person
> is imbued with the dignity and distinction of his office. (Shore. 1982:69)

Samoans are organized within families, called *aiga* in Samoan. *Matai* are titled

heads of *aiga*, chosen from within the family group (Gilson, 1970; Grattan, 1948;

Kramer, [1902] 1995; Meleisea; 1987b; Shore, 1982). A *matai* title is legitimized by a

fa'alupega, an oral account of the descent line of the title and the geographical space

(usually a village, but sometimes a district) to which it is linked (Meleisea, 1987b:4, 10).

Meleisea (1987b, and personal communication) has analyzed the *fa'alupega* as a social

ordering device in interfamily relations.

The *matai* ideally holds the title and associated lands for that part of the family for

which he is responsible (see Shore, 1982:59-61 for a discussion of this relationship).

Other family members are corporately attached to the title that the *matai* holds in trust for

them. One's family name can derive from the name of a title. Descent lines are

commonly invoked through both female and male gender categories associated with the

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brothers and sisters of a family. Criteria for title succession based on agnatic and uterine connections can also apply (Shore, 1982:90-95). The succession to a *matai* title is therefore not clear-cut. Although often given to the eldest son, there are, ideally, various pathways to a title. These are based on one's multiple links to it through the extended family, as well as one's presumed suitability for office.

Ali'i and *Tulafale*

There are two types of *matai*, *ali'i* and *tulafale*. The *tulafale*, who are also called orators, are the active politicians of families. Traditionally a *tulafale* is usually associated with an *ali'i* for whom he acts as an initiator of political processes. The *ali'i* are traditionally considered to be nobility and direct descendents of ancestral gods. *Matai* are often addressed by their title and then by a given name. The relative status of *matai* titles may often be linked to the village in which the titleholder resides, however, titles that are ranked highly in one village may be considered of lower rank in other villages (Shore, 1982:306).

The *tulafale*, as distinguished from the *ali'i* with whom he or she is associated, is generally, but not always, of lesser status, yet is more active in debate and in proposing village and family policy. *Ali'i*, on the other hand, subtly steer debates, make refined points, and often make final decisions depending on their rank.

In addition to being the heads of kinship groups, *matai* embody order through their direction of others, speech forms, body posture, tone of voice, and their relationship to physical activity. Social order as contextualized by the body is a significant theme in Samoa (St. Christian, 1994).

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In contrast to the *matai* are the untitled men, the *taulele'a.* They serve the *matai* and perform much of the difficult physical work in the villages.

In the idealized *matai* system, *matai* of the highest rank rely on *matai* of lesser rank to organize those of still lower rank, who in turn organize the untitled men, the *taulele'a.* It is the *matai* of middle and lower rank who, in a sense, take direction from those above and who have the more difficult task of organizing those below them.

The extended family, known as the *aiga potopoto,* is attached to its titles and lands through multiple descent lines (Shore, 1982:90-95). It is commonly held that Samoans can trace their lineages to the titled heads of four maximal descent groups (Samoan scholar, personal communication).

Resource Mobilization

The responsibility of the *matai* in their daily lives becomes, de jure and de facto, to organize the family for which they are responsible. They can also represent the family in village councils, called *fono.* Some have wide-ranging responsibilities related to land and titles and the running of villages (Grattan, 1948; O'Meara, 1990; Pitt, 1970; Shore, 1982).

A *matai* is responsible for mobilizing the family's resources. *Tautua,* or service to the *matai,* is one motif that contextualizes how resources are mobilized. Resource mobilization on the part of a *matai* can include finding contributions of material wealth and labor for both day-to-day family requirements and for participation in *fa'alavelave.* *Fa'alavelave* are traditional Samoan exchanges of goods, a cornerstone of Samoan reciprocity motifs. An example is family emergencies, particularly those associated with

the death and funerals of family members from within the extended family, where resources are redistributed and traditional bonds are renewed (see Yamamoto, 1990). Status and esteem accrue from one's ability to contribute to such exchanges.

Traditionally, Samoa's resources came from subsistence agriculture (Meleisea, 1987b:18) and fishing. Untitled men were mobilized to perform heavy work such as canoe and house building, hunting, work in the plantations, or deep sea fishing. Women worked closer to the village center, were in charge of domestic tasks and childcare, and produced wealth in the form of fine mats (Shore, 1982:226). Fine mats still have exchange value in Samoa. As we shall see, exchange, resource acquisition, and resource mobilization have transformed a great deal since contact with Europeans.

Political Processes

Matai are commonly involved in political processes as individual agents, as well as on behalf of their families. While *matai* are sometimes contextualized as autocratic, individual involvement in family affairs can also be democratic (Holmes, 1974:24). *Matai* rely on family members for resources and therefore have reason to treat them well, although this does not apply to all cases. According to some individuals with whom I have become familiar, a family member, with few exceptions, considers it a right to attend family meetings where the *matai* is present, and it is considered the duty of the *matai* to invite the relevant family members to these councils. Although in the more contemporary sphere, family members of, say, a nuclear family may be scattered throughout Samoa, they can remain part of the family "council" when decisions are to be made.

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Family members are aware of and participate in activities that are in the political and economic interests of their *aiga* and therefore have consequences for themselves. Participation in the family system produces adults who are politically adept at many levels. Children can be present when family matters are being discussed, although they are non-participants in these discussions. This practice accords with traditional education, which is weighted towards observation.

Historically, alliances were conceived of by *tulafale*, the talking chiefs, and were often associated with sexual liaisons with the daughters of chiefs of other families (Schoeffel, 1979). In contemporary life, political activities can also become business activities conducted by *matai* with either *ali'i* or *tulafale* titles. This is because business is now important in the mobilization of resources and can aggrandize the political power of families and individuals in relation to others. Traditional political processes, numerous and widespread, are often associated with land and titles (Meleisea, 1987b:30-31).

Politics and resource mobilization are usually linked to one's associations with others in one's nuclear and extended families, including elites. These associations must be kept in order for political processes to remain effective, as inheritance of *matai* status is not de facto automatic (Freeman, 1971:94).

Transformations in the *Matai* System

Changes in the *matai* system have been occurring since the advent of Christianity in the early 19th century.[6] Some of these will be discussed in the chapter that follows. Commoditization and education have led to a new set of economic and social relations that have affected the *matai* system. With the increasing requirement for cash at all levels

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of society and the nucleation of families, one sees *matai* who work in Apia driving taxis, running businesses, working in restaurants, or in high governmental positions. No matter what their modern activities, in their homes and villages *matai* remain customary actors. While *matai* status *per se* brings prestige, new forms of prestige in the commoditized sphere also has a part to play in one's standing. Since the coming of Christianity, *matai*, whether *ali'i* or *tulafale*, have been increasingly regarded as Christian heads of families (Meleisea, 1995; O'Meara, 1990).

In practice, status and perhaps even class considerations in the Weberian sense have come to the fore in Samoa. I have been told that the possessors of some titles of traditionally lesser status have aggrandized their positions in practice by reason of higher education or wealth over those of higher status. O'Meara has noted the case of an individual who, with a lesser title, intended to aggrandize his rank through his own talents (O'Meara, 1990:154). The transformation and manipulation of ordering principles in Samoa requires further study. However, some respondents feel that money has had a great deal to do with changing rank.[7]

While transformations in the *matai* system have been going on for some time, Pitt (1970) remarked in the context of the 1960s that with involvement in Western kinds of resource mobilization,

> ...Chiefs (*matai*) become managers, kin groups (*aiga*) become co-operatives, while kinship or friendship becomes the basis for associations in the town or abroad (Pitt, 1970:9).

Pitt's example also illustrates the flexibility and fluidity of the *matai* system and the responsibility of *matai* to organize many exogenous forms, including business. It shows that, as a system of organization, it has so far remained very adaptable to outside forms.

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While family units are nucleating, the Samoan family is still a far-reaching kin group that crosses many oceans and political and economic systems. At the level of the nuclear family, remittances from overseas to family chiefs still retain some of the character of the traditional system of resource mobilization (Macpherson, 1994). Increasingly, *matai* titles go to those with education and business skill (Meleisea, 1987b; Penelope Schoeffel, personal communication).

Some Samoan Ordering Principles

The Samoan *aiga* is not only a system of social organization, but operates within a general code that helps order all Samoan life. As mentioned earlier, it is referred to as the *fa'aSamoa*, which is sometimes translated as Samoan custom. The oral discourses of the *fa'aSamoa* stress the importance of a number intersubjective relationships. Respect (*fa'aaloalo*), obedience (*usita'i*), love (*alofa*), dignity (*mamalu*), and service (*tautua*) are some important ones. *Fa'aaloalo,* or respect, is thought to be the Samoan way of displaying one's esteem for another person or their rank. Love, or *alofa,* can have a material side in addition to its affective/empathic usage (Gerber, 1975: 3, 15-17, 195). That is, one shows ones love for others by doing things for them.

Dignity, or *mamalu,* is thought to be another ideal form of intersubjective display. Individuals of lower status are expected to aspire to dignity displays of those of higher status. As one Samoan scholar put it, *matai* are considered to be the exemplars of the virtues of Samoan intersubjectivity and are the standard to which others are to aspire.

> In Samoa, to behave like a chief is the aim of Samoan socialization. In Samoa a "*tufanua*"[8] is a commoner, a person without chiefly values; while a "*tama'ali'i*" is a person with correct social values. (Samoan scholar, personal communication)

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Embodiment or body displays also contextualize order. To behave like a chief, one should also look and act like one (also see Shore, 1976).

Another set of relationships that are essential to understanding Samoa are those based on the interrelationship of *tautua*, or service, and *alofa*, or love. Traditionally *tautua* has meant service of the untitled to the *matai*. The untitled could serve *matai* in various ways, such as the preparation of their food and the gathering of resources. In contemporary times these relations between *matai* and the untitled still remain in place in villages. Ideally, it is through *tautua* that one attains *matai* status. Service does not demand reciprocity, although as we shall see in a later chapter, future reciprocity is implied through service and thus can become part of political processes. Traditionally the Samoan expression, *o le ala i le pule o le tautua*, ("authority is achieved through service") was the discourse that legitimized both present and anticipated *tautua* relationships. *Pule* means authority. One pays one's dues through *tautua* and eventually gains *pule*.

One can see variations on these relationships in most, if not all, Samoan homes. In a common form of *tautua*, youngsters serve the elders, including the family *matai*, if there is one present in the home. *Tautua* is also commonly seen in the helping and fetching that children and the untitled perform for their families. It is also part of the work efforts of the untitled in town or on plantations near the villages, as part of their contributions to family resources. Remittances from overseas are also a form of *tautua* (Macpherson, 1994).

Alofa, which means love or empathy, is a term often used to imply the proper emotion or attitude associated with socially correct and supportive behavior of a material nature (Gerber, 1975:15-17, 195). *Alofa* is also the attitude expected in the service of one's parents and family. Ideally, one receives esteem from fulfilling one's age-defined duties. The notions of *tautua*, along with *alofa* and *pule*, capture the important instrumental activities which lead to solidarities which order Samoan life through rank and resource mobilization and in which reciprocal respect and dignity motifs are ordered and played out. The term *alofa* can also have the connotation of doing someone a favor (Milner, 1993).

Alofa also has an affective side (Gerber, 1975:15). Although distancing has been observed between parents and children (Gerber, 1975:53; Mageo, 1991), children feel that their parents love them. One of Gerber's respondents reported the feeling that her father loved her, but that his love simply remained unexpressed (Gerber, 1975:53). I have heard such accounts from others. *Alofa* can, of course, be expressed. For example, one individual remembered the occasion when her father, a *matai* of high rank, wept when she left Samoa for schooling in New Zealand. Mageo (1991) has also reported on this kind of *alofa*.

I have also found the connotation of *alofa* as empathy to be widely held under some conditions, especially related to underdogs or the sick. I have also noted some people feeling *alofa* (empathy) for individuals with spoiled identities.

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Sex and Gender

Shore distinguishes between sex and gender in Samoa (Shore, 1981, 1982:225-230). Gender is a social construction that is attached to other Samoan identity markers and is not separate from sex. For example, reproductive sexuality for women is a distinguishing marker between a female's status as wife and her sacred status as sister (Shore, 1981:210). The change from being boys to being men is "more gradual" (Shore, 1981:210) and is not based on sexual considerations so much as it is on the attainment of the role of husband, father, and titled person.

As regards gender roles, to be born with the primary sexual characteristics of a female creates expectations of a destiny of one kind. To have male primary sexual characteristics creates expectations of another life course. These expectations illuminate social roles and that part of the village polity to which one may be expected to be assigned.

The "village of the ladies" and the "village of the gentlemen" are both the symbolic and instrumentally active divisions of the Samoan village related to gender (Schoeffel, 1978; Shore, 1982:100-106). The *'aumaga*, or men's organization, consists of all untitled men (*taulele'a*). Traditionally it was led by a *manaia*, a position usually held by the son of a high chief. Ideally the *'aumaga* supports the *matai*, works for the village council, and performs heavy work and guardian-like duties (Grattan, 1948:112-113). Informants have told me that the *'aumaga* also protects females of the villages and in earlier times was recruited for armies or militia. In more contemporary times, membership in the *'aumaga* is often forgone until an individual completes his education. In cases when education is completed and the individual resides elsewhere, the *'aumaga*

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is almost never a consideration. The *fono,* or council of *matai,* is the other part of the village of the gentlemen. It is the legislative and judicial body of the village.

The village of the ladies is ideally composed of the *aualuma* plus the *faletua* and *tausi* —the wives of *matai* and *tulafale,* respectively. The *aualuma* is made up of women born in the village (Shore, 1982:104). Historically, the role of these women was ceremonial. They served as greeters to visiting parties. In pre-contact and early missionary times they were responsible for entertaining visitors and arranging the pleasure motivated erotic encounters with visiting young men in the form of the *poula* (Mageo, 1992, Schoeffel, 1979:220). The *'aumaga* would similarly entertain members of the *aualuma* from other villages. The *aualuma* was also responsible for the provisions for and comfort of guests.

The *aualuma* was led by a *taupou,* a ceremonial virgin who epitomized the highest standards of femininity and decorum for the village (Shore, 1982:232-233). Discourses related to the *taupou* still support this view of Samoan women. However, after WWII Grattan noted the decline of the *aualuma*'s traditional activities (Grattan, 1948:12). Shore has suggested that the function of both *taupou* and *mania* have been in decline since contact (Shore, 1982:232), although the *taupou* still remains important as a sacred ordering principle. Schoeffel (1995) found that the village women's committees have largely replaced the work of the *aualuma.* The former originated in the 1920's as health-related initiatives introduced by the New Zealand administration in Apia. In the 19th century, missionaries had tried to replace the *aualuma* with women's auxiliaries to the churches (Schoeffel, 1995:103).

Feagaiga: The Relationship Between Brothers and Sisters

One of the most important gendered aspects of the *fa'aSamoa* is the brother/sister relationship found in the concept of the *feagaiga* or covenant (Schoeffel, 1978, 1995; Shore, 1982). Some respondents, as well as Shore (1982), and Schoeffel (1979, 1995) propose that the idealized Samoan intersubjective ordering principle is based upon this relationship. Traditionally, women, as sisters, were not considered for *matai* status. Their role was to aggrandize the family through dignity displays, and by exogenous marriage into other families, provide through their children, access to the titles of her spouse's family for her brothers or their descendents. (Schoeffel, 1979).

The *feagaiga* also elevates sisters to a higher social category than their brothers in their consanguine families (Schoeffel, 1995:88-89; Tcherkezoff, 1993:57). The corollary is the marital relationship, which Schoeffel has understood as a lesser status for women as compared to sisterhood (see Schoeffel, 1979:240-247). The *feagaiga* is also characterized by avoidance between brother and sister (Schoeffel, 1995:89). Avoidances can range from not being in the same room with sisters, to not discussing certain matters like sexuality, which is deemed improper. The power to curse a brother was given to the sister. The brother must protect the sister.[9]

The sister and/or her descendents have significant influence regarding the granting of *matai* titles to her brothers or their descendents (Shore, 1982:95). The sister does not relinquish her association with the family land and titles upon marriage, nor do her children, and at least ideally, she could leave her husband's family, returning to her own or her brother's home with her children. I have observed one example of the honoring of this sacred obligation.

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Schoeffel (1979 and personal communication) has argued that more recently, with a moneyed economy, the nucleation of families, the move to private land in or near Apia, and the widespread use of European goods and services, monetary pressures have tended to reduce this privilege for sisters. Some brothers simply cannot afford to accommodate whole families on their limited private land on which their closed, relatively expensive, European-style houses are situated, while at the same time providing for and educating children of their own. The out-migration of Samoans since independence may also have resulted in fewer male siblings who have remained behind and who can fulfill the brotherly part of the *feagaiga*. This political economic interpretation warrants further study. However, in spite of some of its practical vulnerabilities the *feagaiga* still defines the sacred status of females in the same way as marital status defines its profane aspects. The connotations of *feagaiga* have been expanded since contact with Europeans to include the general notion of a generic covenant, or contract, as well as the relationship between a pastor and congregation (Schoeffel, 1995). The *feagaiga* between brothers and sisters as it pertains to aspects of the lives of *fa'afafine* will be dealt with in further detail in a future chapter.

The Samoan Village

In addition to its gendered breakdown, the *nu'u*, or village, has important spatial arrangements that correlate with certain forms of organization. Simply put, one can view the village as composed of degrees of sacred and non-sacred spaces, spaces that are related to prestige (Shore, 1982; St. Christian, 1994) or as a set of spaces where stratification arrangements are played out to greater or lesser degrees.

The rule of thumb is that the closer to the center of the village, the more likely it is that sacred Samoan displays of dignity, respect, and expressions of authority will be found (see Shore, 1982:48-51; St. Christian, 1994). The spaces around the church, the pastors' houses, the family *fale*, the women's committee houses, and the *fono* of village chiefs are considered to be the most sacred and dignified. Further out from the center, the spaces are less sacred. The work, bathing, and toilet areas, less so; the young men's houses, where they exist, even less so; and the spaces in the bush, the least so (see also St. Christian, 1994).

Correlating with space and the sacred is the Samoan notion of culture and nature. Shore (1982) has made a strong case for the differentiation in Samoa between what is considered to be civilized or cultured and uncivilized or belonging to nature. As Shore (1982) indicates, the spaces furthest from the center are also the least civilized or cultured, and less under the social control of others.

> The bush is a morally ambiguous setting, however, since it is associated not only with freedom from the complex personal entanglements of village life, but also with the dark passions of unsocialized or uncivilized existence. This ambiguous status associated with the periphery of the village is the converse of the status of life in the village center. (Shore, 1982:162)

This suggests a Samoan conception of culture versus nature that correlates with normative considerations that help to define the kinds of activities that can be expected to take place in these areas.

It becomes obvious from Shore's account, which is supported by my own observations, that the areas farther away from the center, such as the bush, can become unregulated as long as authority figures are not present. These are areas where freedoms

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of various kinds can be expressed. Spaces at the periphery of the villages are also invitations to temptation for both sexes. Thus, the periphery is an area where protection or regulation of persons is less possible. As Shore (1982:164) points out, not only is protection from outside imminent threats considered to be necessary, but so is protection from presumed internal forces, impulses, personal desires, or temptations.

The Transforming Village

Samoan villages have changed greatly in the more than twenty years I have been visiting Samoa. One would expect to see the greatest continuum of forms in those villages closest to Apia. For example, in the villages of Vaimoso, Pesega, Siusega, Alafua, Lotopa, Lepea, Vaitele, and others, adults take on a variety of activities, many of which are not related to traditional forms of finding resources, yet most of these are tradition-run villages. Many adults, including *matai,* have jobs. Adults or older children wake early, prepare breakfast, and then head into town for work or to do other business, often dropping children off at school.[10] There is much variety in village activities depending on the mix of families, the churches, the presence of children, and the extent to which individuals are tied to the moneyed economy.

Individuals may work in town until around 4:30 PM. Some stay in the town area for recreation, such as going to a movie or a bar. Some engage in sports. Many, however, return home to prepare evening meals, attend to children or deal with affairs related to the village, church or family. Some people stay at home during the day, charged with the management of domestic activities. Some professionals and office workers commute relatively long distances by car or bus from peripheral villages to Apia.

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Prayers are typically part of the early evening family routine. In the evenings, couples and older unmarried people may drive back to town to a nightclub or a dance, for a hospital visitation or meeting, to take a meal at a local restaurant, including MacDonald's, or engage in other activities, such as those related to the churches. In the town-area villages one would be most likely to find a combination of a modern work ethic modified by some of the ideological requirements of the *fa'aSamoa*, or vice versa.

Many villages contain some European style houses. Villages near the town area are more likely to have houses built of wood or cement blocks. Some, like Vaitele Uta, a suburb built on former plantation land from the German colonial period, contain mostly European style homes. Traditional *fale*, which are found throughout Samoa, now have hurricane proof corrugated iron roofs. The typical traditional *fale* consisted of a circular or rectangular thatched roof standing on posts, spaced about four to five feet apart.

Moving away from the town area to the south part of Upolu island and to more remote villages on Savai'i and Manono, one finds a more traditional life. However, even isolated Manono island has tourism, which employs local people. Most villages have electricity. Many have at least one telephone, often in the houses of the women's committees. Households in the villages have television, and people rent videos produced mostly in the United States. All of this is in sharp contrast to what I witnessed in 1978 when only Upolu island was electrified.

In remote villages, life consists of rising early, doing the chores or working in the plantation, (mostly done by untitled adults, or young people who do not attend school), caring for children, and participating in various village activities that apply to one's status. Children usually attend school until 1:00 PM. The village *fono*, supported by

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members of the *'aumaga* who are not at school or at work, meet weekly to discuss village affairs, but *matai* may also convene to discuss matters as they come up. Women who do not have jobs or titles may be active in the women's committee and weaving houses. The wives of highly ranked *matai* usually lead these activities. Males and females can be involved with the churches' various projects and activities. Women are also involved in fundraising for the church and in women's committee activities, as are *fa'afafine* in some villages. The women's committees perform a variety of tasks in addition to fundraising. They see to the upkeep and cleanliness of the village, including the water supply and the tidiness of individual house sites.

There is at least one church in most villages, and often more. Sunday is a day of rest, going to church, and preparing *to'ona'i*, the traditional after-church meal. Church activities carry on throughout the week in many villages, including those close to Apia. Interestingly, as television has come to Samoa, some people have developed an interest in American sports and other TV programs, and Samoans enjoy watching rugby on television. One informant has suggested that the national rugby team, Manu Samoa, has helped to create national solidarity and collective identity in a Samoa that was, and in some instances may still be, a collection of competing traditional villages. Besides the government TV channel there is now a religious channel in Samoa.

Rural villages contain some elements of the villages around the town area. A number of rural villagers have jobs in industries or schools located near their villages. The past ten years has seen a build-up of tourist infrastructure. As the best beaches in Samoa are on traditional village lands remote from Apia, a number of successful arrangements have been made between local entrepreneurs and the village councils.

Some villagers are employed at these resorts. It is common to see the routines of these villagers now set to the rhythms of the various workday shifts at these resorts. The resorts have also increased contacts with foreigners. One often encounters villagers on the road on their way to work, dressed in the uniform of a particular resort.

In most villages there is a rich *ad hoc* social life amongst the young and unmarried. After work, young people may congregate at the cricket pitch or the volleyball court at the church for a get-together and a lively game. School children play various games in the villages. In the evenings, young men sometimes leave their homes to socialize. This is sometimes done in spite of curfews. A few women or girls may do this as well. Some unmarried females will attend village dances, sometimes accompanied by other girls, their families, or a village *fa'afafine*. Some people attend church functions. The pastor's home, the church, and the church youth group are all active sites for collective and individual expression in the villages.

Socialization of Children and Relationships with Parents

A number of studies have addressed the socialization of Samoan children. As Mageo (1991) points out in an article on the concept of the Samoan notion of *loto*, or will, in most instances there is a collective approach to child rearing in Samoa. This notion is also found in the work of Schoeffel (1979: 101-102), Ochs, (1988:78-80), and is also summarized in Freeman, (1983).

Samoan children are socialized into obedience, or *usita'i*, from between the ages of two to three (also see Schoeffel, 1979: 125-126; Gerber, 1975: 47-50), although socialization of this sort can begin earlier, and obedience routines can extend into

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adulthood (O'Meara, 1990:78). Prior to the ages of two or three, the child's needs and desires are catered to (O'Meara, 1990:77), and in the instances I have observed, the child is hardly left alone or untouched. He or she is massaged, fed, talked to, sung to, picked up, and taken wherever the family goes. The child is treated like a treasure. This also takes place for older children during times of illness. At those times the *tautua* role is forgone. The patient role comes into play, and the child is given the same close attention, concern, and care as the younger children (Gerber, 1975:52).

Although socialization into Samoan obedience and service motifs can be quite dramatic, it has not been systematically studied, but only generalized from studies in a few villages (e.g. Gerber, 1975; Schoeffel, 1979). Gerber noted that children undergo a sudden physical separation from adults starting around the age of two (Gerber, 1975:75). Very little cuddling and touching is exhibited towards children as they grow older. I have seen exceptions to this practice in some families where distancing can sometimes take a less dramatic form.

In one village, I witnessed an eight-year-old boy who works with his mother and sisters in the household. The family suspects that he might become a *fa'afafine*, as they feel he has feminine tendencies. His older siblings feel that he is that way because he has been mainly socialized by women, and avoided by his father. He is very physical, snuggling with his mother and his sisters, to their delight.

There is also a great deal of love and caring by parents for their children (see Gerber, 1975:49-53). Children are the future of the family and the caretakers of aging parents. Ochs (1988:158-161) notes some flexibility in the rearing of the young that allows for certain kinds of personal self-expression that sometimes borders on the

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"cheeky." I have observed looks of warmth and love towards children on the part of

parents and a widespread practice of public pride in children's' accomplishments. This is

often ritually displayed at graduations or theatrical evenings. The public support of

family is a common form of showing solidarity and the general strength of family ties.

Winners of the *fa'afafine* drag queen contests have been known to break down and weep

for joy in public, as have members of their families. There are occasions like funerals or

leave-taking for overseas in which emotions are given public display (see also Mageo,

1991).

Affective emotion display rules may appear to be highly constraining in Samoa. A

common explanation for emotional reserve towards children is that displaying too much

love may lead children to think themselves overly important. The axiom "spare the rod,

spoil the child" is sometimes mentioned as the motivation for corporal punishment and

derives its authority from the Bible (Samoan scholar, personal communication).

Thus, the obverse of physical affection can be corporal punishment (O'Meara,

1990:109; Schoeffel, 1979:125). The term "getting a hiding" comes up in my data as

regards the physical enforcement of obedience rules. A number of *fa'afafine* have

reported receiving hidings from their parents for "bad" behaviors that equated with

certain feminine displays.

On the other hand, Gerber (1975:55) found that the corporal punishment that

Samoan children receive could also be perceived by them, as demonstrations of parental

concern. However, a debate has been percolating within Samoa for some time regarding

the continued efficacy of child-rearing practices that include corporal punishment

(Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1999). Another aspect of child rearing pertains to the role of parents selecting the activities of their children as they become adults.

Socialization is in some senses non-gendered when it comes to childhood work activities (Schoeffel, 1979:106). Around the age of ten, girls are more formally incorporated into activities around the household and boys into the activities associated with the periphery of the village (Schoeffel, 1979:106). This ideal typical motif is complicated by the fact that children now go to school, which is in part a gendered activity. I have noticed in many locations that boys play rugby and wear a boys' style of school uniform, usually a pocket *lavalava*[11]. Girls dress as females and play games like cricket, skipping rope, and tag. Sometimes children of both genders play games together.

When children come home from school they may be immediately incorporated into the agendered general motif of service to the family, sometimes leaving their homework until later. They may sweep out the house, do the dishes, help prepare the meal, if they are old enough, and most certainly serve it—waiting to eat until after the elders have eaten. Then they will clear the table and do the dishes. They also care for younger siblings. In the town area there are few if any plantation duties to perform.

Secondary socialization takes place in the schools (Ochs, 1988:208), where adults teach in a structured way. I have heard from outsiders that Samoan children are especially obedient and therefore easy to teach.

If there is any psychopathology or psychological malaise associated with growing up Samoan, there has been little systematic study of it. However, much could be inferred from suicide statistics (Macpherson and Macpherson, 1987) and observations of childrearing by Gerber (1975), the relationship between alcohol and violence by Lemert

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(1972), and theorizing by Mageo (1991). The high suicide rates among young Samoan adults had been earlier theorized as occurring as a result of the highly structured Samoan culture and the dissonance between personal desires and the lack of opportunities for their fulfillment (Macpherson and Macpherson, 1987). The present government of Samoa has recently expressed commitment to an enhancement of opportunity in the economic sphere. Future research may be warranted to reveal if there is more optimism with respect to opportunities within Samoa and if new economic policies correlate with lower suicide rates.

In spite of some obvious constraint, there is also an ease to Samoan emotion displays. Samoans are genuinely warm and hospitable people and often contextualize themselves in that way. Their senses of humor are well-developed. Many are justifiably proud of their system of reciprocal exchange, a system that connotes generosity and support.

Summary

This chapter has served as an entrée into some of the workings of the *fa'aSamoa* and the *matai* system. We have examined some of the important Samoan roles and relationships as forms of organization and cultural repertoires.

The following chapter examines some of the history of the changes that occurred in Samoa with the arrival of Europeans in 1830. Some were ideational and others material. As these changes accumulated, new structures and the eventual production of a new kind of agency took place. Changes, while subsumed for the most part under the *fa'aSamoa* and its *matai* system, became additions to the range of repertoires and forms

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of expression which eventually became available to many Samoans, including some

fa'afafine, upon independence from New Zealand.

Chapter 4: Samoa Over Time – A Case of Structural Change and Complex Social Reproduction

> As the Tofua slowly sails away
> My eyes full of tears strain for a glimpse of you
> And I keep asking myself "is she running away
> because she despises me?"
> -translation of a Samoan folk song

Social movement theory predicts that structural change accompanies opportunities for social transformation. Changes of this sort are often preceded by what McAdam (1994) has referred to as "cognitive liberation." The purpose of this chapter is to examine the structural changes and transformations in mentalities that occurred in Samoa over a period of 150 years as outlined in the histories of a number of scholars. These transformations and their "ideational packages" (Berger et al, 1974) –sometimes embraced, and sometimes hotly contended, resulted in increasingly complex reproductions of the Samoan culture that would eventually become available to many Samoans after independence from New Zealand in 1962.

As Robertson (1992) would predict, many of these outside cultural forms became attached to indigenous motifs. However, they also provided new structures in which social organization and collective activities could ultimately be reworked. Although they applied to a broad range of behaviors and structures, and involved many levels of Samoan society, some of these transformations would eventually have consequences for the emergence of the *fa'afafine*. The following account is a brief history of Samoa since contact with the European world.

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The immigration overseas that would transform Samoa after the war began in 1945 with the New Zealand scholarship program for Samoan students (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1996; Meleisea, 1987b). Eventually ships like the Tofua and its sister ship, the Matua, would transport other Samoans to New Zealand to live, work, and remit to relatives back home. Many Samoans who returned to their homeland brought back new ideas (see Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1996) which gradually dispersed amongst the Samoan polity. These returnees, together with later migrants who stayed in New Zealand, became part of a network of expanded Samoan kin groups that would ultimately transform the Samoan experience starting in the 1960s (Kallen, 1982; Macpherson, 1994; Shankman, 1976). The voyages of the Tofua and Matua, however, were symbolic of just one stage in the development of Samoa into an independent state. That process began over a hundred years earlier.

The recorded history of Samoa is deep and complex and cannot been done justice in just a few pages. Each period of this history displays complex interactions between Samoans, Samoans and migrants, and between the migrants themselves. One example of the richness of Samoan history can be found in Gilson's (1970) account of Samoa from 1830 to 1900. Another are Meleisea's (1987a and 1987b) histories of Samoa. I have not tried to construct a history of Samoa from original materials. That would have been an impossible task for this dissertation. However, a number of scholars have produced excellent accounts that have taken many years to create. This chapter relies on a number of those histories: Davidson (1967) Ellison (1938), Field (1984), Gilson (1970), Grattan (1948), Keesing (1934), and Meleisea (1987a; 1987b). My knowledge of Samoa's history has also been generally informed through reading the accounts of Churchward (1930),

Pritchard (1866), Rowe (1930), Stair (1897), Stevenson ([1892] 1967), Turner (1884), and Williams (1841).

Contacts with the World System: Arrival of Europeans

The first recorded exposure to Europeans, the 1722 voyage of Roggewein and the 1768 voyage of Bougainville, involved the exchange of material goods. These brief exchanges of provisions for European goods took place without either party venturing onto the other's territory (Gilson, 1970). In 1772 the La Perousse expedition was badly mauled when the French went ashore to trade for provisions. The HMS Pandora, which arrived in the late 18th century in search of the Bounty mutineers was attacked by the locals and drove off the attackers with gunfire.

A few European visitors –whalers, beachcombers, castaways, and escaped convicts – had found Samoa prior to the arrival of Christianity in 1830 (Ellison, 1938; Meleisea, 1987b). Foreigners, even in small numbers, were found to be usefully instructive in technical matters, introduced iron and steel to Samoa, and were valued for their ability to deal with the increasing number of European callers prior to the 1830s (Meleisea, 1987a:45).

The arrival in 1830 of the John Williams expedition of the London Missionary Society (LMS) coincided with the end of a more than 100-year war in Samoa. Christianity and its institutions were gradually adopted. The LMS was soon involved in contentions for supremacy with Methodists and Wesleyans. A Catholic mission arrived in 1845 (Gilson, 1970:ch 4). A popular charismatic hybrid Christian cult, Sio Vili, had also taken hold prior to the arrival of the mainstream denominations (Meleisea, 1987b:12).

Christianity did not annihilate the Samoan culture as occurred in the new world. It did, however, provide new mentalities and significant changes to it. Keesing has contextualized the period from 1830 to 1870 as the "Samoa-Mission-Trader equilibrium of culture" (Keesing, 1934:476). This contributed greatly to changes in the *fa'aSamoa* and Samoan mentalities.

New Mentalities: Propriety and Literacy

As part of its missionary work, the LMS and denominations such as the Methodists and Wesleyans, which were eventually eclipsed by the LMS in number and influence, attempted to Christianize gender and marriage (Schoeffel, 1995:103). Eventually pastors' wives became role models for young Samoan women (Schoeffel, 1995:103).

The missionaries gave priority to the establishment of literacy (Ellison, 1938; Gilson, 1970; Keesing, 1934). To the missionaries literacy meant biblical studies and the "civilizing process." To Samoans it personified the mastery of Western knowledge and the entrance into new areas of power (Dunlop, 1993). Other themes provided by the first missionaries included modesty in dress, the elimination of certain forms of presumed erotic practice, and the notion of commerce as an elevated pursuit. Meleisea argues that the transformation of production implied in the Protestant ethic did not take hold in Samoa at that time. Christianity, while producing some changes to the *matai* system through the introduction of the role of pastor, in fact became part of the *fa'aSamoa* (Meleisea, 1987b:18; 1995:33).

The churches also began to organize village youth. Youth brigades, called *autalavou* in Samoan, eventually co-opted many of the functions of the *aualuma* and *'aumaga* in the villages (Schoeffel, 1979:154-155) as well as providing new sites for the expression of personal creativity and new forms of commitment to the polity.

The impression made by Christianity was at least as materialistic as it was spiritual (Watters, 1959). In spite of Meleisea's claim that the relations of production were not changed in Samoa, the religion of the *palagi* became inextricably linked with material advantage (Gilson, 1970:72-73; Watters, 1959). Less than ten years after contact with the LMS school attendance was widespread. *Matai* accompanied their children to the mission schools in the pursuit of literacy (Keesing, 1934).

The Role of Pastor as Achieved Status

Prior to Christianity, *ali'i* had both secular and divine authority. With the incorporation of Christianity, pastors, once ordination was approved in the 1870's, were given the territory of the divine formerly held by *ali'i* (Meleisea, 1987b:18). Neither could accede to the role of the other without relinquishing their previous role. The position of *faifeau* was therefore open only to the *taulele'a*, the untitled men, or *matai* who gave up their titles. The untitled could achieve status as pastors without having to manage their way through the *matai* system. *Faifeau* status became a non-conflictual parallel to that of the *matai*, and a de facto part of the *fa'aSamoa*. Teacher/pastors may have been Samoa's first professionals. In 1845 the first theological college was founded in Samoa for the purpose of training the teacher/pastors.

The LMS introduced the media to Samoa. After the establishment of the printing facility at Malua, the site of the theological college, access to popular media was possible. As early as 1845 the LMS mission published a regular broadsheet called the *Samoan Reporter* (Gilson, 1970:122).

The churches did not have an easy path, however. They had entered a society that adamantly entrenched its interests and requirements in villages. Thus, rather than centralizing religion, the churches were compelled to establish themselves in each village (Gilson, 1970:ch5). Within a decade of the arrival of Christianity some teacher/pastors, trained by the church and supervised to an extent by travelling missionaries, resisted insufficient recompense for their services. They demanded equitable financial consideration (Gilson, 1970:128), an indicator, perhaps, of the sophistication of some Samoans with respect to money and merit. The villages provided considerable material resources to the churches and demanded consideration with respect to these disbursements. As churches depended on the material support of the villages, the *matai* had a great deal of influence with respect to the missions (Davidson, 1967).

New Elites and the Incursion into Apia

The first European non-missionary settlers arrived in 1840, of Anglo-Saxon origin. They were to form the basis of a new elite. They were merchants, traders, and planters. Apia became the focal point for their activities,

Desiring accommodation with Samoans, the settlers at first adhered to the wishes and policies of the high chiefs of Apia. However, Samoans were soon being subjected to the force of foreign law. The traditional village of Apia became the main anchorage for

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visiting ships. The regulation of Apia was, in part, transformed through a naval system of justice (Gilson, 1970:ch 9). Visiting sea captains, backed up by the firepower of their ships, took jurisdiction over courts they set up in the town area. Some of the traditional Samoan elites were co-opted into juridical tribunals based largely on overseas law, the underpinnings of which they did not fully comprehend. Although perhaps too premature to be called a contention for sovereignty, aspects of Samoan supremacy, jurisdiction, and in Samoan terms, *pule*, were being challenged.

Commoditization of Samoa

Currency had been introduced in the 1830s. 1847, the same year that a British consular agent was appointed saw the first permanent trading station established in Apia (Keesing, 1934:296). Copra and coconut oil became the basis for trade, the production of which was an important preoccupation of Samoan villagers. Meleisea has argued that the initiation of monetization resulted in a new form of *tautua*. Service to the *matai* and the subsequent granting of titles could now be achieved through money or bought goods (Meleisea, 1987b:76).

The alienation of customary land began through the churches. From the late 1840s to mid 1850s warring Samoan factions sold some land to settlers in exchange for armaments. The privatization of land also accompanied European traders. Foreigners who married Samoan women were given land for their own use, as was customary. In some cases this land became permanently alienated (cf. Meleisea, 1987b:29-30; Gilson, 1970:162-3, ch. 12).

In the 1850s the expanding European community began to take firmer hold of its own affairs. By 1854 there were sufficient Europeans in Samoa to form the Foreign Residents Society in Apia. The society soon established a form of local governance that also applied to foreigners throughout Samoa (Gilson, 1970:230-5). Although a rudimentary regulatory body, it had a legislature, elected its own officials, and passed its own laws.

At the same time Samoans from villages close to Apia village, and some from remote areas began to move into the coastal area. They were attracted by

> ... The excitement and opportunities provided by commercial development. Although the villages of the harbor area continued to control their affairs in the traditional way, they did so in circumstances that were novel, since a multi-cultural, quasi-urban community had begun to be superimposed on the traditional village structure. (Davidson, 1967:39)

The Apia area, however, was gradually wrested from the control of Samoans and ultimately came to be seen as something of a European enclave, both de facto and often in spirit, until independence in 1962 (Davidson, 1967).

Samoa as an Object of Colonial Interest

By the 1870s, there commenced what Keesing has referred to as "a period of political and judicial changes in accordance with the will of alien authorities" (Keesing, 1934:476). Germany, Britain, and the United States all had interests in Samoa based largely on the presence of their citizens and undoubtedly the machinations of colonialism and imperialism that marked the later 19th century. Germany in particular had come late to the colonial game.

Wars and skirmishes between contending factions of some of the maximal descent groups that had interlaced the middle part of the 19th century were renewed in this period, often with the involvement or intercession of agents of the great powers. In the 1870s some of these skirmishes coincided with a land grab in which a great deal of customary land was alienated for private use, quite often in exchange for firearms (Gilson, 1970:271-288).

To illustrate the extent to which outsiders had insinuated themselves into Samoan affairs, by the mid-1870s a short lived Samoan government was established in Apia under the premiership of an American, Steinberger (Gilson, 1970:ch.13). Steinberger was supported, in part, by the churches, which desired stability for the country. It was hoped that Steinberger could develop a working accommodation between contending Samoans, Samoans and settlers, and the settlers themselves. Each group was vying for authority, status, or land. Each, in a sense, had their own issues, which at times overlapped.

Steinberger, while charismatic and well-liked by many Samoans, may have been somewhat of an adventurer, reminiscent of the type involved in the subversion of the Hawaiian monarchy[12], although Steinberger's personal intentions have never been clearly understood by historians. The Steinberger regime was soon subverted. This was due, in part, to the presence of some resistance by other foreign officials in Apia, perceived underhandedness in his preferential treatment of a German trading company, and the sense that he may have misrepresented his association with the American government to the locals. His departure was followed by further instability and wars of accession between various leaders of the maximal descent groups (Meleisea, 1987a:89).

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By the late 1880s Samoa became a serious focal point for the tensions between Great Britain, the United States, and Germany. Each often dispatched warships to support its nationals. On March 16, 1889, six of seven warships anchored at Apia were sunk in a hurricane (Meleisea, 1987b:40). The Treaty of Berlin, which followed that year, established a tripartite jurisdiction over Samoa. Further wars between contending Samoan factions took place. Successive Samoan monarchies were established through the force of arms, sometimes with the tacit or direct backing of a foreign power (Gilson, 1970:ch15-16; Meleisea, 1987a:92-99). Almost all of these contentions took place in the Apia area.

The Partitioning of Samoa

As a result, in part, of the escalating tensions in Europe and instability in Samoa itself, a grand plan for parts of Oceania was worked out between Britain, Germany and the United States in 1899. Germany was to get the western part of the Samoan archipelago, by far the largest and richest portion. The United States would get the eastern part, which included the island of Tutuila and its protected harbor at Pago Pago. Great Britain would accept an involvement with Tonga and other areas of Oceania (Gilson, 1970:432). The American portion became American Samoa. Its subsequent micro and macro trajectories through history have been different than Western Samoa, which was renamed Samoa in 1997, although there have been a few reciprocal influences, and the traditional cultures remain intertwined.

Changes in Lifestyle

Even with the tensions and instability of the 19th century, some Samoans benefited from the system that had started with the missionary schools. Samoans entered the business elite through intermarriage, and other elites emerged. One example given by Davidson, the Petaia family, entered the church establishment and bureaucracies in the 19th century and became both well-educated and well-placed (Davidson, 1967:392). Some members of this family were eventually elected to parliament after Samoan independence from New Zealand. One, who was of the fourth generation, became a Prime Minister. Another, of the fifth generation, became a cabinet minister in the Samoan government.

By the end of the 19th century, in spite of the political contentions between Samoans, the intrusion of foreigners and periods of instability in the town area of Apia and countryside, the steady development of commerce had led to considerable infrastructure in Apia. There were also signs of links to the outside world. Visitors to Apia on the steamships that arrived would have noticed

> The well-built churches, the stores filled with imported foodstuffs and cotton piece goods for sale to their Samoan customers, the substantial offices of the D.H.P.G. (Goddefroy und Sohn trading company), the Samoan peddlers of curios and local foodstuffs plying their trade in the main street of town. When they went beyond Apia, they saw not only the surviving strength of Samoan tradition, in the political and ceremonial life of the villages, but also many marks of change. Everywhere the evidence of Christianity and commerce was evident. Knowledge of the scriptures seemed deeply implanted in every Samoan mind. Every village engaged in the cutting of copra for sale to the traders. And chiefs and pastors who spoke English sought out the visitors and talked with them of the wider world, not infrequently against a wider background of personal acquaintance with foreign lands. (Davidson, 1967:68)

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Samoans in the 19th century had increasingly experienced Christianity, paid

employment, foreign rule, commodification, and land alienation. In addition, they had

begun to learn about the ways of the *palagi*. Many were now literate and had traveled

overseas, or had seen overseas come to them. They understood that they were placed

somewhere in a vaster system of world events.

The German Colonial Period: The Entrenchment of the Rational-legal

In 1900 Germany occupied Samoa, and for the next 14 years it remained their

colony. Some scholars (e.g., Keesing 1934, Davidson, 1967 in Meleisea, 1979b:49) have

characterized the German administration under Wilhelm Solf as rather benign. Meleisea,

using a Weberian sociological analysis, understood that Solf's intention was to impose a

rationalized administration in place of traditional Samoan institutions. Indeed the

competing meta-narratives of the rational-legal and the traditional ground Meleisea's

thesis on the modern social history of Samoa (Meleisea, 1987b).

Rationalizing the *Fa'aSamoa*

Solf, understanding the *fa'aSamoa* very well, instituted a comprehensive

European system based on German law and European forms of bureaucratic organization

(Meleisea, 1987b). As part of his policy, Solf tried to undermine the authority of *Tumua*

and *Pule* (Meleisea, 1987b:53), the powerful orator groups who held authority in

politically significant parts of Samoa, with their recognized traditional right to promote

political initiatives and influence resistance, as well as to determine the outcome of the

contention for important titles. Among other things, Solf set up a token advisory council

of *matai*, the *fono faipule*, whose activities he tightly controlled. He appointed *pulenu'u*, or mayors, in the villages. He instituted a Land and Titles Commission, ostensibly to protect parts of the *fa'aSamoa* but also to establish some control over both the process of choosing traditional authorities and the Samoan land tenure system (Meleisea, 1987b:64).

The rationalizing of traditional authority into the structure of the administration produced a system that has continued to this day. The Land and Titles Commission, which eventually became the Land and Titles Court, has been viewed by some as a dispute venue. The court as a rationalized structure would play into the hands of Samoan agency. Individuals of differing rank could now be, in a sense, equal before the court in disputes over titles. The rational-legal system had advantages that Samoans could use to aggrandize their own and their family's status. It also introduced some confusion to the system of choosing *matai* through the practice of splitting or sharing titles (see Meleisea, 1987b:ch.8)

Solf maintained other aspects of custom that he linked to German authority. For example

> To complete the process by which Germany asserted supremacy, the Samoan national *fa'alupega* (national ceremonial address) which had traditionally honored Tumua and Pule[13] the districts, and the paramount families of Samoa was changed. (Meleisea, 1987a:114).

In the new *fa'alupega*, the German Kaiser and the Imperial Governor became the sources of the administration's power. Solf's successor, Dr. Schultz, attempted to codify Samoan customary practice, inevitably distorting some of its principles according to Meleisea (1987:76). Thus, the German regime introduced the country into an even more complex

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social order, which they did not understand very well at first and which they were to eventually both resist and help reproduce.

Germans had begun arriving in Samoa by mid-19th century as part of commercial enterprise. Some eventually married Samoans, despite intermarriage being discouraged towards the latter part of the century (Meleisea, 1987:160). Immigration from Germany escalated after the annexation of 1900, and Germans increasingly became part of the commercial and administrative elite of Samoa. To this day, some descendents of the original German settlers remain a business and political force in the country. As we shall see, a person with the last name, Schwenke, also originating from the German settlement period, figures significantly in the *fa'afafine* transformation.

Resistance

It did not take long for Samoans to recognize that Solf's policies were fundamentally unfair. By 1905 there was some resistance to the regime. A forerunner of the kind of resistance the *Mau a Pule* movement against New Zealand was to demonstrate was the *Oloa* movement. Its credo was based on further Samoan involvement in trade (Meleisea, 1987b:79). Other forms of resistance included the bypassing of the government-appointed *pulenu'u*, or mayors. The village *fono* formed committees to exercise residual powers in villages.

In spite of some resistance, the fourteen-year German period was relatively harmonious compared to the first 70 years of contact. With the firm and manipulative policies of Solf and his successor, Dr. Schultz, order was maintained; commerce increased, the economy, rationalized; and the political structure of Samoa, in part,

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centralized. Samoan elite factions were no longer contending with each other for power

through war. In a sense a *pax Germanica* allowed Samoans to focus on early forms of

coherent resistance as a collective. In August 1914, war broke out in Europe.

New Zealand Administration: Contentions for Mentalities

If the establishment of new forms of authority and the rationalizing of existing

forms marked the German period, the New Zealand period, by contrast, was more of a

contention of ideas. New Zealand had no intention of exploiting Samoa as a colony, nor

was that the mandate it was granted by the League of Nations. Based on British notions

of superiority, theirs was an organized attempt to "liberate" Samoans from the effects of

their own institutions. They also wished to include Samoans in some aspects of

administration.

From 1914 to 1921, military authority was in place in Samoa. In 1923, perhaps

the most notorious New Zealand administrator, Brigadier G. S. Richardson was

appointed. He displayed a patronizing sensibility towards Samoans. Although

acknowledging a previous policy of the New Zealand Government, "...a policy that

would place the native and his interests, first ..." (Keesing, 1934:98), according to

Meleisea, the administration often betrayed ethnocentric, if not racist British attitudes

embedded in the New Zealand consciousness:

> It was reflected in the British idea that colonial governments should help
> native peoples to 'advance'. The idea of advancement confused European
> technical superiority with European *cultural* superiority (Meleisea,
> 1987a:134).

However, new forms of social organization were introduced into Samoa under the

New Zealand regime. A new village organization that was to transform the "village of the

ladies," the women's committees, received significant authority under the auspices of the

Department of Health in the 1920s (Schoeffel, 1978:12). With ties to the administration

in Apia, they eventually became the de facto organizers of many women's public

activities in the villages, replacing for all intents and purposes the activities of the

aualuma (Schoeffel, 1978:17).

In the meantime, further changes in the town area had been occurring. In the late

1920s Keesing observed a rather active business sector.

> Apia has ... restaurants, a photographer, curio store, butchery, several
> transport companies, two motion-picture theatres, a boarding
> establishment, carpentry and engineering works, laundry, tailors and dress
> makers, hair dressers and the like; several bakers ply their trade in
> different sections of the islands, as a number of Samoans have developed a
> fondness for bread, particularly for ceremonial occasions; a number of
> professional people - lawyers, accountants, and a dentist - have practices
> in Apia. ... The existence of such a commercial center as Apia furnishes
> employment permanent and temporary for some hundreds of part-
> Samoans , native Samoans, people from other islands, and to some extent
> whites, though the last named group are usually owners, or people in
> responsible positions. The various administrative departments also afford
> work to local people in addition to some sixty officials who come from
> New Zealand (Keesing, 1934:307-308).

The New Zealand Educational Project

In the 1920s the New Zealand administration began to prepare Samoans for some

of the transformations that they intended. Keesing has referred to these initiatives as

"educational" (Keesing, 1934:476). It was, in a sense, an "enlightenment project" which

included schooling and sending Samoans overseas for teacher training. One administrator

noted:

> We are gradually building up an educational organization which within a
> few years should be capable of carrying on with a complete native staff
> under the direction of a Superintendent and about two assistants from New

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Zealand, .. (Report on Administration, 1923-24, p. 12, quoted in Keesing, 1934:421)

However, the transformations in "mentalities" that the administration hoped for did not take place universally, as one individual lamented:

> It will take many years before our educational efforts have made any marked improvement in the psychology of the people. One of the chief reasons is that the great majority of pupils after they leave school return to their villages and become absorbed in communal life with its old firmly established customs, which afford little opportunity to apply knowledge gained at school other than that which has a direct bearing on agriculture and handicraft (quoted in Keesing, 1934:435)

Meleisea (1987b) has examined the strict adherence to the *fa'aSamoa* as a unitary ideology in the New Zealand period, arguing that it was held unto with great tenacity in part as a form of resistance to the administration.

In the 1920s and 1930s contentions with respect to the education of Samoans persisted, especially with regard to the effect of what such an entrée into "privileged" knowledge might have. Keesing observed the keenness of some Samoans in the late 1920s to pursue education and competence in English with a view to gaining employment, particularly with the government. Many regarded English as "... the esoteric formula that reveals the secret to western living" (Keesing, 1934: 423). As one New Zealand official noted:

> Above all there is evident a desire to learn, and the one subject where this 'urge' is most manifest is English (quoted in Keesing, 1934:424)

In contrast to such keenness was the fear that Western knowledge was destabilizing the *fa'aSamoa*. Some of Keesing's Samoan respondents evinced the following concerns:

> Education is creating an ignorance of the *fa'aSamoa*...since the whole of our customs are bound together in one sheaf we fear that too much education will destroy us ... when the young people learn English they have *papalagi* (white) minds, and break from the old ways ... The educated person disregards the interests of his family and people, is disobedient to chiefs and his parents, considers himself superior, refuses to take part in plantation work, and often leaves his home to go to town... Even the sons of our pastors become careless and get into trouble. (quoted in Keesing, 1934:437)

Some Europeans living in Samoa gave the following opinions:

> The present semi-education for all is a great mistake ... fatal...spoiling ...superfluous ...deculturing.... It maladjusts the young people from the old type of life but does not prepare them for any new type of life in line with Samoan conditions ... The school breeds discontent and produces trouble-makers, thus complicating the task of administration... They all want to be officials or clerks in the town, but only a small number of natives can ever be absorbed in urban employment.... Where they go back they are unhappy and discontented (quoted in Keesing, 1934:437-438).

Other Samoans offered positive views with respect to the learning of English and its potential for liberation:

> The views of our children are broadened. Our young men are given high positions. ...They learn English and so can prevent the Samoans from being cheated by half-castes and whites ... They will not need to feel ashamed in front of white people. (quoted in Keesing, 1934:438).

The half-castes also referred to as *afakasi,* part-Europeans or part-Samoans, were the descendents of settlers who had married Samoans. Some of these individuals became the business elite of Samoa, and until the establishment of Chinese migrants who had married Samoans, as well as their descendents in the business and agricultural sectors, these elites and some middle class *afakasi* would dominate commerce and influence opinion for several generations. They were thought to be meddlesome and destabilizing

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by both the German and New Zealand administrations, undoubtedly because they were perceived to be more difficult to control than the Samoan population.

These part-Europeans also had opinions on the subject of the education of Samoans. According to Keesing, a catchphrase in Samoa in the 1920s was "never trust a Samoan who speaks English" (quoted in Keesing, 1934:439). Keesing also found that the "resident whites and part-Samoans" were opposed to:

> Filling Samoan heads with a smattering of English and other ideas that can't possibly be of any use to them. (Keesing, 1934:439)

Given references to the relationship between Samoans and the part-European community in the literature (Davidson, 1967; Meleisea, 1987b; Pitt, 1970; Shankman, in progress) and the references to this relationship in my data, the mercantile town class may have felt that it was to their advantage to maintain the Samoans where they were, as dependent clients and purchasers of their goods. This theme has recurred during my visits to Samoa. One of my older part-European respondents elaborated regarding the pre-independence period:

> ... That's why I always feel there's a little bit of anger in our Samoan brothers and sisters, because in the olden days they were sort of always ... a "lesser" person than the *afakasi* or the *palagi*, or part European ... because they were Samoans and they were expected to do the menial jobs and they weren't "intelligent enough" and they were supposed to "know their place" and I mean this was the feeling in the olden days when I was growing up, you know. They were supposed to be just doing the menial work and be doing the household work and all that sort of thing, gardener you know and then ... it always upset me this sort of feeling was there. Even when I was a little girl going to New Zealand when I was 12 years old I always felt that I wouldn't get any prejudices or discrimination from anybody because I wasn't a dark little girl although I was brown, but when I was in New Zealand I wanted to play with some of these girls that were skipping. I was only twelve and I went up... and I sort of said "could I play with you" and they said "go away, you nigger." Yes, and that really hurt me and it made me understand how a person would feel if they were discriminated against because it really hurt a lot and it made me realize

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that ... some of our local part Samoans and the *palagis* were treating the Samoans like that. And it was very, very, it was sort of quite an experience and it kind of cut me to the core and I never forget that. – Fern

Thus, the problematic of English was a metaphor for other issues of transformation, power, escape, wealth, and esteem. The Samoans by and large labored and bought; the others sold. Indisputably this situation was not meritocratic. There is little doubt, however, that the *afakasi* in business were also a group to be envied and emulated.

The Media

Further changes in sensibilities came when media such as radio were introduced during the New Zealand period. Of all the media, movies seemed to have had the greatest impact. Commenting on the movies of the 1920's Keesing wrote:

> The influence of the motion-pictures upon Samoan youth cannot be overestimated. In Samoa alone something like 1,000 natives attend the theatres weekly, many more than once... From observation the writer found the great majority of "fans" to be aged from about 16 to 25. Their special passion is for the "wild west" pictures, with horses, guns and fighting - an interesting symptom of the modern situation - and in Apia no performance is given without one of these accompanying the more sophisticated films shown for the benefit of the non-native community. According to the manager of one theatre the Samoan audiences are learning English rapidly through the medium of the sub-titles, and gaining an increasing "comprehension" of what the stories are about. This must be counted as now the greatest educational influence in Samoa other than the schools (Keesing, 1934:441).

Western culture also penetrated the villages via the media. Some copra traders would bring portable generators and projectors to villages and show movies (Samoan Scholar, personal communication). I witnessed the tail end of this practice on Savai'i in 1978. Church groups had earlier introduced the dramatization of bible stories.

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Homoerotics

The *fa'afafine* do not occur in any of the published accounts of the period, except for the Margaret Mead (1928) reference nor are they in the history books or journals of the 19th century, with the exception of the Pratt entries. However, there are clues that they may have been present and active in the early part of the 20th century. In particular, there have been accounts which provide an insight into the New Zealand attitude to homoerotics, which, at least for Westerners and some part-Europeans, has been associated with the *fa'afafine's* activities.

"Sensational" cases of homosexuality involving Europeans and Samoans came to light in the 1920s. Robert Flaherty, in recounting the filming of his documentary of Samoa, *Moana of the South Seas*, on the island of Savai'i (which followed his more well known, *Nanook of the North*, shot in Canada), reacted to accounts of homoerotics between Europeans and Samoans in extremely judgmental terms (Flaherty, cited in Shankman, unpublished manuscript). Field (1984) has reported on a question asked by a visiting New Zealander to Apia as to whether certain men in Samoa had resorted to male prostitutes in the absence of the availability of women. Keesing (1934) has described New Zealanders in general as being puritanical.

The Mau Movement

Parallel to and part of the contention for mentalities described above was the *Mau a Pule* movement against New Zealand authority which began in 1926 (Field, 1984; Meleisea, 1987b:ch 6). The *Mau's* goal was Samoan independence from New Zealand.

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Its leaders were full-and part-Samoans. Some were astute politicians, well-educated and well-organized, who may have benefited from the results of what Keesing has called "a century of political experience" (Keesing, 1934:ch II). Female family members who were involved in the village women's committees supported the *Mau* movement and helped to maintain it when the leaders were exiled or jailed.

The *Mau's* tactics were those of deliberate non-cooperation with the administration. In fact, at certain points all attempts possible were made to avoid contact. Tactics included the settling of disputes in traditional ways and the withdrawal of children from government-run schools. This last tactic was short lived according to Davidson (1967), due to the value Samoans put on the superior, administration-run schools. By 1928 the *Mau* had instituted a well-organized and effective Samoan shadow administration. The fact that the *Mau* were able to organize the affairs of villages and the country as a whole evinces a dramatic transformation in Samoan sensibilities in just a generation.

The administration clamped down on the *Mau*. In December 1930, during a peaceful demonstration in Apia against the administration, some members of the *Mau* were shot by New Zealand troops (Meleisea, 1987b:147). One of the leaders, Tupua Tamasese Lealofi III, died of his wounds shortly after. He has been contextualized as a martyr to the cause. Other *Mau* leaders were exiled. By the late 1930s the *Mau* movement had diminished in activity. It had, however, made contact with and received the backing of the opposition Labour Party in New Zealand. When Labour formed the government in 1935, it began to take initial steps towards direct Samoan involvement in its own affairs (Meleisea, 1987b:149).

World War II

Approximately 12,000 American servicemen arrived in Samoa, beginning in 1942 (Meleisea, 1987a:143). Samoa became part of the line of defense against expected Japanese invasion. It would have to be taken before American Samoa, which lay to the east, could be assaulted. The Americanization of Samoa, while brief, remains vivid in the memories of many Samoans who experienced it. Meleisea estimates that "by the end of 1942 there was one US Marine for every six Samoans" (Meleisea, 1987a:143). The Americans' idiosyncratic tastes were provided for. The desire for hamburgers, for example, is said to have contributed to the legacy of Aggie Grey, whose entry into hospitality services resulted in one of the best-known family-run hotels in the Pacific.

The Second World War also brought inflated prices for goods and created entrepreneurial opportunities for many Samoan growers and local businesses. It established the need for labor around the ports and bases and in town, and the desire of young Samoans to learn English. It also brought social and more intimate contacts with these outsiders, accounts of which belong to local lore (see Dunlop, 1996; Shankman, 1993; Wendt, 1977). *Fa'afafine* may have been part of these liaisons as well. There are official reports of marines who were in Samoa at that time engaging in erotic activities amongst themselves (United States National Archives, personal communication). It is possible that they may also have become involved with *fa'afafine*.

A Samoan professional from New Zealand told me about a *fa'afafine* whom he interviewed from that period who has since passed away:

> {He was] a very wonderful Samoan *fa'afafine* called Johnny Fruitcake,
> and he got that name via the American GI's during World War Two.
> - Felise

Other references to a John Fruitcake appear in my data.

Post-World War II

After the war, changes accelerated. Due to increased post-war demand,

agricultural prices remained high until 1954. This resulted in more money reaching the

villages and more Samoan entrepreneurs in Apia (Davidson, 1967:254-255). Further

commoditization and commercialism took place. Davidson notes that in 1954, a wide

variety of items were being sold in addition to the usual foodstuffs, clothing, and

kerosene for lighting. "Articles such as bicycles, sewing machines, and radio sets were

now common in all parts of Samoa" (Davidson, 1967:255). Radio, although present in

Samoa since the 1920s (Keesing, 1934) became ubiquitous in the post-war period and a

source of various cultural expressions from overseas.

Davidson reports on the partial destabilization of village activities created by the

demand of the town area for wage laborers. In some instances this situation resulted in

the absence of young men from the villages to do local traditional work and the attempts

of village authorities to induce young men to stay and become involved in village

projects which were then on the increase (Davidson, 1967:282-283).

The Road to Independence

In 1945, the New Zealand government instituted a scholarship program to provide

some young Samoans with overseas education (Davidson, 1967:158-159). Their intention

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was to produce a local infrastructure that would be operated by individuals with leadership skills suitable for an independent state. Prior to World War II, a teachers' college and local government schools had been established (Meleisea, 1987b:179; Samoan academic, personal communication).

Meleisea reports that in the ensuing years,

> ... There were growing numbers of Samoans amongst the educated elite and the external symbols of European language and lifestyle were no longer the exclusive province of *afakasi* (Meleisea, 1987b:179).

From 1947 until independence in 1962, a progressive restructuring of government and civil service brought gradual control of Samoa to Samoans. A Public Service Commission was established to administer the government bureaucracy (Meleisea, 1987b:209). In the 1980s, its union, the Public Service Association, to which all civil servants belonged, became involved in a serious challenge to the Samoan government of the day (Meleisea, 1987b:233; Shankman, 1984).

A series of constitutional councils and debates were held to consider the form of government to be implemented. The result was the selection of a Westminster-style parliament with a Prime Minister and cabinet. The position of Head of State was to be shared by two of four holders of the paramount titles of the maximal descent groups.[14] The authority of *matai* was ensured by the decision to grant suffrage only to *matai* and to have *matai* only stand for parliament, although this point was hotly debated (Davidson, 1967:389-390). Some accommodation was made for the part-Europeans who were granted two elected seats in parliament. The distinction was not made according to racial background, but rather, by attachment or not to the *matai* system.

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Universal Rights

While the constitution was to be in the service of Samoan custom, of great significance was the granting of universal rights to citizens, regardless of whether or not they were voters. In effect, the result was two parallel systems –the *matai* system and a Western legal system. While the two systems had previously co-existed, one had been controlled mostly by colonial administrations and the other by Samoans. After independence these systems would both be in the hands of Samoans. Understandably, a certain amount of tension between the traditional and the new system would arise, a fact which partially grounds Meleisea's account of the fashioning of Samoa as an independent state (Meleisea, 1987b:xi).

Samoa After Independence: The First Ten Years.

In 1962 Samoa became an independent nation. As we have earlier discussed it was initially called Western Samoa. The *fa'aSamoa* remained "strong" according to some respondents, however, some of the exogenous ideological "packages" which had been the privilege of mostly the well-to-do part-Europeans and some high-born Samoans, and which others could appreciate but to which they could merely aspire, could now be shared by other Samoans. The physical spaces closed to Samoans, in particular in the Apia town area, would open up to them. The level of contact with the world system increased in a manner that probably could only have been imagined prior to independence. Contacts with New Zealand, in particular, led to further changes in the family system, novel reproductions of the *fa'aSamoa*, and the commoditization of social relations.

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After independence, Samoans were free to occupy the same social spaces as the European or part-European elites had. For example, they could now enter the teaching profession on the same basis as part-Samoans. This was not the case prior to independence (Gatoloaifa'aana Tilianamua Afamasaga, unpublished lecture and personal communication). The restriction on alcohol consumption, instituted during the colonial period, was suspended by the late 1960s, and in Apia, bars and nightclubs sprang up that became sites for socializing.

Samoan independence also coincided with New Zealand's requirement for labor in an expanding economy (Macpherson, 1994; Meleisea, 1987b; Shankman, 1976). Samoans began migrating overseas or sending their children there to work. A national scholarship system was instituted. Students went overseas to New Zealand and to Fiji for advanced training.

Samoans began to move to Apia from the villages and take up residence there, purchasing or leasing land. If they had not been doing so before, there is evidence that Samoan families had begun to nucleate in the immediate independence period, producing and mobilizing their resources on their own (Pitt, 1970). By the end of the 1960s and into the early 1970s the economy began to degrade, due partly to two devastating hurricanes and lower prices for agricultural staples (Shankman, 1976). However, in spite of the economic situation many people still had money to spend.

A Case of More Complex Reproduction

In research conducted in 1969, 1970, and part of 1973 Shankman noted a seeming paradox concerning the economic habits of Samoans and Samoa's "eroding" economy. He writes:

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... The present situation does not seem, on the surface, to be particularly troublesome. In fact, Western Samoa is in the midst of a consumer boom of sorts. In both the port town and rural villages, the casual observer is impressed by the material changes that have occurred since the early 1960s. There are a startling number of new cars and houses; there is a diversity of consumer goods; the personal appearance of most Samoans has been conservative, but in 1973, long hair, sideburns, mustaches, and even beards were commonplace. Young Samoans were becoming "teenagers" complete with T-shirts emblazoned with "hippie" and "peace." Mini-skirts and bell-bottom pants were very much in vogue in the port town. The radio station played the latest in rock and easy-listening music, as well as some "oldies but goodies," and while there is a certain amount of irony involved in listening to "It Never Rains in Southern California" in the middle of Western Samoa, Samoans like the new sound. They also have definite taste preferences. In 1970, Rothmans cigarettes and Steinlager beer were very popular, but in 1973, Marlboros and Leopard beer were in demand. Samoans want what Europeans have, and their fundamental problem is how to meet these wants in a *deteriorating* economy. While Samoans have increased their consumption of imported goods, agricultural production continues to decline. This paradoxical trend of consuming more while producing less is, in large part, the result of migration and remittances. ... Although migration and remittances presently play an important role in the Western Samoan economy, fifteen years ago they were only of marginal significance. Since then, remittances have moved from a minor, supplementary source of income for [the] islands to a position so vital that migrant remittances are the chief source of personal income for Western Samoans. In 1974, remittances comprised more than one-half of the islanders' personal income, and officials state, without exaggeration, that "people are our most valuable export."
(Shankman, 1976:x-xi)

A political economic analysis alone would be a simplistic approach to

understanding changes in Samoa after independence. However, Shankman's evidence

supports the argument that large-scale migration overseas to New Zealand, coupled with

new forms of reproducing the traditional system, as well as new lifestyle and life chance

demands, changed both the ideational face and socio-economic base of Samoa. While

continuing to reproduce the culture in terms of its fundamental relations, Samoan society

now became involved in even more complex social reproduction.

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This took a myriad of forms. For example, traditional family relations became commoditized at a distance as children were sent overseas to work and remit. At the same time these outmigrations denuded families of labor and resources in the homeland. Choices had to be made as to who was to go and who to keep behind. Shankman (1976:60) reports that females were the gender of choice for migration, as they were felt to be reliable remitters. The effect of outmigration can be illustrated in part by the following statistics: in 1964, remittances amounted to 12% of the income of Samoans as compared to agriculture. By 1973 that percentage had increased to 49%. (Shankman, 1976:37).

The description by Shankman provided above and the previous observations of Davidson are reflected in the recollections that I have obtained of the social changes and the transitions from the late 1950s to the mid-1980s that affected all Samoans. Some of these accounts illustrate the extent of certain attachments to the world system. One respondent has summarized many of the changes over the decades:

> I was away in New Zealand during the Beatles and the Kennedy [era] and just come back to teach and so, you know, like mid 1960s so you can't avoid that. Its all here. The Vietnam War. Some of our boys went off to [the] Vietnam war. So we were very much in [touch], you know.
> ... But I mean our lifestyle [was] more like from New Zealand cause I mean there were people going, coming, going, coming every day, every week from New Zealand, you know. Kids going to school. Coming back. New ideas. New ways. ... The influence of America anyway came from Pago Pago all the time. ...If you want [ed] to eat a Cracker Jack ...[its] already there in front of you. You didn't have to wait for the 1960s to have all those things. We were bathing in Camay soap and whatever else ... we get from Pago Pago. Eating Hershey bars before, you know, all these people came you know. ... I mean in the war, too, we had all the Americans we could dream up and think up and cough up, and even then we have the little ones, the half-Americans that came after them. So there was always that connection, so there was ... nothing new. I mean we were just cycling along with the rest of the world and every decade there was change. -Ake

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At the same time that the reproduction of the Samoan family system was growing more complex, the Samoan government elite was reproducing many of the forms of sociality left by the New Zealand administration. There were foreign dignitaries to entertain, ambassadors and high commissioners to be installed, government balls, independence day parades, and the like. The well-off or comfortable *afakasi* were still a social group to be respected and emulated in the material sense, while sometimes resented and denigrated in another (Pitt, 1970).

While the Samoan system remains a conservative one, the independence experience greatly transformed the homeland. Shankman found that in the four years after independence, approximately 8% of Samoans were overseas. Approximately ten years later the number was 16%. By the mid-1980s, the figure had doubled again. Thus, it took only twenty years for 33% of the Samoan population to shift (Shankman, 1993:160).

Respondents recall a number of reasons for migration from the villages to Apia. Two are employment, and better education for children, which was thought only to be possible in the high schools (called colleges) in Apia. Another was escape from the constraints of the *matai* system in the villages. These findings correspond with Shankman's (1993).

Title-splitting, which had become widespread, brought with it contentions over the custodianship of land. This could be avoided with freehold land in the town area. Additionally, freehold land could be put up as collateral at the bank, whereas traditional land could not. Pitt observed that banks were reluctant to lend to Samoans without collateral, and notes that in the 1960s, Samoans became subject to forms of usury from parts of the Samoan community involved in lending money (Pitt, (1970:207-210).

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Shankman found that with the increase in income from overseas remittances, demand for manufactured goods from abroad increased. An enjoyment of and dependency on commodities, while undoubtedly preceding these events, may have been seriously taking hold by this time. Some manufactured commodities became part of the *fa'alavelave*. Money, as a substitute for the traditional *lafo*, or gift to host villages, has been commonplace since at least the 1970s (Samoan politician, personal communication).

Between 1969 and 1981 there was a nine-fold increase in the value of imports (Shankman, 1993:163). Shankman attributes this to an increase in demand from wage laborers and increased remittances. He observed that "the islands were consuming more than they were producing"(1993:163). Inevitably, increased inflation led to de facto poverty as demand for cash increased from various areas, including, presumably, education, the churches, overseas airfares, and consumer goods, including food. The upshot, Shankman argues, was the requirement to have more family members working at paid labor, either in town or overseas (Shankman, 1993:163). Shankman cites a study by Fairbairn-Dunlop (1984 in Shankman, 1993) where she found a stated preference for office work on the part of her respondents. This could only be achieved in the town area.

Shankman noted the increasing monetization of traditional activities in the villages. According to some of my informants, the reciprocal *fa'alavelave* became a demanding cash consumer. Additionally, in some instances, there was never enough cash for everybody to have access to important items such as education. While some family members went overseas, there were always cases of those who remained behind to look after parents and grandparents. Shankman also reported that the investment in the overseas employment/remittance sojourns for young people were such "... that neither

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cash cropping nor subsistence activities could be sustained at previous levels by the mid-1970s" (1993:164). It is also common knowledge that, while relatives from the *aiga potopoto* could once be employed for next to nothing, increasingly they began to demand cash for services.

Shankman also noted that as a result of programs to employ and provide economic incentives, "the average cash income in American Samoa is many times that of neighboring Western Samoa" (Shankman, 1993:157). As a result, many Samoans migrated to American Samoa to work over the years, beginning in the 1960s.

Along with migration and monetization and their related artifacts, there were also center-periphery issues. Apia towns people had often viewed the traditional village sphere as "the bush." Some call it "Guam" or "Kuwait," which are local euphemisms for the "sticks."[15] Whatever privileged position Apia had held since the mid-1850s was firmly written on the consciousness of Samoans by the time independence. On the other hand, some villagers have contextualized Apia as a wicked place. Samoan poets had earlier been critical of the effects of the commoditization and rationalization of life in Samoa (in Wendt, 1974) which Apia undoubtedly represented.

Economic Crisis and Instability

By the mid-1970s with the world economy in recession, Samoan immigration to New Zealand was restricted, with a subsequent dramatic reduction in remittances (Shankman, 1993). Many families faced income shortfalls. By the 1980s, the Samoan government, close to insolvency, had to pare down many of its normal economic initiatives, devalue its currency, and restrict imports (Shankman, 1993).

Some respondents have alluded to the relative financial deprivation of Samoans in Samoa, compared to those living overseas. The costliness of goods, traditional reciprocity, and the educational system have all been mentioned as problems. As one respondent remarked to Shankman,

> It takes real guts to live in Samoa and to have to reach down into your pockets when there is no money there. The people that went to New Zealand could not do this and that is why they left the islands (quoted in Shankman, 1993:167).

The supplanting of cash for customary goods in traditional exchanges could also explain the sense of economic hardship that some Samoans felt. As mentioned above, the *fa'alavelave*, the important reciprocal exchange mechanism in Samoa, gradually became commoditized (see Yamamoto, 1990). This could drain family resources as well as become a source of some malaise. As one of my respondents noted:

> ... [With] the development process and [with] this concept or this thing called "progress," inevitably changes would happen and those changes have impacted on our culture including our family system. ... There has been a change in the scale at which we do gift exchanges in weddings or, you know, the big functions and the big occasions within families and within village communities. It's a much bigger scale now involving a lot more things in kind and a lot more money (emphasizes money). And that certainly is becoming more and more a disincentive to people's spirit of reciprocating and sharing. It's becoming a little bit, ... quite expensive! More and more everything is cash based. Even to get fine mats you would need to buy those. – Timu

I have heard of these disincentives from others and the carefully measured "budgeting" for *fa'alavelave* that takes place amongst some. I would hypothesize from what some people have told me that the *fa'alavelave*, as it is so cash-oriented and yet a sacred obligation, may be a source of psychological malaise for some family members. Yet, according to one respondent, having cash, even in the mid-1960s in Apia, had

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become an important sign of status and individualism. It represented the ability to take care of oneself and fulfill one's personal as well as corporate obligations.

Summary

This chapter has examined some of the occurrences that transformed Samoa over approximately 150 years. Christianity, colonization, the attempt to absorb Samoa into a rational-legal system during the German period, the New Zealand "enlightenment" project, new forms of elite status, the notion of individual rights, commoditization, private property and the private individual, lifestyles and life chances, notions of urban and rural, center vs. periphery, all were inserted into a system of traditional authority. We have also examined the emergence of a form of complex reproduction of traditional forms of sociation in Samoa. The relationship with New Zealand after Samoan independence also became an important cause of change.

Taken together, these changes would become commonplace activities, metaphors, and material sites to which to aspire for many Samoans. For some Samoans, such as the *fa'afafine*, these transformations would eventually provide a repertoire of resources and sites where newly imagined opportunities could be enacted. Some of these resources would aid the *fa'afafine* in their transformation.

The following two chapters begin our examination of the *fa'afafine*. Their lives will be examined for their similarities and differences from other Samoans. This exploration of their identity and issues, along with examinations of the culture and the complex reproductions that have previously been explored, will help contextualize the collective activities that they were to produce in the Apia area after independence.

Chapter 5: Description of the *Fa'afafine* - Identity

> Live your life to the fullest
> Of who you are
> And what you are.
> How you live your life
> Is none of my
> Or anybody else's business.
> You are Faafafine
> Not homosexual
> You are the third sex.
> You are the Sons and Daughters
> Of this land, this culture
> You are human beings and deserve to be treated as such
>
> I'm starting not to recognize you
> As I see you
> Slowly melting into the western pot of Gayism
> Which is the root of all misconceptions about you
> You're a cog in the wheel of meaning
> But only if you remain Faafafine
> Not Homosexual
>
> — Iosefa Leiataua Iosefa (1997)

In this chapter I will explore the problematic of the *fa'afafine* identity. This exploration will also serve, in part, as background for contextualizing the collective actions and organization which the *fa'afafine* constructed in the urban area of Apia beginning in the mid-1960s. The thematic of *fa'afafine* identity will also be explored in subsequent chapters.

Notions of identity in Samoa differ somewhat from Eurocentered ones. The Samoan identity has been discussed as a series of contextual, situational, and collectivist arrangements (Mageo, 1991, 1997; Meleisea, 1987b; Shore, 1982; Schoeffel, 1979).

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Indeed this form of identity has sometimes been generalized to all of Oceania (see Linnekin and Poyer, 1990:1-16; Lieber, 1990).

In Western scholarship, the problematic of identity ranges from the public, rational, active, enlightenment individual of some ontological traditions, to the internal, private and subjective individual of the psychoanalytic perspective (cf., Cerelu, 1997; Zaretsky, 1994). The Samoan identity has been the site of developments that are explained in part by both consocial and Western notions (Samoan scholar, personal communication; see also Dunlop, 1984), undoubtedly due to almost two centuries of contact with the West.

The New Social Movement literature deals with other kinds of identities, including those arising out of struggles in relation to capitalism, minority status, and gender. Identities have also been linked to lifestyle and the body. Some identities are conceptualized as having an assumed essential concreteness, or are contextualized as constructions developed through interaction and shared experiences (Cerelu, 1997; Friedman and McAdam, 1992; Johnston et al., 1994; Melucci, 1994; Zaretsky, 1994). Identity-based movements often depend on collective identities that are either pre-formed or "works in progress". Such movements can exhibit a range of attributes amongst their members (Cerelu, 1997; Friedman and McAdam, 1992; Gusfield, 1994; Klandermans, 1997; Melucci, 1989).

As regards contending identities, such as those found in gay movements in the West, gay becomes a discreet "identity marker" for the outsider. For the insider it can represent a network of alliances and multiple personal constructions, histories, biographies, and erotics that are often in tension. The *fa'afafine*, if they are to be

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contextualized as a totalizing idea, must be viewed similarly as a category in progress with their own taxonomic complexities. For example, I would disclaim, as they do, that the term "gay" applies to them as an identity marker. Rather, *fa'afafine*, like other Samoans, represent a culturally specific category, transformed somewhat by contacts with the West, upon which other "identities" and identity imputations, both positive and negative, have been constructed.

Some Samoan Notions of Identity

The problematic of identity as interiors, self-concepts, and ego has been little-explored in the Samoan literature. This deficiency has perhaps been exacerbated by the lack of Samoan terms for constructions such as personality and self (see Shore, 1982, Mageo, 1991). However, Shore (1982) has understood, and I have observed, that Samoans speak about rich personal lives that manifest outside of traditional identity. In Samoa, traditional identity is often defined as one's "standing," or *fa'asinomaga,* and is played out in well-defined social arrangements (Samoan scholar, personal communication). Mageo (1991, see also, Shore, 1996) has attempted to bridge the gap between the social and the personal theoretically, arguing that the term *loto*, which can mean "will" or "emotion," represents an interior state that is somehow beyond the social which requires constraint. Individualistic displays originate from *loto*. Mageo's notion has found concordance with a number of Samoans with whom I have spoken.

Loto is personal, whereas *fa'asinomaga* is social, the latter concept suggesting that one takes one's identity from ascribed status/roles related to the Samoan kinship system. For example, without kin one's identity/standing is problematic:

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> The starting point of Samoan identity is social in nature, as we have already posited. Thus a person without relatives, that is without social responsibilities, is a nonentity. He/she does not exist, socially speaking, and can be compared to an animal. – (Samoan scholar)

In this reference, the word "animal" is used to mean an individual who is not symbolically linked through kinship activities to others. However, Shore perceived in Samoans, with respect to *matai* status, an ability to differentiate between an identity determined by structural considerations and one related to personal characteristics (Shore, 1982:69). I have found that some Samoans view interior states as motivations for personal interests, although there is circumspection surrounding their expression. An exception are some *fa'afafine*. Their expression of certain interior states is perceived to be part of the perception of their individual and public identities.

The Samoan scholar cited above has also indicated that notions of personal lives do exist in the Western sense but have received little investigation. However, there is some evidence that may be of value. A 1984 study by Fairbairn-Dunlop of a sample of Samoan elite students in Apia provides evidence of a personal locus of control amongst those whose lives are partly determined by personal attainment in education. Fairbairn-Dunlop found this to be an unexpected result as findings in the anthropological literature describe Samoans having more collectively oriented selves. Mageo (1991:406) also argues that there is a ..." residual desire for individual recognition and success ..." amongst Samoans. It could therefore be argued that a number of perhaps contending sources of identity are now present in Samoa.

While there may be problems of commensurability between Samoan notions of identity (related as they are to kinship, standing, and role) and the discrete notions of interior identity found in European typologies, it may be possible to come to terms with

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these differences analytically, if they are presented as a continuum of attributes rather than as distinct opposites. Thus, Samoan identity based on rank and social standing could be presented in a way that for the Western reader re-visits the problematic in classical anthropological or sociological terms. The collective conscience of Durkheim (1976) assumed shared meanings derived from social structures. However, one of the problems in valorizing homogenous identities is that, while these presume the existence of a collective conscience, they do not capture the complexities of individual consciousness nor agency in Samoa as Shore has suggested (Shore, 1996:302-303).

Samoan identity based on one's standing in the community or family is always framed in relation to others. It depends on continua of gender, age, and titular considerations in the traditional sphere. As modern forms of reproduction have entered the mix, one has also to contend with continua of education, wealth, professional and personal interests, and the consciousness that these factors may be presumed to represent. To this can be added the personal feeling of "who one feels one is."

Traditional Samoan Identities

Some of the more valuable general works on the question of Samoan identity were written by Gerber (1975), Shore (1982), and Schoeffel (1979). The following exposition derives from these, as well as personal observations and questioning over the years.

In Samoa, one has many identities, or as some people have put it, many "sides," depending on context (See also Mageo, 1997). One is expected to be a child of someone. One's identity is also ascribed in terms of one's standing in relation to siblings. Between brothers and sisters, there is an elevated status for sisters, with rights and obligations for

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both siblings. In relation to same-sex siblings, one's standing is determined initially by birth order. As a spouse, one is identified, certainly by primary sexual characteristics, but one's identity is based more on one's standing by rank, with the husband elevated above the wife. The playing out of this arrangement can be modified in practice by location and by the propriety one displays.

In the traditional authority system *matai* are ranked above the untitled. They can also be ranked in relation to other *matai* on the basis of the status of the title that they hold. Standing, therefore, can be based on one's symbolic and actual authority over others. Identity is also related to the village whence the family titles originate and the status of that title in relation to its location. These notions of identity are part of the extended family as well. One's descent groups and one's standing within them also determine identity. Identity may also be based on the way one plays out one's status and obligations.

Contemporary Samoan Identity

In the contemporary public sphere, identity or standing appears to be measured by profession, income, and authority over others. In the very active civil service, individuals compete for jobs of higher status. These initiatives are means to various ends, including personal satisfaction and freedoms, increased rank, identity in the community, earning one's own salary, and for the aggrandizement of the family. For example, one individual told me of his life plan to rise within his profession both for personal satisfaction and for reasons related to family status. At the National University of Samoa, lecturers and supervisors often compete for higher positions that bring personal satisfaction and elevated status. Many *fa'afafine* joined the teaching profession in order to rise in rank, because it fit with feminine identities, a gendered and perhaps essential consideration,

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and to satisfy their personal ambitions to be part of a contemporary division of labor. Thus, one's identity can also be associated with self-esteem, based as it is on both personal accomplishment and maintaining one's reciprocal obligations.

The *Fa'afafine* Identity

In the case of the *fa'afafine* one finds an identity that falls along the continua mentioned above but has a somewhat different range on the gender continuum. While a very valued identity in many cases it can also be perceived as having shortcomings, as in Goffman's (1963) sociological usage, if it does not sufficiently conform to normative displays expected in the relationships that make up one's standing in the community. An example is not falling within the idealized masculinity displays that form part of the Christian binary gender designations.

The *fa'afafine* identity is both individually and collectively different from the dimorphic genders and, in part, stigmatized by some. It also includes a continuum of considerable positive attributes that the individual may be perceived to have, with the attendant affection and positive reaction that may accrue from the very fact of being kin and from having fulfilled one's associative or corporate responsibilities. It is also a very positive identity in many families in its association with some females and the *fa'afafine's* individual and collective honoring of societal obligations.

We also see in *fa'afafine* evidence of personal identities linked, in part, to feelings of being like women or being women and desiring men for erotics. These feminine identities are sometimes supported through their performance of women's work in the home. Dressing in the garb of Western women or in traditional Samoan women's costumes can also circumscribe the *fa'afafine* identity. These attributes can find acceptance but, as we shall see, have also produced issues. They are indicators with which some negative and positive attributions about them are made, and around which their collective identity can be both constructed and contested.

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Because a generation or so ago, Western projections of femininity of many *fa'afafine* in the town area, as well as certain other behaviors were new, their public identity became contentious and stigmatized for some. Some Samoans felt that they were not entitled to such aspirations for it was unheard of for a group to emerge that wished to be recognized on new terms in spite of the fact the *fa'afafine* are included in many aspects of family life.

The *Fa'afafine* as a Changing Identity That is Problematic

The poet, Iosefa, cited above, stresses themes of inclusion and reaction. His poem introduces the notion of hybridization and the fear of the transformation of the *fa'afafine* to a more Westernized identity in an implied flight from kinship. In some ways their transformation and the poet's fears are markers for other transformations that have been and are occurring in Samoa. His appreciation that they "...are human beings and deserve to be treated as such" also speaks to the dilemma of many *fa'afafine* as people whose identity has created issues for some in Samoan society. Iosefa's poem addresses matters of conscience and fairness with respect to the *fa'afafine*. To use McAdam's (1994) construct, Iosefa might be contextualized as part of their positive "audience", or for McCarthy and Zald ([1977], 1987), one of their "conscience constituents," expressing in poetry what others have expressed verbally or in deeds.

Contending Views of the *fa'afafine*

In appearance, *fa'afafine* are mostly effeminate looking or acting individuals with male bodies and feminine mannerisms and sensibilities. According to some older informants, homoerotics was never a condition of their identity, and some Samoans

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account for their erotics, attributionaly, as an imported Western construct. Here is one

view of the *fa'afafine*:

> Some people have translated *fa'afafine* as homosexual, …which is a word
> that's been mistranslated into English. But the Samoan word simply
> means a man with effeminate qualities. [He] can weave a fine mat if he
> wants to… He can also perform all the functions of a male that the culture
> demands and sets down. – Sina

Many Samoans, and certainly all *fa'afafine*, argue that the latter's erotics were

always reproduced in Samoa but were not specifically part of the traditional culture.

These erotics have been associated, in part, with a tacit developmental stage for males

related to the enjoyment of pleasuring and that the *fa'afafine*, with their own erotic

interests, were always central to it.

Historical accounts of the *fa'afafine* are scarce. A Samoan scholar of high status

graciously supplied me with some of the knowledge passed on in his family that relates to

fa'afafine history. He told me that they were thought to make contributions to Samoan

society and that, prior to contact, there was no negativity towards them. The eroticizing

of young men is also present in his account.

> … Neither in history nor in mythology is there any evidence of [our]
> culture frowning or our culture, you know, declaring *fa'afafine* as
> subnormal or abnormal. … That's part of the Christian legacy. That's
> certainly not part of our culture … and I find nothing in there that puts
> down *fa'afafine*. … On the sexual side, according to my information, the
> *fa'afafine* had certain gifts. They were supposed to have a sensitivity or
> sensibilities about things sexual that other men did not have. Therefore
> the young men were exposed in sexual matters to *fa'afafine*, more by way
> of exploring their sexual capabilities. What you can accomplish sexually
> with sensitivity, sensibility, you know. How do you arouse, how do you
> satiate by word, by deed. How do you pick, you know, the areas of the
> body which are more responsive to titillation and what represents
> titillation, you know. … I mean, sexual play… was very much part of our
> culture, and so that if you have this understanding it gave you an
> advantage over other people because, after all, wooing was, you know, a
> gift that was in high demand and if women desired you or …took to you,

then of course, you know, that was a considerable advantage and that is celebrated in song, in poetry and in chant. – Tanielu

Although a functionalist explanation, if this information is correct, then *fa'afafine*–at least where erotics were concerned–were undoubtedly valorized historically.

It is important to note that, in general, the *fa'afafine's* association with "effeminate qualities," such as the type of work noted in Sina's quote, has also defined their identities and currently still includes these highly valued propensities. Their involvement in men's work is also noticeable, although for some *fa'afafine*, this has been an issue, as it detracts from interior sensibilities that are felt to be feminine.

Fa'afafine are sometimes perceived to have other strengths upon which women could rely. One individual, born before the turn of the century and who died in 1990, was known to assist female family members in matters related to childbirth and childcare.

The present situation and identity of the *fa'afafine* is far more complex than the preceding accounts attributable to Tanielu and Sina. Scholars have described them in various ways. Shore (1981) argues that their femininity provides negative examples of masculinity to Samoan boys. This argument resembles Levy's (1973) account of the *mahu* of Tahiti. Levy discusses *mahu* erotics, work activities, and the teasing they receive that are similar to the situation of some *fa'afafine*. Mageo (1992, 1997), as we have seen, argues that they provide certain societal functions in Samoan society, and that their feminine public personae gain accommodation through the feminine depicted in performances by *faleaitu* actors. Mageo also notes that the *fa'afafine* are known as entertainers. Indeed, entertainment has contextualized the public activities of some *fa'afafine* in the villages and in the urban area for some time. I have been told that this is

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a way in which they create solidarity amongst themselves and endear themselves to the public. It is also a form of activity which local organizations make use of for fundraising.

Tcherkezoff (1993) has briefly noted one of their erotic practices, and the fact that because they are "not girls" they have certain freedoms. Poasa has discussed what I have interpreted as issues that may beset some *fa'afafine* with respect to their initiation into erotics (Poasa, 1992:45). Mageo (1992, 1997) has also mentioned aspects of their lives that could be construed as issues.

Schoeffel (1979), in a brief but clear structural rendering of the *fa'afafine's* status in her larger work on gender in Samoa, suggests that their activities, if they gave them a feminine identity, gave them a lesser one. Schoeffel also argues that there was a general accommodation of the *fa'afafine* in spite of their lower status. She noted the slight feminizing of their appearances in the village in which she studied. She also reported that their could be mild shame for men associated with erotics with *fa'afafine*, and that the latter could be looked upon as a casual erotic release for males (Schoeffel, 1979:203). This has been corroborated by my own research. She also writes, in 1979, of what could be construed as a status-related dilemma that some may face

> ... Since they fulfill neither of the honored requirements of either the male role or the role of females as sisters with its attendant dignity and status. The term *fafine* –woman–may only politely be used of a female who is married and cohabiting with her husband. It implies then that she is sexually active. The *fa'afafine* is thus only like a woman in her less honored and functional state (Schoeffel, 1979:203-204).

O'Meara (1990), in a short rendering of the *fa'afafine*, found no perceivable discrimination towards them, nor that their presence was the basis for comment amongst Samoans. O'Meara's assertion contrasts with Mageo's, Poasa's, Schoeffel's and Shore's perceptions, and my own observations. In commenting on their salient feminine personae

in Apia, O'Meara argued that "...*fa'afafine* do not take on "female" roles so much as they create new roles for themselves that overlap in some respects with traditional female roles" (O'Meara, 1990:71). Schoeffel, on the other hand noted in the 1970s that while the salient feminized urban *fa'afafine* were subject to derision, they were given a certain amount of accommodation where females were concerned (Schoeffel, 1979:147). Schoeffel's account also accords with the findings of this study.

Shore (1981) argues that the *fa'afafine* have the status of a third gender in Samoa. Besnier (1994), in an 1994 article on the liminally gendered males of Polynesia, including the *fa'afafine* and the Tongan *fakalieti*, argues against this position. He suggests that for the effeminate men of Tonga and Samoa, stratification issues may confuse the problematic of gender, rendering for them inescapable the defining characteristics of the local dimorphic genders.

The above accounts point to a kind of dilemma with respect to the *fa'afafine* for both the scholar and the *fa'afafine* themselves. On the one hand, *fa'afafine* are widely accommodated, utilized, appreciated, "loved", and valorized in a way that is not found with similar populations in the West. This fact initially led me to an interpretation similar to O'Meara's. On the other hand, they have historically and to an extent contemporarily, faced certain issues, a fact which led me to modify my understanding of their status to include interpretations such as Besnier's and Schoeffel's.

The following illustrates this seeming paradox. Some *fa'afafine* note with pride their two-sidedness within their society. One remarked:

> Its like a person with two personalities. You can be a man depending on the conditions and the situation you are in. When you want to be a woman, you can ... And at the moment and at present, being accepted as we are in

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the villages, especially in our families, we do women's work in the families and so is the free life that we have. - Misa

Femininity is associated here with role/task, a common theme regarding the *fa'afafine*. There can be issues, however, with regard to other aspects of their identity. Misa continues:

> ... And its very hard to get settled down with a woman with their knowledge that you are a *fa'afafine*, as being one of them – feminine. But with the guys it is a question that is unanswerable at the moment with us. We don't know what to do about that. – Misa

One issue for some *fa'afafine* like Misa is that of stable, meaningful relationships with men. I have been told about a few and met one former *fa'afafine* who had been involved with men, but who married women. None of them wished to be interviewed at the time I was conducting research. They had, it seems, abandoned the category of *fa'afafine* for the more stable identity of a mature man. Fathering children would give them status and, of course, security in old age as the beneficiaries of the labor and the remittances of their children.

I have one account of an effeminate man who married voluntarily, fathered children, and performed domestic work. He successfully managed a variety of his activities to the satisfaction of all. Other accounts, provided by *fa'afafine* whose *fa'afafine* friends married and fathered children, indicate an ambivalence regarding marriage and the abandonment of the *fa'afafine* lifestyle where men were concerned. Yet another instance reported by a female respondent involved a person who was forced by his father to marry, a situation which my well-educated informant noted turned out to be a "disaster."

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The *Fa'afafine* as a Continuum of Attributes: Personal, Collective, and Public

In this section we will begin to hear the voices of the *fa'afafine* themselves with respect to their identities. *Fa'afafine* view themselves in what amounts to a continuum of forms and social positions. That is, while they can be co-opted into or choose some of the activities of women; while they can, for reasons of their own, make some claim to femininity as a result; and while many feel that they are really women, they realize that most Samoans view them ultimately as men. Some *fa'afafine* take the male designation while others feel that they are both male and female.

The interior sensibility of being feminine, which many *fa'afafine* hold, is often correlated with the performance of women's work–usually household work. Some tend to identify with this work as "females" or to correlate it with an essential femininity. For example, Anela was part a group of *fa'afafine* who emerged in Apia in the early to mid-1960s. Her feelings about herself and her work include both personal and instrumental sensibilities.

> I feel, you know, that ever since I was young 'til I grow up, I know nothing else but I am, my mind is a woman['s]. I do everything as a woman... My job in my home in Samoa when I was young in those days is washing and iron[ing] and cooking and I clean the dishes.
> Q: Did you pick it yourself or did they pick it for you?
> A: Well I suppose because they see me interest[ed] in doing it so they let me do it and most of the girls in our family they just sit around and talk and gossip. And while I'm doing the washing it doesn't matter how big the washing, I still love to do linen. Then I come with the washing and hang them. When I finish the washing then I come and have a sleep and wake up and start doing the ironing.
> Q: And feeling like a girl all the time?
> A: Oh yes! (emphatic). Like I said, my mind is I'm a girl. ... I just wish that the body ...[was] what I want, but its just [didn't] happen (His tone of voice expresses hoping, wishing and disappointment). - Anela

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Anela was a valuable asset to the family as a domestic worker. It is obvious from her response that she was still a male in relation to her sisters, as it is not uncommon in the *feagaiga* relationship for brothers to serve their sisters as Anela did, while the sisters sat around and did little. Anela, then, is a version of a brother who feels she is a woman.[16]

In identifying themselves as women, some respondents have expressed dislike of the term *fa'afafine*. As Schoeffel's (1979) description implies, it labels and constrains the individual's own perceived identity. Being merely "like" a woman, if you have a male body, produces connotations of being a sissy and an erotic object for some. As Anela and others have said with respect to the term *fa'afafine*:

> I don't like the word, you know, like you [are] "acting" like a woman because in me I feel I "am" a woman.
> Q: I understand.
> A: I feel a woman,
> Q: It's no act.
> A: I'm not "acting" like a woman. I "am" a woman. I was born this way and its only just a little bit, you know, different. Something is wrong somewhere ... - Anela

The notion of "feminine interiors" and the "feeling" of being a woman are expressed by many *fa'afafine*. Others have echoed what is "wrong" for Anela. Some have used the Western phrase of being women "trapped in a man's body." Thus Anela's account is of feminine interiors that could be described as "essential", and deeply personal.

In considering the transformation of both personal and public identities, some *fa'afafine* have contemplated having sex-change operations. Two who are now in their fifties had earlier started hormone treatments and grown breasts. A number of *fa'afafine* living both in and out of Samoa, all with extensive contact with the outside, are now post-operative transsexuals. Another received breast implants.

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A sex change operation, however, is not always perceived as changing one's status from *fa'afafine* to woman (see also Poasa, 1992). It does not make one a sister nor a *tama'ita'i* (a lady). It is felt by some that one will always be a *fa'afafine*. Overseas by contrast, one can take on aspects of Western womanhood and have a more feminine identity. Most *fa'afafine* could not afford the operation even if they contemplate it. In addition, some fear giving up the pleasures of being an erotic male for a new erotics, the success of which cannot be predicted.

At the other extreme are *fa'afafine* who, while effeminate, feel that they are men. They are masculine-looking to a degree but have effeminate mannerisms They dress as males, and are often associated with elevated forms of paid labor. Samuelu is one such individual.

> I strongly believe that I'm a man. What I do with my sex, it's my own doing. I am not a woman. Mentally, physically, spiritually I'm not a woman. I was born a man. I was born a man and that's it. Whatever I do with it ... it's my freedom to do it. I don't have to be dressed [up like a woman] to be something. – Samuelu

While feeling that he is a man, Samuelu also states that he is a *fa'afafine*. He does women's and men's work in the household. He prefers erotics with males. *Fa'afafine* is part of a collective identity which he appropriates. He has *fa'afafine* friends that include some who feel that they are female. Being *fa'afafine* is also part of his public identity, as it is for most other *fa'afafine*. Like many *fa'afafine*, Samuelu is a member of one of their support groups. Samuelu is also a professional whose identity, both individual and public, derives from his work and the standing that he holds in his family and community because of this. He comes from a "good" family. He is proud of the title that his father holds and has told me that, in the past, when he was young and was teased for being a

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fa'afafine, something which many *fa'afafine* encounter, he would turn to the perpetrator with words like: "Who do you think you are? Don't you know I am attached to the title so and so from the village of such and such?"– thereby deflating the aggression of the perpetrator on traditional grounds. Samuelu is a *tautua* in the family in both the traditional and modern sense.

Not all *fa'afafine* are comfortable with their public identities. I met an older individual who is known to be a *fa'afafine* but who denies he is part of this community. He won't admit to being a *fa'afafine* in public. He also claims to have fathered a child as a young man. However, this individual also appears to command a great deal of respect in the Apia community and is appreciated for the work he does and the contributions made to his family.

Some *fa'afafine* take part of their individual and collective identities from the fact that they desire men for erotics. To paraphrase what some have told me, it is because they prefer men, and not women, for erotics that they feel that they are women or are like women, or that they must be feminine. Thus, erotic preference is in part a marker of gender identity for them.

The feminine as embodied by their mothers, grandmothers, aunts, female friends, and sisters may also provide a reference point for their identity. If they are not quite like men then they must be like the women who are their female family members, alongside whom they work and who often give them emotional support.

Other *fa'afafine* feel that they are in between. They state that they are neither men nor women but simply *fa'afafine*, or they use the newer term, "*mala*"[17]. Some feel that they are perhaps a third gender category that should be legitimized. Although such a third

sensibility has not been well-developed and is certainly not formally institutionalized in Samoa, it has been mentioned on occasion, and is present in the works of the poet Iosefa and anthropologist Bradd Shore (1981).

I met one individual with considerable Western experience who does not want to be categorized at all, yet feels she is part of the *fa'afafine* community. Others like having the "qualities" of both dimorphic genders, enjoying the strength of a male and the sensibilities associated with the feminine. That is a common theme regarding the *fa'afafine*.

There are probably few *fa'afafine*, these days, who entirely live the quiet life of a traditional domestic *fa'afafine*. *Fa'afafine*, including many in the villages, are increasingly linked to new Western aspirations, occupations and personae, and the new forms of *fa'afafine* organization and activity found in the Apia area and more recently on one of the outer islands. There are of course, exceptions. One example is an individual who divides his time between his remote village and his family in Apia. He is a mild-mannered, quiet and traditional person who takes orders and serves willingly. He does domestic work and is appreciated for the female tasks he performs in the family.

According to one family member, he may, on occasion, "fall in love" with one of the boys in the village but may not show his feelings as openly as do other *fa'afafine*. He appears to be extremely shy, with downcast eyes. In Samoa this is a sign of deference to those of higher status, as well as a marker of respect to others.

In another remote village live two *fa'afafine*, one a wage earner and the other a stay-at-home. Both serve their families to varying degrees. The former is the family's only source of income in Samoa. He organizes the household and arranges the domestic

activities of his sister's children who are now becoming the servants of the family, just as he used to be. He is very aware and respectful of the *fa'aSamoa* in his dealings with authorities. Still, he is linked to the town *fa'afafine* in Apia and sometimes dresses in an effeminate manner when he visits there. A churchgoer in the village, he nevertheless satirizes the pastors on occasion. He has an active erotic life, including a boyfriend. He remembers that his mother always treated him like a girl (although she called him a boy when I spoke with her), sometimes referring to him as "*suga*," a term that is used when addressing a girl.[18] The other individual has a lower status, as he left school, does not work, and can be hostile and moody, going into *musu*, a Samoan form of the "silent treatment." He is somewhat incorrigible, and less active around the household than the former individual. He also feminizes his appearance more overtly than the other. In another remote village, a *fa'afafine*, assigned by his siblings to stay in Samoa and look after his mother, sometimes comes to Apia to engage in *fa'afafine* activities in the town area.

In the villages near the town area, *fa'afafine* also carry out the time-honored duties that all Samoans do with respect to the organization of the *aiga*. One individual, for example, along with his siblings, is responsible for looking after his family in Samoa. This is a source of obligation, but also pride. It allows him to fulfill the norms and values of the *fa'aSamoa* as indispensable members of a kin group. This individual also talks about the dual, more uplifted qualities that *fa'afafine* posses which a mature man and woman should have. So rather than refer to doing the dishes and all of the domestic tasks, as some *fa'afafine* do, he sees the combination of the two qualities of male and female, which he feels characterizes many *fa'afafine*, as being "responsible, accountable, reliable,

honest, caring, and tolerant." Aspects of this view of them are sometimes echoed in the general population, in spite of some negativity or ambivalence. It is for these perceived qualities that *fa'afafine* are often called upon to perform both individual and collective tasks for important public occasions. Many are well-regarded for their propensities for organization and fundraising. Their relationships to families and society in general have many aspects that are inclusive.

Some *fa'afafine* are well educated and therefore well placed in the work force. This leads to elevated forms of esteem and responsibility, as well as access to new expressions of creativity. Some, including those with overseas experience, are leaders and participants in new forms of collective and organizational activities in the still transforming contemporary *fa'afafine* community. Some are involved in creating solidarities within that community.

The Village of the Gentlemen: A Dilemma for Some

As we have seen in an earlier chapter, it is primary sexual characteristics that define the aspect of traditional society to which one is expected to be assigned. The *fa'afafine* by tradition are males. However, in some villages, although they often do the work of women in the home, engage in some women's public activities, and feel that they are really women or more on the feminine side, they may be formally assigned to the *'aumaga*, the village institution of untitled men. This defines them ultimately as males. This assignment can expose both their internal and public identities to attack. One form of attack is teasing or ridicule and sometimes physical assault. These factors have motivated some *fa'afafine* to leave their villages for Apia.

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In other villages, *fa'afafine* are only nominally part of the *'aumaga* and, as one individual remarked, have their names inscribed in the *'aumaga's* book. In one village, in recognition of their preferences for the activities of women and to create harmony, the village council only requires them to pay dues to the *'aumaga* but not participate in its activities. A number of people have enjoyed performing the activities of both genders.

I know of three villages, and there are undoubtedly many more, in which *fa'afafine* take part, on occasion, in the women's committees, sometimes as inspectors of cleanliness, at other times in weaving, and at times by making suggestions to the committee. One was briefly inscribed in the women's committee " book," as a member of the committee, until the village council overturned the decision. This example illustrates the ultimate authority of the village council while at the same time indicating that women have a great deal of say in determining who is feminine or not with respect to their public activities.

Opinion in Samoa can vary on the question of how the *fa'afafine's* sensibilities should be accommodated. One respondent remarked to me, with regard to the traditional gendered designations of *aualuma* and *'aumaga*, that Samoan society had to come to grips with the fact that the *fa'afafine* had to be given a formal structural position analogous to their sensibilities. On the other hand, another person, who is one of a number of employers of *fa'afafine*, echoes what is also heard about their identity:

> Well, they must understand, or they must be made to understand that as far as those organizations or those groups are concerned (*'aumaga* and *aualuma*) it's based on your sexuality, so in the eyes of the parents and of the society, [and] village community, they are masculine and so... because, you know, they feel more (like) women but their sexuality is male and they were born as males ... to the chiefs and to the parents they're not daughters. They're sons. – Timu

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In practice this individual appreciates and maintains a flexibility towards their feminizing because she has the sensitivity and authority to do so. With respect to the possible transformation of the Samoan culture to accommodate this form, which she is aware some *fa'afafine* have discussed, she remarked, as have others:

> ... It would take a long time for the attitude to change, as far as that goes. That they're born as sons and they'll remain as sons ... I mean even myself, if I had given birth to a *fa'afafine* I don't know that I'll change my attitude toward my child as a son even though they have effeminate ways about them.   - Timu

Parents have also been known to take a hard line with their *fa'afafine* children. One well-educated *fa'afafine* told me of a close friend, consistently forced by his father to perform the activities of men in the village:

> He didn't want to do it but he was constantly forced to do it and [it] led to confrontation with his father who was a chief and then he was virtually ...disowned by his own father ... So he actually had to make the choice and he left. – Natana

The *fa'afafine* themselves come to a variety of practical accommodations. This same respondent, who has trouble with some aspects of the Samoan culture which defines his world in ways that are not compatible with his own feelings has found mechanisms in the town area for avoiding, where possible, some of the constraining aspects of the *fa'aSamoa* while at the same time maintaining respect for its institutions. Some *fa'afafine* who are given titles become leaders in their families and do not face the *'aumaga* problematic.

In some villages, *fa'afafine* have a choice of what work role they will play. One individual is from a village where she was allowed to become involved to a degree with the women's committee:

> What I do in the women's committee in our village, I will go out there and clean all the dishes after the mothers and the *aualuma* have been there [eating] their food ... I will go out there with the brooms and you know clean the house afterwards and that. – Hana

While Hana takes pride in playing this role, it is still a peripheral role compared to what real females play in her village. Hana has also indicated to me a disdain for being identified solely by her utility in performing female chores. She feels, as do many *fa'afafine*, that she is a woman. There are *fa'afafine* who report enjoying women's work, its compatibility with their sensibilities, and the contributions they can make to their families in this way.

One person who remained in her village after leaving school, indicated that she engaged in some of the activities of the women's committee until the age of eighteen, when she was made to go to the *'aumaga*. Now she says she is not required to participate in the *'aumaga's* activities. She just pays her dues every month. There are also reports of *fa'afafine* who, while in the *'aumaga*, help keep it organized, and deal with record keeping and organizational activities.

In addition, *fa'afafine* increasingly perform work at the pastors' houses, a village institution that has historically utilized the skills of village girls and which has begun to circumscribe the experiences of some *fa'afafine* as well. As we shall see, the church youth groups have increasingly re-defined gendered activities in the villages.

In town, situations can be different from village life. Many *fa'afafine* and males who both live and work in town do not have to consider *'aumaga* participation. Village institutions often do not apply to them.

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Feagaiga

If *fa'afafine* who wished it were to receive the full range of statuses traditionally granted to females in Samoa, they would enjoy the status of *feagaiga*, the sacred status of sisters. Thus, an important aspect of the *fa'afafine* identity can be found in their relationship to their sisters. As we have seen in an earlier chapter, a sister has an elevated status compared to a brother. An avoidance relationship characterizes the brother/sister *feagaiga*. Brothers protect sisters in all manner of ways, including protection from assumed and real sexual predation.

The *fa'afafine's* ultimate relegation to cultural maleness makes them, ideologically, brothers in relation to sisters. This subverts their claim to the totality of feminine status, even though some are treated "as women" or work as women, or are appreciated for being "like" women. However, their masculinity can benefit them as well. It provides them privileges that males normally have which their sisters do not. For example, they are not sequestered in the home as their sisters can be. They are more free to come and go as they please, as they are physically and symbolically males. They go out at night on their own in Apia or enter the spaces remote from the village where they can, if they wish, meet friends for reasons of their own choosing. Additionally, if they choose to embark on the route of traditional pursuits related to the valuable service that many provide for their families, some can and do access family titles.[19]

In practice, some *fa'afafine* have a degree of flexibility in their relationships to sisters that their non-*fa'afafine* brothers do not have. The avoidance taboo does not seem to apply entirely to them. Many are often seen in the company of their sisters. Some work alongside them, performing women's activities. Some adult *fa'afafine* claim to have slept

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in the same beds or mats as their sisters and their female friends, as they are considered to be sexually non-threatening to women. These instances have taken place in group situations rather than with a *fa'afafine* and a sister together. That is, some *fa'afafine* have slept with a number of sisters, or female friends, and in one case, with a sister and her child, the child sleeping between the *fa'afafine* and his sister.

Fa'afafine also can be indispensable to their sisters as childcare givers. They can spend a great deal of time with them and their children as a result. Nonetheless, there is a sense that the *feagaiga* applies to any mention of erotics and to the protection of the sister from male predators. Many *fa'afafine*, in spite of claiming more feminine status as a result of the informal suspension of the avoidance taboo and the performance of women's tasks, still conceptualize themselves, ultimately, as brothers in relation to their sisters in the formal, sacred sense. To do otherwise would be disrespectful. It could cause them feelings of shame and evoke negative reaction from the family. At the same time, they sometimes informally take the designation "sister" for themselves and call themselves sisters or are called "sister" by their friends and family. But of course they are fictive, affective, or associative sisters, not real ones.

Fa'afafine can be confidantes and protectors of their women friends. They sometimes discuss various aspects of erotics and reproduction. Samoan males are generally not known to do this with women, perhaps for reasons related to a generalized avoidance taboo. Women and *fa'afafine*, as we shall see, have much in common, often building levels of mutual trust based on similar sensibilities and interests. There are, in addition, emotional benefits to *fa'afafine* and women who socialize.

The *Taupou* and Feminine Public Displays

Another partial claim to feminine identity has involved the occasional offering to or appropriation by *fa'afafine* of *taupou* activities in certain public situations (see also Mageo, 1997) and under certain family conditions. The *taupou*, the sacred virgin/greeter of Samoan villages, was always a female. One can distinguish, however, between the sacred aspect of the *taupou* as embodying certain forms of order and the instrumental activities of the *taupou* as greeter and dancer. Sometimes the male leader of the *'aumaga*, the *manaia*, would undertake the role of greeter in the absence of a *taupou*. However, I have found that *fa'afafine* have on occasion been given some of the *taupou*'s instrumental role in activities outside of the villages—in such non-sacred but still symbolically traditional spaces such as boys' public schools, where females and traditional village stratification arrangements are absent.

In one case, a *fa'afafine* whose family comprised an entire village and whose father was the high chief, performed some *taupou* duties in the village in the absence of her sisters. Thus, with the appropriate mix of authorities and in the absence of perceived resistance or possible shaming, traditional gendered activities may become flexible through association. This provides *fa'afafine* an outlet to some feminine public displays, and provides the family or institution with individuals who can contextualize public ceremonial activities in traditional terms. The aforementioned individual has always thought of herself as a woman.

Similarly, flexibility can sometimes mark a *fa'afafine* and a male living together as a couple in a village. This kind of arrangement is unusual in the villages and is not common in contemporary Apia. However, I learned from a Samoan scholar who grew up

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in Samoa and then moved away, of one example in a sub-village (*pitonu'u*) without a village council of its own. It was explained that as no village council was present to regulate this form of cohabitation in this case, the couple lived together successfully for some time without incident.

These examples may illustrate the relationship of "gender fluidity" in Samoa to the agency of authorities. Other reasons for gender fluidity may be symbolic, based on the importance of role/tasks in defining aspects of gender identity (cf. Mageo, 1997; Schoeffel, 1979), or even the perceived "essential" femininity of some *fa'afafine* in some instances. There is also the sense that the *fa'afafine's* usefulness in the area of feminine tasks counts for much in their accommodation. Yet another perspective suggests that as long as one works diligently for the family, gendered or erotic expressions outside the home are not an issue as long as they are not perceived to dishonor the family.

The following section presents aspects of the *fa'afafine* identity that are in a sense corrupted by the attributions of others and the asymmetrical hegemonic relations that contextualize part of the *fa'afafine* experience in Samoa.

Imputations of a Discredited Identity

In spite of the wide accommodation that we have seen, the *fa'afafine* identity has been and continues to be subject to certain forms of criticism. One often hears imputations of *fa'afafine* having a "spoiled identity" in the Goffmanian (1963) sense. One sister illustrates these imputations in describing the relationship of a *fa'afafine* to his older brother in the 1960s:

> [He] (the brother) really thought that being a *mala* …he was retarded and he (the brother) could not accept that. Its either he became a real man or he's not. – Fa'afetai

The individual in question was extremely close to his sisters.

One person repeated a sentiment that "there's no use [for the] *fa'afafine* in the world." He said that he would retort to his detractors:

> ...Well, who created us? We're all human beings. You are a human being, [therefore] we (emphatic) are human beings. – Tui

Imputations of stigma sometimes relate to the usefulness of *fa'afafine* to the collective. In the past some *fa'afafine* were sometimes thought of as "hopeless" children in their families, the implication being that some would not aggrandize the family through paid work, marriage, or titular status and therefore would be held back to serve the family in other ways. One educated individual referred to his effeminate brother as a "faggot," a derogatory Western term that is current in some sectors in Samoa. On a personal note, I was surprised to hear some individuals chuckle or snicker when learning of my research topic.

Negative Family Reaction to *Fa'afafine*

While corporal punishment is reported to be a common reaction to disobedience in Samoa (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1999), there are reports of *fa'afafine* receiving beatings for assuming that they were girls or because they acted like girls. Oli is one example. She remembers the reaction of her family:

> And then most of them those days they said "stop acting like a girl.
> You're not a girl, you're a real boy." ...I wasn't afraid. I don't care if they
> beat me ... I'm still doing it. ...Well they think ... we're people from
> another planet or whatever – Oli

As a response to some identity imputations about them, some *fa'afafine* have tried to find evidence for their existence in widely held myth. Consider the example of one

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well-educated *fa'afafine*, now in his mid-fifties and a regular churchgoer. In search of some positive biblical evidence for *fa'afafine*, he felt that Abel must have been a *fa'afafine* because he was weaker than Cain. This interpretation appears kinship-and church-based. It may derive from the presumption of weaknesses in *fa'afafine* compared to their presumed more masculine bothers. In contrast, however, there is a widespread perception that some *fa'afafine* are very strong and that a few are even potentially dangerous, if insulted, due to their powerful male bodies. I have met a number of *fa'afafine* who are very strong and appear to be able to take care of themselves.

Also current is a reinterpretation of the story of the Samoan warrior goddess, Nafanua, who some members of the Apia *fa'afafine* community have re-read as being like a *fa'afafine*. In this instance the aim appears to be to Samoanize this identity and find examples of "*fa'afafine*-ness" in Samoan myth.

Fathers and *Fa'afafine* Effeminacy

Some *fa'afafine* have received negative responses from fathers for their effeminacy, in particular when they assume western styles of dress or put on makeup. In one case, the mother also took issue. One individual reported

> Not until my mom told him I was a *fa'afafine* did [he] give me a hiding. When I was 11 or 12 he found out. She would tell him "he's doing his nails, dressing as a girl." Mother was angry that I did my nails, when I spent hours in the shower. - Loa

Another example illustrates how feminizing of appearances can lead to avoidance on the part of fathers. One respondent who is well educated describes how his father reacted:

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> But my father ... had some kind of problems with me. There was one
> whole year that he hardly talks to me. Then I said to my mom, "Ask dad if
> he has anything against me." He looked as if he's not my father. He doesn't
> talk to me regularly ... I had the feeling that he was concerned over my,
> you know, how ... I dressed.
> Q: Were you dressing in dresses?
> A: No, I never dress in dresses but I wear, like female type of style. I wear
> my lavalavas long. I wear my frangipani or hibiscus on my ear and
> everything else I mean [is] ...feminine. – Miriama

Gerber (1975:169) observed that children's behavior could be a source of shame

for fathers and siblings. Thus, having a *fa'afafine* in the family, in particular one who

feminized his appearance, might compromise family esteem. Family esteem can be a

fragile thing, and expulsion from the family is a fear that Gerber noted can be implanted

in Samoan children (Gerber, 1975:83).

One now-deceased *fa'afafine* whom I knew well told me that he felt that he was a

disappointment to his father, who as one of his surviving family members also noted

"...deep down wished for a son." The issue, I learned, was one of shame for both father

and son.

One effeminate individual was able to articulate the pain that his relationship with

his father caused him beginning in the late1970s. The relationship was basically one of

avoidance on the part of the father. After this respondent left Samoa the difficulties with

the father became more serious. Their relationship eventually improved, however. Over

time, tensions with fathers often resolve, a situation that I feel also demonstrates a

Samoan propensity for accommodation and perhaps the harmonizing of relations where

kin are concerned.

This individual discussed the possible sources of confusion for fathers that have

developed since contact with Europeans, such as the incorporation of the binary gender

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designations preferred by Christianity, and the importation of certain Western etiologies. Undoubtedly confusing for fathers was the feminizing of appearances which began to take place in the town area in the 1960s. The array of competing ideologies with which Samoan parents may now have to contend cannot be easy with respect to their effeminate sons, in a Samoa that is rapidly transforming and which reproduces competing ideological themes and many forms of the *fa'afafine* persona. Some ideologies are contextualized by the *fa'aSamoa*, the churches as an extension of it, with their specific moral influence, in addition to Western forms of individualism, intellectualism, merit, and self-expression.

Fa'afafine Identities and the Inheritance of Titles of Fathers

There are reported to be issues regarding the femininity of *fa'afafine* and its effect on title succession. *Suli*, in the context of Samoan succession and kin group participation means "heir" (Milner, 1993). As we have seen, ideally, all Samoans are corporate heirs to the family titles and lands although someone else in the family may actually hold the title. That is, even when one's sibling receives a title, he or she inherits it and the family lands in trust for other members of the family. Family members can claim identity and status from the title even though they are not the titleholders. As we shall see in a later chapter, one particular *fa'afafine* was thought to lend legitimacy to some *fa'afafine* collective activities due to the high title his father held. So *fa'afafine*, too, having the status of family members, have the right to consider themselves as one of the corporate inheritors of titles and lands. They may, ideally, also be in line for a *matai* title.

However, tensions with fathers can on occasion relate to title inheritance.

Male effeminacy, while useful around the home, in work and organizational areas, may not be the qualities associated ideally with *matai* holders. Some people have spoken of the problem of succession and effeminacy. One individual told me of his father's specific concern over succession:

> According to the Samoan customs and culture men should always be lining up for the family title... That's why my father was always saying to me 'I don't want you to be like that (a *fa'afafine*) because I want you to carry the family name clearly and purely.'
> Q: being a *fa'afafine* makes it slightly impure?
> A: Its slightly impure because I don't have the full image of a *matai* or a man, you know? ... He knows that I will still be playing my number with the men, with the straight guys, ... If I was a straight guy he wouldn't mind. He really wouldn't mind. It doesn't matter how many girls I [bed] he wouldn't mind at all. - Tala

In Samoa "womanizing," although not condoned, as one Samoan scholar put it, is not unexpected, a vestige, perhaps, of a number of pre-Christian socio-erotic arrangements.[20]

One *fa'afafine* recounted his father's account as to why he was not considered for a title and yet would remain esteemed:

> I am working and I am a *fa'afafine*. So even though the parents and the family [have] not conferred me a *matai* title, ... my father said ... "you are not having a *matai* title but you are having a "title" because you are working." So people can respect me. They do respect me. Maybe they think I am a special person because I am working. That's why they respect me. - Tui

This particular individual has said that he does not want a *matai* title because he is so feminine. I have sat with this person in the village weaving house and have heard women address him respectfully, which he recalled, accrues to him from his status as a well-regarded professional.

Some *fa'afafine* do receive *matai* titles, however, I have not met any who feminize their appearances in public who have also received titles. I have met titled

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fa'afafine who feminize their appearances within their own social groups or when they visit New Zealand for holidays. The projection of masculine dress appears to accompany selection for a title.

Fa'afafine as Caretakers

It is very likely that as Samoa transformed after independence, some *fa'afafine* were expected to take over the domestic work in the home when female and male siblings moved away, either for work or marriage. One local scholar has referred to this as the their role of filling gaps in transforming family infrastructure brought on by structural changes to the society as a whole due to relationships with the world system. Some *fa'afafine* may have enjoyed this role. For others, however, it may have seemed like an indentured trap.

> You either ... change your life to become a man in order to move up in the ladder of *matai*, or ... you become frustrated and become an "auntie," like most of our old *fa'afafines* have been. They became aunties and grannies and, ... the heterosexual life, the man and the woman becomes important and we became their caretakers, ...We became caretakers of things. Even parents...so that's the nanny, that's the caretaker step that I don't accept as an individual. ... – Lea

As their families sent children overseas to work and remit, or as their sisters married and left, some *fa'afafine* were kept behind to perform the family tasks or were basically assigned these tasks. One effeminate individual noted:

> Like in my case ... I [did] women's work not only because [I'm] the only person that's there, my sisters have all been married and moved away, [but] my mother and my brothers expected me to do the washing, the ironing and all the women's work. – Misa

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Other *fa'afafine* were also assigned the domestic duties and care of parents because their sisters had moved away. Taking care of parents and other family members is also a Samoan respect display that is deeply ingrained and a source of pride to some.

Misa's older brother protected him from heavy work, in part, because he was effeminate:

> He's the one who looks after the plantation and sometimes ...you know, I would just tag along you know, just for the fun of it, just to get away from home and go to the plantation. He never expect[ed] me to do anything. I would just sit around and do nothing ...because he thinks of me as the weaker version, you know. He doesn't expect me to do any planting, any cutting or anything, any hard jobs, hard chores in the plantation like what men, farmers do.
> Q: Now do you say physically weaker or does it imply some gender designation?
> A: Both. I would say both.

Some *fa'afafine* eventually left for various overseas countries where they could work and *tautua* on different terms.

Over the years people have also alluded to the functional advantages to families of having a *fa'afafine* who could do the work of both genders. Some *fa'afafine* have themselves valorized this idea. Misa and other *fa'afafine* performed domestic work in addition to jobs in town.

For women, marriage is generally exogenous (Schoeffel, 1979; Shore, 1982). Traditionally, this arrangement benefits her family because when the woman has children she accesses the titles of her spouse's family for her brothers and their descendents. In discussing what exogenous marriage meant de facto for some women, it has been suggested that in certain instances it could lead to quasi-indentured labor to the husband's family, in particular his female relatives who live in the village. Schoeffel (1979:241, 243) has also discussed this situation. The status of in-marrying women was generally

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lower than their husbands in relation to their husbands' sisters. O'Meara (1990:70) also

discusses the asymmetrical hegemonic arrangements between men and women that he

encountered in Samoa, including those related to work. It has been suggested by a

number of people that *fa'afafine* could help to alleviate these situations, as was the case

with one individual I interviewed.

One respondent, who feels her effeminate son will become a *fa'afafine*, discussed

her trepidation about having such a child, fearing for his future. She asked me what I

thought lay in store for her son as he matured. I felt at a loss to answer her question, as it

was a prediction that I could not make. At the same time, she said she would love this

boy and felt that he would be someone who would love her in return and look after her as

her other children married and moved away. I have heard *fa'afafine* referred to in words

to the effect as "mother's best helper." In general, there is a widespread notion that the

relationship between *fa'afafine* and their female family members –mothers and

grandmothers in particular, is warm and supportive. Indeed, a number of respondents

have noted the positive outcomes of being raised by grandmothers.

The Churches and *Fa'afafine* Identity

> ... So apart from they didn't want me to grow up as a girl, they didn't
> want me to do these things because of the church standards, and so I had
> to go along with it, but it didn't stop me, you know. - Pau

Many *fa'afafine* are regular churchgoers and part of their identity, like that of

other Samoans is to be found in their relationship to the churches. While the churches

define gender in terms of the binary distinctions of male and female found in Christian

ideology, the current relationship between *fa'afafine* and the churches is mostly one of

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accommodation. There is also ambivalence and at times some misunderstandings. This should not be surprising as *fa'afafine* personae are not all compatible with the expectations of all the churches, their various denominations, and their pastors, whose responsibility for harmonizing social relations in Samoa is well recognized. Nor are the churches uniform in terms of their application of doctrine.

Given accounts from *fa'afafine* and pastors, one discerns the churches' involvement in their accommodation and inclusion, as well as their monitoring, on occasion, as a rather ambivalent and sometimes anti-social category. The dilemma (where there was one) for both the churches and *fa'afafine* was complex. One aspect of the problematic stems from the role of *faifeau* as Samoan moralists; organizers of public activities in the villages, and arbiters of custom and tradition, as well as the doctrines of the churches. A further complexity involves some of the *fa'afafine's* more recent body displays, some of which do not conform to church expectations.

Yet, there is more than the ideology of the churches at work. The churches are de facto part of the *fa'aSamoa* (Meleisea,1987b:18). The widespread accommodation of *fa'afafine* by the churches that I have encountered appears, at one level, to be an example of the agency of the pastors and the deeply imbedded notion of *fa'afafine* as churchgoing kin. The *fa'afafine's* instrumental roles in areas of the feminine and the masculine, their personification of effeminacy, and their widely regarded competence are also accommodated and utilized in Samoan churches. Thus, many *fa'afafine* are front and center in their churches. I have met a *fa'afafine* choir leader, a deacon, choir members, participants in women's organizing committees, and a youth group organizer.

In some churches *fa'afafine* sing in the choirs' soprano or alto sections. Some dress up in frocks, just as other women do in churches in the town area. Samoan television presents a regular evening program of church choirs from around the country. *Fa'afafine* choir members are occasionally seen on these programs singing in the choirs. These individuals may, in part, measure their value by these contributions, as they would with other contributions to society.

As Vili, one of my *fa'afafine* respondents suggested, it is important for *fa'afafine* to be respectful and give the churches, as another institution in the community, what they require in terms of dignity, respect, and service. The pastors, while having a different relationship to the villages than do *matai*, owing their positions as professionals to the villages, would still expect and appreciate all of the dignity, service, and *alofa* displays that *matai* would, as one pastor's wife confirmed. Thus, Samoan reciprocal relations are salient in the church establishment as well as in families and villages, and this is an important notion, not only in understanding the *fa'afafine's* relationships to the churches but those of all Samoans. The parishes are the sites for the organization of much of the lives of Samoan villagers, including *fa'afafine*.

The Church Youth Groups and Identity

We have earlier discussed aspects of the *'aumaga* in relation to the *fa'afafine* identity. Since the coming of Christianity the youth group or *autalavou* has taken over some of the functions of both the *'aumaga* and the *aualuma*. In 1979, when Schoeffel reported this phenomenon, youth groups were still quite gendered. I have seen evidence of a blending of the activities of both genders. One *fa'afafine* respondent reported the following about the youth groups:

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> ... With the *autalavou* men and women ... can actually do the same things that everybody else is doing. ... It's actually better for the *fa'afafine*, you know, because they can fit into the *autalavou*, they can do whatever they want. If they want to do the man's stuff they can do that. If they want to do the women's stuff they can do that as well, whereas before it was gender specific. *'Aumaga* was the men. *Aualuma* was the women. The *fa'afafine* were stuck in the middle. – Tesi

Other respondents have supported Tesi's rendering of the *autalavou*.

Participation in church activities may produce a range of satisfaction in terms of the *fa'afafine's* talents and abilities which participation in the *'aumaga* may limit, can assuage guilt that they may feel for their erotics, and help impression manage those same erotics:

> When I feel tempted I first meditate on that passage from the bible about Sodom and Gomorrah. Because I am so active in the church I have given up my sexual activities. [That is] I don't do it very often. Some people have that philosophy that you are either with God or the devil. I say do both, but I'm perceived to be good because of my church activities. – Vili

The following example of church participation resonates with the problematic of impression management of a particular *fa'afafine's* identity for both the family and for the individual:

> Even the people in my village, when I was still young, they criticized us and I was feeling that this might hurt my parents as well. People might say that my parents did not raise me well. So I joined the choir and my pastor picked me for the soprano part because of my voice. I was afraid the men in the village might beat me up because of that, but the pastor said, "Don't worry, leave that up to me." And the older members were shocked that I had done so well. The pastor has me come and decorate because I am so good at decorating. – Toni

In addition to impression management, this example also speaks to the practical accommodation between the churches and *fa'afafine* in some villages. In other villages, *fa'afafine* are not given the privilege of acting like females.

Hypermasculinity

As a solution to the stigma of effeminacy for some, hypermasculinity has been documented in transsexuals in the military (Brown, 1989). Not immune to such pressures, at least two *fa'afafine* that I know of joined foreign armies to convince their fathers that they were masculine and worthy of respect. One respondent provided this account:

> Yes, I have a classic example of a friend ...and he was the last person I think I'd see him in the [army]. ... His dad's a chief and ... we became good friends ... and he told me the reason why [he joined up]. He had to prove himself. First of all his father was a chief, so, you know, it didn't look good for him being the way he was growing up, so he felt he had something to prove ... So he's currently right now, he's very much a *fa'afafine*, but he knows his limits and he's able to do what he can do and I think he's doing his father a great service. On top of that, I think he's surprised his father, because his father looked at him as far as being a *fa'afafine* and sort of hiding him behind the house. And he's (the father) very nice [now]. He's doing what he can do, and I think the family has to accept what he's doing. – Aroni

Above we find some themes around the *fa'afafine* identity and families. One is the recurring issue of the embarrassment of some fathers and the dramatic solution to that embarrassment in this case. The second is the steps taken by the *fa'afafine* son to aggrandize the family and its titleholder, thereby managing impressions of his identity which could affect the reputation of his family. The management of the possible identity imputations of others is something that many *fa'afafine* have done individually and collectively over the years.

Etiology

There is no consensus on the etiology of the *fa'afafine*. Local explanations range from the salience of females in their lives to the current genetic and hormonal explanations found in the medical model. A search for local myths that might support or explain the presence of the *fa'afafine* revealed very little, suggesting that in pre-contact

Samoa *fa'afafine* were not thought to be unusual. Still, there is a folk-etiology of sorts that supports the notion that *fa'afafine* are different, and may be "caused" as a punishment for certain forms of anti-social behavior.

The Samoan *aitu*, the ghosts and spirits held to haunt wild spaces, or particular sites in Samoa, and are involved in the punishment of sinners or transgressors of custom and mores, are thought to cause various aberrations and trickery in Samoa (Schoeffel, 1979; Shore, 1982; Sinavaiana, 1992.). Some Samoans still ascribe to *aitu* pathologizing powers, a fact that has currency for this study. For example, Schoeffel reports on the belief that the illnesses of children can result from infidelities of fathers.

> It is believed that men who are unfaithful to their wives bring illness upon their children, presumably through the *aitu* of the woman. (Schoeffel, 1979:375)

This account appears to marry Christian propriety to Samoan punishment. The notion of the intervention of *aitu*, however, has attributional currency for the *fa'afafine*. I have heard two accounts of attributional causes of their presence. While neither example involves *aitu* directly, implied is some intervention for reasons of wickedness related to the prospect of infidelity. Both female and male erotic factors have been purported to lead to women having children who are born *fa'afafine*. One individual explained that some people in her village believed that if a woman dressed up too seductively, this practice could lead to her having a *fa'afafine* son.

The other individual, a *fa'afafine*, explained, that some years ago he was invited to respond to questions about the *fa'afafine* at a formal gathering. During the question period, he was asked how *fa'afafine* became that way. Stuck for an answer, he constructed one, as he was to say later, that put the cause squarely on the shoulders of the

father's erotic fantasies. He told the group that should a married man be attracted to a woman other than his wife and continue to think or fantasize about that woman while making love with his wife, then the child, were it a boy, would be born a *fa'afafine*. This answer resonates with Schoeffel's account of punishment for male infidelities. It also seems to combine Christian notions of propriety with Samoan forms of punishment.

Another account associates *fa'afafine* with a more concrete pathology. One individual recounts from the 1960s, the reaction of visiting *matai* to his femininity and then his father's response:

> ... They look and they ... kinda take a second look and said [to my father], "We thought that this was a son but it looks like it's a girl." ... I walk up in front and shake hands and then my father says, "Oh, he's a sickie, a sickly person." ...I felt so upset [with] my father to think that I was ... a sick person. And then when it was over I said, "Why did you tell them that I'm sick?" And my father said, "ehhh, its not important." I mean why didn't you tell them at first that I was a *fa'afafine*? You let me clean the house. ..." I said, "I do the cooking. I do the washing; I do everything as a woman and why do you...? I'm not sick (emphatically)!" ... And then my father always stops discussing with me. - Mose

One Samoan scholar suggested that Samoans do not have a specific account of the origins of the *fa'afafine*. Instead, they can be looked upon both as valued kin, and, sometimes, as odd people. Yet, the notion of pathology lurks in the description of Mose's identity. His story exemplifies McAdam's notion of identity imputations, which suggests that Mose's identity is not contextualized as unspoiled, but rather, it is actually contextualized as spoiled, but for a socially defensible reason. As one of Mose's trusted friends who was present remarked later, the father faced a quandary in the context of the visiting *matai*: managing the situation in a way compatible with Samoan impression management displays but at the expense of his son's feelings. That is, the situation had to be harmonized, and the sensibilities of the titled outsiders were given first consideration.

An explanation, not unlike that of Mose's father, need not result from intersubjective impression management. A case in point is the rather interesting and widespread perception of the *fa'afafine* as a "curse" or a "cursed people." This notion requires some elaboration. Although I found no specific reference to either a Samoan or Christian deity as regards the origins of the *fa'afafine*, "cursed" implies some sort of intervention by deities or spirits. As one *fa'afafine* explained it:

> ... Generally, when there's a *fa'afafine* in the family [in] those days and it is still apparent now, if there's a *mala* in the family it's like a curse you know, it's like a curse. – Samuelu

Others have echoed this description. Another *fa'afafine* said:

> That's how people look at the *malas*. "Oh, these people have been cursed. ... No wonder ... they're doing all these ... odd behavior and ... things ... they should not be doing. Like doing women's jobs when they should not, when they are men."...And then they [say], "Ah, that's your penalty. You have been cursed and that's why you are that way." We have a [word for curse] *malaia*, that's it in Samoan. *Malaia*. So ... they shorten it [to] *mala*. - Aleki

The term *mala* that Samuelu and Aleki have described has become a more current term for *fa'afafine*. It is derived from the word *malaia*, or curse, which also means plague or scourge (Milner, 1993).

The designation *mala* requires some interpretation, however. The fact of the matter is that *mala* in many quarters is not a negative term at all, but one which many *fa'afafine* themselves and society in general collectively employ. According to one account, the idea that they were cursed people became so widespread that the *fa'afafine* began to appropriate the term for themselves and their emerging collective and public identity.

> *Mala* means a disaster, a catastrophe, a divine curse. It only became sweet
> when the *malas* themselves said, "OK, we are a catastrophe," and we
> adopted it for ourselves. Then we turned it around, and it became an
> endearing term when we use it. - Tofi

Tofi's explanation recollects the tactics of the gay movement, which co-opted the term "queer"—a word packaged with hegemonic implications—in order to diffuse its power.

Another account suggests that *mala* is a widespread term, also used in other contexts, which has no particular negativity. Yet another suggests that one of the early *fa'afafine* leaders may have begun using the term humorously and endearingly in the 1960s amongst some *fa'afafine* in town, and it stuck. The term *fa'afafine* remains in use and is in a sense the official term for them, being the one found in dictionaries and the anthropological record, but *mala* is now a vernacular that appears to be very widely used. Many *fa'afafine* prefer *mala* over *fa'afafine*, although some do not like the *mala* term. Others do not like the term *fa'afafine*, for it is felt to be insulting, analogous to being a sissy.

The above discussion notwithstanding, I have found that the term *mala* in the final analysis has come to mean something rather positive. It has become akin to the English expression, a "hard case," in the sense of being endearingly incorrigible, a charming unpredictable entity, a gentle disaster waiting to happen. As one astute individual put it, the use of the word *mala* can be analogous to how the term "bad" appropriates the connotations of "good " in African American English (Samoan politician, personal communication). Thus, *mala* as possibly originally a curse, plague or scourge for some, now can include the notion of something endearing. It is a designation for the new and still changing public identity of the *fa'afafine*.[21]

In addition to local attributional accounts, Western education and contacts with overseas networks have produced expanded views of their etiology amongst some *fa'afafine*:

> Well, *fa'afafine* when its actually translated straight to Samoan it means to be like a woman and not to "be" a woman or, you know, something like that. Its to be "like" a woman you know or act "like" a woman, so that word was given Samoans in the very old days to a boy that was ... doing the girls' work, domestic work. But [you] see [in] those days they didn't have the mentality to observe and really look into it and see what kind of person is this, you know. ... But nowadays people understand about, like hormones and things like that, all these scientific things, and they've learned, sometimes a child is born with more female hormones and sometimes another with more male hormones and so that's something that's done [occurs] naturally. Nobody's [purposefully] changing that. That's why a boy comes out, you know, acting feminine. I mean like because he's got more female hormones in him than male hormones and so therefore he's like that. And he feels like a woman inside and ... so my description of us is women trapped in men's bodies. And *fa'afafine*, I don't agree with it. - Pau

Pau feels she is a woman and while performing feminine tasks, also has an interior identity that is feminine:

> I've never thought of myself as a *fa'afafine*. I've never thought just, you know, once, just for a minute or one second that I was *fa'afafine*. I've always thought of myself as a woman. –Pau

Pau lives on her own away from family and the problems that assumed femaleness could bring her. It is only in the modern sphere that she can stake out sites and repertoires in which to express herself. Her's is a romantic personal identity that desires respect on its own terms. She has also expressed a dislike for the term *mala*.

The Question of Being Gay

Besnier (1994) has reported, given personal communications from other Samoanists, that the Western "gay" designation may have entered Samoa to describe males who prefer erotics with other men, but who are otherwise not effeminate nor part of the *fa'afafine* community. Although not the subject of this study, I have heard the term "gay boys" used to describe a few individuals to distinguish them from *fa'afafine*. I have met one such individual and have had two others pointed out to me. As Besnier suggests, further study may be warranted in this area. My preliminary understanding leads me to believe that this is not a salient population, as are the *fa'afafine*, are not subject to any hegemonic issues, nor are they associated with women's activities.

I have noticed that elements of gay, transsexual, and transvestite expressions from the West have sometimes replaced traditional discourses but not necessarily the sensibilities with respect to *fa'afafine* personae. While *fa'afafine* have used the terms gay, homosexual, and queen in my presence, I have determined that, in most cases, they were doing so for my benefit, using analogies which they felt would be helpful to me. For example, when I went backstage during preparations for the 1996 Miss Samoa Drag Queen Pageant in Apia, I met a young organizer previously unknown to me. He attempted to explain to me, a presumed naïve observer, how "gay" culture worked in Samoa. When I asked him why he used the term "gay" in his explanation, he replied, in words to the effect, "Well I was using a term that I thought you would be familiar with." Normally he would have used *fa'afafine* or *mala*.

In my experience, the term "gay" or "homosexual" is seldom, if ever, used amongst *fa'afafine* in Samoa. I have heard a Samoan medical professional use the terms

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homosexual and bi-sexual, and other well-educated professionals use the terms gay and "faggot" in describing *fa'afafine*. My sense is that the use of any of these terms would also be determined by the specific questioner and respondent. For example, the fact that the term "*mala*" has not come up in any of the literature on the *fa'afafine* suggests to me that respondents were content to go with whatever term the researcher used, or with which the researcher was familiar. Still, Western terms are strongly resisted by *fa'afafine*. As another respondent put it:

> ...That's the reason why I said gay is because I understand how they use it overseas. See, we don't use that here, because we don't see ourselves as gay. – Pau

A few *fa'afafine* have used the term "queen" when speaking in English. "Queen" appears to be an uplifted term among some *fa'afafine* when used with outsiders. It may allude in part to the accommodation and success of their drag queen pageants, a topic that will be dealt with in a later chapter.

In "Gay" Lands: The *Fa'afafine* and the Overseas Experience

Respondents have alluded to the phenomenon of mixing with gays overseas as falling into lifestyles that appear to approximate the lifestyles of the *fa'afafine* in Samoa; yet are markedly distinguishable from them. One well educated respondent put it in a way I had come to understand over my years of interacting with *fa'afafine*:

> Because there are different cultural conditions that exist within that [other] society... it's like you're being a fish out of water, you know. Over here, you're comfortable with your being *fa'afafine*, because of the social structure and it being part of the thread of Samoan society. When you go into a New Zealand, for instance ... or Australian society or in Western culture, *fa'afafine* is a strange concept [to them]. You know and we all know [how] those cultures ... react to things that are considered abnormal. So definitely there's a pressure to look for...the [equivalent] of the

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> *fa'afafine* concept and once you move in overseas, there's no pot like that, so you look for the nearest thing ... so [that] you can jump into [it] ...you know the pot is the gay [pot].... We're talking about the *fa'afafines* that have come to new Zealand and how their first reaction to gay relations was negative because they found it against their whole belief system and conditioning. So it took them awhile to come to terms with it.   – Tesi

Many *fa'afafine* in Samoa have not "come to terms with it," for to be gay overseas is, in part, to give up an important aspect of one's Samoan identity. One *fa'afafine* who lived overseas described his difficulty fitting in:

> But there was that kind of attitude in all things, and very clearly I noticed in New Zealand, that to be a Samoan and to be a *fa'afafine* wasn't a good thing. And then I went through a phase of, say, trying to cope, but very early on I thought I wasn't succeeding because I just couldn't fit ... - Felise

Fa'afafine are not defined solely by their erotics, but rather, by their resemblance to women, both in manner and in work; as contributors to families; as men and brothers; and as fictive sisters and women. Their kinship relationships count for much. With regard to erotics, employment, and familial attachment, their position was not tenuous like the position of gays in the West. There has never been an issue of fighting against the state for their erotic rights or being sacked from jobs because they were gender anomalous, in spite of other structural issues that some may have had. Consequently they resist identifying with overseas gay movements where projections of identity are concerned. A *fa'afafine* activist in Samoa for over twenty years put it this way:

> We do not want to see ourselves as being in the same category as the *palagi* gays,... because the *palagi* gays have simply made that movement ... to identify themselves, [to] get the freedom that they do not have that we in Samoa have. Naturally have. So I personally fear the fact the queens who have been abroad will bring the idea of the gay rights as being similar to what we have been trying to identify right in Samoa. All that we wanted to do was to basically to be of value to society. As far as identity is

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concerned, we naturally are accepted and blended into society and families as normal people would have been.

Q: And by that you mean just being able to have the rights and benefits of being an heir, of *suli* and ... the rights and benefits of all the people in your families?

A: Very much so, yeh. Very much so. 'Cause I, when it comes to this gay right thing, I don't want to affiliate myself with any of that. Because its a very negative, a very negative concept. They've gone through a lot of hassles to get themselves where they are right now regardless of the rejection and the ridicule. I wouldn't want that to come, to become part of *fa'afafine* life in Samoa.

Q: Do you feel it would be necessary ever, here?

A: No. It would be a dysfunction. It would almost be a dysfunction to the queens of Samoa and their identity. Why, is simply it's because we naturally are who and what we are. We are accepted normally [as normal people] in society. I don't want that to creep [in] and ... take up the hard work we have been aiming for so long to accomplish. – Tala

In suggesting that *fa'afafine* are accepted as normal in Samoa, Tala is referring to their wide-ranging centrality within families, their de jure attachment to all the privileges that accrue to kin in Samoa, a general appreciation of aspects of their femininity, and the general accommodation of their erotics. In mentioning the *fa'afafine* dilemma of being seen to be useful, Tala refers to the other side of their issue. That is, their need, in particular in the early days, to expand the awareness of their Samoan kin and society as to the other gifts that they had. The dilemma for many had been, Tala infers, and others have stated, one of exclusion from certain forms of sociation, paid or professional labor, esteem, status, identification, and respect. Their fluid movement has always been identity-and esteem-based, has been involved in the creation of their own solidarities and the projection of expanded identities into the general community. They wanted to be seen to be useful and necessary to the community at large on their own terms. That is the essence of "the hard work" they have been trying to accomplish.

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The Samoan culture, deep, embracing, and complex, can extensively enable the *fa'afafine*. For example, Tala, in addition to all his other roles and activities, difficulties, pain, joys, and accomplishments, remains a noble person in the Samoan sense. His lineages and contemporary attachments can be linked to very high titles and at least one of the titles of the maximal descent groups. These ideological perks are one of the positives that some *fa'afafine* put forward as deeply Samoan, which provide structural stability to their lives and distinguish *fa'afafine* from gays overseas. Some of the best-educated and most experienced *fa'afafine* who have been overseas will tend to contextualize their identity in Samoan terms rather than Western ones. The commitment to Samoan identity of overseas *fa'afafine* requires further study.

Teaching: Status and the Socialization of the Young

Fa'afafine identity can have aspects that are circumscribed by their attachment to the contemporary world. Some *fa'afafine* are involved in entertainment on a professional basis. Others are in the hospitality profession or hold important jobs in a variety of businesses and academic institutions. A few *fa'afafine* from the elite *afakasi* group have businesses and have remained in Samoa. Some have attached themselves, to varying degrees, to *fa'afafine* organizations and support groups.

Samoa's involvement with the world system has provided educated *fa'afafine* with forms of identity that both express their sensibilities and give them status. One example is the teaching profession, a profession in high demand in Samoa and one where *fa'afafine* are widely found. As one individual put it, for many *fa'afafine* there is a

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compatibility between teaching and their personal and public identities. Mema has explained this:

> You know what we talked about earlier, that that we get to be domesticated. ... One part of the domestication that we go through is looking after the nephews and the nieces and the grandchildren. ... From there we learn what the kids' psychology is like. ...So whenever a problem crops up, we know what the solutions will be...So when we become teachers we are like mothers, you know. We know how to cope [with] the kids. We don't see them as individual students, but we see them as a group of children who are children to us as mothers. ... besides the ...curriculum we have to give them, you know.
> Q: And is it satisfying?
> A: Oh, very much. It's very rewarding.

Mema found being a professional an aggrandizement of status and, as a form of *tautua*, preferred school teaching to work in the home.

Teaching often relates to *fa'afafine* identity in another way. One individual has equated teaching with the sensibilities of women:

> ... Because ... I'm a woman and I say, "Oh, teachers usually are women so ... I should be a teacher because I'm a girl, I'm a woman, I'm a lady." So ...teaching is a woman's job because you're dealing with the young generation, educat[ing] the young generation. In reference to families, ... just like mothers who are, you know, nursing and bringing up her children ... so that's exactly the same with what you're doing in the classroom. ... Loving, caring, patience, concern. – Marina

The involvement of *fa'afafine* in education has resulted in expanded opportunities for many. Some were sent overseas for advanced degrees. Some found teaching jobs in New Zealand. Others who remained behind were given management positions. A few in management have received *matai* titles.

Fa'afafine teachers are widely appreciated both by the department of education and the community. The qualities of dedication, compassion, and discipline, perceived to be part of the identity of *fa'afafine* teachers are thought to enhance the development of a

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classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. Recently, *fa'afafine* have returned to Samoa with the credentials to enter other professions. Some of these individuals are making contributions to the *fa'afafine* subculture in the urban area.

Summary

In this chapter we have seen that various continua of factors can circumscribe the individual, collective, and public identities of the *fa'afafine*. Identities range from the feminine to the masculine and are also contextualized by work orientation, status of families, and an individual's standing in their families. *Fa'afafine* have been seen to fill gaps in family structure created by outmigration or the exogenous marriage of siblings.

Some *fa'afafine* have excellent jobs in the town area and have entered various professions. *Fa'afafine* who have entered the professions have aggrandized their status and provided resources for their families. On the other hand, the *fa'afafine* category can be an unstable one, which, without marriage may not result in the public perception of full maturity and therefore can be perceived as being a flawed and sometimes stigmatized identity. Issues with fathers have been noted by some.

An etiology of the *fa'afafine*, such as it exists, pertains to their being cursed, sick or the result of erotic misdemeanors on the part of parents. More educated *fa'afafine* have incorporated some of the etiological accounts from Western science into explanations of how they got to be the way they are.

Fa'afafine erotics with men, while generally accommodated, are also associated with their public identities. Some *fa'afafine* have achieved status as *matai* through their abilities and both traditional and more modern forms of service.

The churches contribute to the identity of the *fa'afafine*, both through their widespread accommodation of them and the monitoring of aspects of their personae in some instances. We will return to other aspects of *fa'afafine* identity in some of the chapters that follow.

In the next chapter some of the specific issues of the *fa'afafine* will be explored. Issues regarding their status incongruity will be investigated, as well as those issues based on the relative deprivation which some *fa'afafine* claim to have experienced.

Chapter 6: Some Persistent Issues

> I am Vili Atafa, son of Tapili and Siana Atafa, brother of Sione. I am the provider and the oppressed. I am the caretaker and the teacher. I am the role model and embarrassment. I am *fa'afafine*.
>
> — Oscar Kightley and David Fane, from *A Frigate Bird Sings*

> They were doing a lot of the work at home, whether its men's work or women's work, and a lot of them dropped out of school at that stage. ... and certainly when I was growing up, a lot of the *fa'afafines*, the main employment they had, they were self-employed either in sewing, which was lucky if they did that, or they were hired help, like nannies, probably looking after the household, looking after the kids, looking after domestic chores.... and no one really would consult you on your opinion...
>
> -a *fa'afafine* describing the early 1970s

As we have seen in the social movement literature, issues, grievances, and relative deprivation can accompany social transformations (Gurr, 1970; Morris, 1984; McCarthy and Zald, [1977] 1987). Relative deprivation, although it can be materially based, may also be related to the respect one receives in relation to others (Gurr, 1970). In addition, while grievances may correlate with transformational activity, they may not be a sufficient condition for this activity to occur. This is not to imply, however, that *fa'afafine* actions and sensibilities are not in part contextualized by the issues that some

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have perceived and faced. In the early days of their emergence many *fa'afafine* did not feel that they were well understood. My intention in this chapter is not to overstate the case but to contextualize some of their persistent issues in terms of misunderstandings about themselves that many *fa'afafine* wished to have addressed.

Their issues fell into a number of categories related respectively to the material aspects of their lives, their direct humiliation and teasing, their relationships with males, and a general lack of respect for many, especially in the early days. To varying degrees these factors also led to personal problems, including emotional malaise and the fear of aging. Issues of the type to be discussed did not beset all individuals. However, there is a sense that many peoples' lives have been touched in some way by factors related to their *"fa'afafine*-ness."

Material Considerations

Contact with the West brought commoditization and paid labor to Samoa. As with other Samoan young people, part of some *fa'afafine's* dilemma after independence has been perceived as a lack of opportunities in the contemporary sphere. While town *fa'afafine* had mostly been associated with paid labor of some kind, some of this labor was domestic work for wealthy families or visiting expatriates. A few wealthy *afakasi fa'afafine* in town were attached to family businesses, and at least one from the 1960s had a business of his own.

One theme in the data is that, since the 1960s, some village based *fa'afafine* had been held back to work at home, while contemporaries benefited in modern activities. The amount and degree of this holding back has not been determined, nor are these

accounts immune from interpretation. For some individuals, lack of opportunities may have resulted from a number of factors. One had to do, in part, with the anomalous *fa'afafine* identity. To this were added the unstable Samoan economy and changing social structure, and possibly the difficulty for some adults in understanding the structural and ideational changes which the transforming *fa'afafine* persona represented. Other factors must be considered. For example, school fees and books were not supplied *gratis* by the state. Anela describes the 1960s:

> When a family's got no money it's very, very hard for them to send all the kids to school, and so there must be someone to leave [behind] and send the others. So ... they see this person (*a fa'afafine*) is very good at doing the housework and all that sort of thing, they decided, "Oh well, we better leave him and let's take [another one] to carry on the school and leave this [one] because that's what she's good at." – Anela

Town *fa'afafine* may have had more opportunities than those in the villages. Many if not most were sent to school in the early days. One individual commenting on the 1960s compared the town and village *fa'afafine* with respect to schooling:

> Us from in town were always treated basically the same. As long as the family can afford, everybody is treated the same ... but out of town, yeh, ... they can see that "he's hopeless." He's going to be a hopeless kid. He's going to be causing ... trouble if he gets sent. ... So they ... either turn him into the domestic one or they take off from home or come into town. – Semisi

In some ways this observation reflects the relative deprivation, in general, between center and periphery that some people have discussed. In addition, education only became compulsory in 1991, although it has always been seen to be of value. The law did not come into effect until 1995 due to instability in the economy and the educational infrastructure created by two devastating hurricanes in the early 1990s (Samoan politician, personal communication).

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Dropping Out of School

Some *fa'afafine* who were sent to school dropped out, or resisted going. Respondents gave teasing or "being pointed at" as some reasons for leaving. One individual from the town area who dropped out of school in the 1960s remarked on the negative attention that some received:

> They don't like going to school because they got teased at school or they got beaten up at school and all that sort of thing, and they refused to go to school. Even if the parents [were] trying to push them to school but they don't want to go to school. – Iakopo

Interestingly, having a *fa'afafine* in the family could prompt parents to encourage schooling. In the 1950s and 1960s the father of one individual who "ran wild" in the town area tried to instill the value of schooling in him, wanting him to "…live by [his] pencil," as he was a *fa'afafine* and thought to be too vulnerable to do heavy work. Also of significance is the fact that working with the pencil is associated with town living, for Apia was the place where most "pencil" employment could be obtained.

Teasing at school has dogged some *fa'afafine* throughout their recent history as well, as one well-educated individual indicated:

> By the time I was in secondary school most of my fellow students mocked me and finger pointed at me. They said there was a waste of life in me, that I was a dead person. This was a challenge to me to show that they were wrong.
> Q: What do they mean by 'Dead person?
> A: They view me as a person without a sex. I remember students from my secondary school days, students saying "You are like people from another planet," and that really hurt me. And then I told him that we are people made by God in his image. They just laughed. – Toni

A well-known *fa'afafine*, now deceased, who emerged in the town area in the late 1960s was by all accounts very bright. Despite being the child of professionals, and

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having brothers and sisters who did well at school, she dropped out because of teasing and because she wanted to project a more feminine persona.

In addition to teasing, another issue for young *fa'afafine* was being forced to be something that they felt they were not. One very bright person, when asked why she did not complete her education told me:

> Being a boy. So that's why most of us are not going to school, pull out of school because of that. They don't want to go to school because they're forced against their wills to be something else that they're not. So that's where I think that the public, ... the people should understand our feelings and us, and accept us like that so that we'll be able ... to live just like everyone else, you know, like going to school just the way you are.   - Pau

While this theme is not uncommon, not all *fa'afafine* were forced to be boys. Some were given girls' activities to perform, on occasion, at school. There is the sense that some schools were fairly flexible in this regard, such as Avele College when it was a boys' school. But some schools undoubtedly were not. Pau continued:

> Yeh. I regret it now. But not regret it in a way that, you know, that [I feel] disappointed but I look back and I think, well you know, if they weren't being real [mean] to me ...I would have finished my school ...
> - Pau

I have observed that Pau, although very accomplished and a contributor to society, is still mocked and insulted on occasion.

To say that most *fa'afafine* do not attend school, however, may be an overstatement and certainly requires further investigation, as there are a number of well-educated *fa'afafine*, in particular, more recently—teachers, artists, business and government employees. Remaining in school appears to relate in part to a family's ability to pay for schooling and their interest in instilling the value of education in their *fa'afafine* children. Leaving school does inform the biographies of many, however, and

schooling would become a motivational challenge among some *fa'afafine,* beginning in the 1960s.

General Mocking and Teasing

In *Where We Once Belonged,* the Samoan novelist Sia Figiel deals with an aspect of the *fa'afafine* that resonates in my data (Figiel, 1996). One of the "girl" names used by Fa'afetai, the *fa'afafine* character in her novel, is "Shirley Girl." Shirley Girl epitomizes the posturing, brave, strong, "in your face" *fa'afafine* who have appeared in Apia in every decade since the early 1970s. She is portrayed as being amongst the most gifted of her female friends. She wears frocks, prepares the most interesting food, essentially outperforming the women at most things. A powerful character, her other friends do not dare to refer to Shirley Girl as other than a female.

Then Figiel introduces another character, a real female who antagonizes Shirley Girl by emphasizing that she is not really a girl, but a boy. A fight ensues. Shirley Girl wins easily because she is strong and can handle herself. While Shirley Girl comes out the winner in Figiel's scenario, not all *fa'afafine* are so strong, and some are deflated by negative imputations regarding their identity. Like Oscar Kightley and David Fane in their play, *A Frigate Bird Sings* and Iosefa in his poem on the *fa'afafine,* Figiel also captures aspects of the *fa'afafine's* dilemma where understanding, respect, and esteem are concerned.

Some *fa'afafine* have reported challenges to an assumed feminine identity. At school, one was told to "speak like a man, not like a girl," an expression I heard in a classroom. Some *fa'afafine* have been gently teased with words like, "You're not going

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to be a real girl if you don't get rid of the wife and get him (the boyfriend) to stay [with you] permanent[ly]." [22] In one case teasing took place even though the individual was performing women's work in the home.

> Well, helping the girls washing the dishes, doing the washing, pick up the rubbish. You know the ladies' work I [was] allowed to do ...and by that time all my family always teased me. You should understand. They never liked me to be one of that, but I can't help it. – Oli

Oli was punished at home for being effeminate. He felt that he received this sort of punishment because his family was the highest titled *aiga* in the village. It would undoubtedly be unseemly for such a family to be associated with an outgoing and outspoken feminine boy like Oli. Some *fa'afafine* who do not cross-dress but who are effeminate, are also teased.

Teasing, of course, has not been the only cause of educational difficulties. Oli left home, and although he went to school and was sent overseas to study, he did not complete his education. This situation happened to other bright *fa'afafine* students sent overseas on scholarship or by their families in the 1970s and 1980s. Some could not stabilize themselves to work independently. Some, away from kin, experienced alienation at universities and colleges.

Constant fear of teasing or being "pointed at" may have produced a kind of introversion in some. One individual had been a participant in the *fa'afafine's* collective activities in Apia from the 1960s to the 1980s. He told me that he had been a loner all his life. He lacked friends when he was young. As a child he kept to his self-imposed isolation, "probably because I think I'll be teased..."

Some *fa'afafine* also tease one another about their collective vulnerabilities, such as their feminine identity, their anatomy, and men. Some lampoon a "fear" of getting

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pregnant and speak of the "safety" of being on "the pill."[23] Others who gently joke with one another seem to be displaying solidarity based on their anomalous personae.

I recall one respondent once telling me that his mother occasionally teased him as they worked together doing their domestic chores in the home, saying, "Why are you doing this? You are a boy." To which the son replied, "Didn't you know? I am your daughter." This was a gentle teasing, a kind of negative humor that both appreciates the other and suggests ambivalence.

Leaving Home

Over the past 35 years a number of *fa'afafine* have left their families to live in the town area. Some of these instances have involved work and school. Another significant reason for leaving has been a desire for a venue that was more akin to their temperaments and identities, and also a wish to be recognized for and to express, at least in certain social spaces, who they felt they were.

The issue of the recognition of a broader range of feminine sensibilities or new lifestyle choices, then, has always been salient for many *fa'afafine*. The aim in many instances has been for more concordance between how they were perceived and utilized in families and how they wanted to be viewed. One astute observer described part of their early dilemma in this way:

> When you grow up as a *fa'afafine*, I mean they ...don't plan the future on you, you know. ... That's how Samoan families are. The future is not planned on you. There's somebody else that they plan the future on. You're supposed to be just part of the family, take care of certain things ...That would be part of the reason why if there's a line of children ...only [certain] people would get their bills paid [to go to school], and the *fa'afafines*: "you can stay home, take care of the kids, take care of momma," you know and that frustrates them too... – Lea

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Apia, as it developed after independence, attracted some *fa'afafine* to town, sometimes for the reasons given by Lea. For others, the issue was lifestyle. The growing urban *fa'afafine* lifestyle in the 1960s and early 1970s became attractive and appealing.

Some *fa'afafine* are said to have been self-exiles from their families for reasons of the strict decorum and the quality of refinement that each family is obliged to exhibit, a point that Gerber (1975) has commented upon. Others considered themselves to be overworked. Some left their villages because of the strictness of elders, not being able to "talk back," reactions to their effeminate body language, and the general rules and regulations in villages. A *fa'afafine* who, without the proper decorum in some of the more conservative villages, could be expected to make his own choice and leave voluntarily. One person mentioned that they would be sure to "take the hint" and leave. This is also reported to be the case contemporarily.

This situation is, of course, not peculiar to *fa'afafine*. As Gerber (1975:81) points out, it would have been true to form for any family member who was a source of poor impressions to be sent away. *Fa'afafine* who "acted up" or hyperfeminized could certainly become an embarrassment to the family. Today, it is rare to see *fa'afafine* who dress up as Western women in the villages, although some have been seen to dress as Samoan women in traditional presentations.[24]

Erotic Substitutes for Women.

The erotic pleasuring relationship between *fa'afafine* and men appears to be analogous to other Polynesian societies (cf. Besnier, 1997; James, 1994; Levy, 1973, Mageo, 1992, 1997; Tcherkezoff, 1993). Before my recent research, I had already

worked out, that in Samoa, the accommodation of homoerotics related in part to kinship and friendship. I was to find a similar interpretation of an anonymous Melanesian society that Davenport studied:

> Men who behave thus are not regarded as homosexual lovers. They are simply friends or relatives, who, understanding each other's needs and desires, accommodate one another, thus fulfilling some of the obligations of kinship and friendship (Davenport, 1965:199-200).

One problem for unmarried men is the lack of availability of females, for reasons of propriety, compared with the availability of *fa'afafine* for casual pleasuring. Boys may avoid seeking out girls from the same village for a variety of reasons. Local village girls are, by custom, off limits to males. Male family members regulate the activities of girls, and many, if not most girls are undoubtedly self-regulating regarding erotics. Even the suggestion of a liaison can place adolescents in danger of shaming (Gerber, 1975:130). A pregnancy can put the reputations of both boys, girls and their families at risk. Thus, males seek out *fa'afafine* in part because they are available and undoubtedly to minimize risk. As one person put it:

> In the old days, the island ways, they're very religious. They have to keep the girl, you know, stay [a] virgin until they get married and all that sort of thing so ... usually if the boy loves his girl friend very much, he doesn't do anything to harm her before they get married, so it always ends up that they just go out and then take her back home and then he goes and finds "happiness" somewhere else, (he chuckles) you know. It's always a *fa'afafine* that he come across to, you know. ...In Samoa if the boys want to have sex, it's a natural thing to have sex with [a *fa'afafine*] ... Once they get married, they are men. They are married and they have full responsibility in the family that they look after their wife and look after their kids and stay that way right through to the end of their life.
> - Andrea

Not "unnaturally," then, a male's erotic experience may begin with a *fa'afafine*.

> Remember the first experience [for] a man, the first is with a *fa'afafine* before they ever have any girl. Because [in] those days our culture is so

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> strong, very strong. ... A girl can just get married around twenty-five and
> ... they never have sex and ...that's why I said their first experience was
> from a *fa'afafine* and then to a girl. – Pea

The notion that the first erotic contact for males is with a *fa'afafine* is undoubtedly a

subject for further investigation. Nevertheless, both primary and consistent erotic contact

between *fa'afafine* and unmarried men and youth is a widely held knowledge claim in

Samoa.

Erotic contact is one thing but relations with men can also produce an emotional

cost for the *fa'afafine* (see also Mageo, 1992). While some men have become attached to

fa'afafine and have had long term relationships with them, I have heard of few of these

men who do not eventually marry women. Thus, *fa'afafine* who become attached to

regular partners can get hurt when they are eventually left for a woman. This example is

not atypical:

> I once had a relationship ... for [many] years. Yes, and like we were so
> close and all that [time] I was jealous of him. He was jealous of me and all
> that but then ... I left for [overseas for a holiday]... I came back and he
> already had a girl friend who was pregnant. Then, from a woman's
> perspective, I looked at this as I don't want to hurt another person's
> feelings. I suppressed my own feelings and said to myself, "All right, we
> can be friends, good friends, no more than that." But he was still coming
> on, chasing me and all that. But then I drew the line.... I said to myself, "I
> don't want to hurt her (the girl friend's) feelings even though my feelings
> are hurt, but I respect that person, so then I ended the relationship there.
> So now we meet and we talk as good friends. – Malaga

For many *fa'afafine* the relationship with male friends is temporary. For some,

this is satisfactory. For others, it is not. In one village Pao has had a lengthy relationship

with Tavita, an unmarried man from his village. Pao says he loves him, but Tavita is

ambivalent, and has said that he could not go on forever with Pao. I asked Tavita when he

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thought his relationship with Pao would end. In front of Pao he replied, "We will finish

when I am married." But Pao has other ideas. He said to me in front of Tavita:

> But to me it won't finish even if he marries. I still love him.
> Q: So what will you do?
> A: Well I have to be with him and the wife.
> Q: Can you be with him and the wife?
> A: Just go *tafao*, visit.
> Q: OK.
> A: And talk with them. Well, maybe there comes a time that he won't
> sleep with the wife and he comes and sleeps with me.

The issue for young men like Tavita and other Samoan men who might like to get

closer to *fa'afafine*, is, in part, that permanent relationships between *fa'afafine* and men

are seldom condoned. As Schoeffel (1979) has pointed out there can be shame for men

who become involved with *fa'afafine*. There is no way to produce natural children from

such a liaison and having children can be paramount to the identities of Samoan men and

women. So some men may be trapped by social expectations in this regard. In addition, a

fa'afafine's sensibilities cannot always be respected or taken into consideration when

leaving them becomes inevitable.

A number of *fa'afafine* have said that the emotional aspect of relationships with

men can be absent. Pao has also echoed this notion. Tavita does not meet his emotional

needs. Tavita will not talk to him, comfort him nor give him the support he needs when

he is feeling down.

Referring to himself and a group of *fa'afafine* friends, Natana, who has spent a

number of years overseas, felt that it was easier to make emotional ties with non-Samoan

men overseas:

> ... We've spent quite a [bit of] time overseas and we found relationships
> overseas tend to be more lasting and more meaningful than relationships
> here in Samoa. I've ... tend[ed] to ask the reason why, and its because the

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same thing. Its the culture. Its the different cultural restrictions. Whereas overseas you don't have that sort of restrictions.

Q: Could you describe the differences to me?

A: OK. Well, a relationship with a person overseas you tend to be on a one to one basis and also it tends to last quite ... a long length of time until there's no relationship but with a relationship here its a very fragile type of relationship and if I happened to meet someone I really liked for one thing, I don't think it would be totally accepted in our society or in families and therefore its a very temporary type of arrangement ... and there's no sort of emotional ties or anything. Whereas overseas they tend to, you know, can last a considerable amount of time, cause we don't have these pressures, you know, the same sort of pressures that exist here. Its interesting isn't it? ... [Overseas] they have access to both an emotional release and also an [erotic] release. Here it's very difficult. Its just one way. – Natana

Some individuals have considered the possibility of a nurturing and more full life if *fa'afafine* lived together and divided their labor and affections in terms of their male and female "sides." This idea seems to contradict a widely held notion that *fa'afafine* avoid erotics with one another. This avoidance has been referred to as a taboo.

A brief excursus into this "taboo" is in order. It appears to be an appropriation of the avoidance taboo with respect to brothers and sisters. Here is one well-developed version of it:

> One reason is the family background. Samoan family, like any universal family, has a role whereby you ... inform the children of ... who your sexual relationships are to be with, you know. Not with your direct sister or brothers. You know, [you do it] with those who are not related to you. ... I identify myself in that similar role. I've got respect for the queens because they're more like... sisters and relatives to me. Now sleeping, making love to them is breaking that, well it's a taboo, you know. And ... that's a disrespect for me, for others and that will kill my conscience for as long as I live. – Manu

This example is very telling because it exhibits further aspects of the embedded kinship motifs held by some *fa'afafine* at this stage in the development of their collective

identity. It seems to support a kind of resistance to sensibilities found in overseas gay communities and illustrates the strength of the *fa'aSamoa* in defining social reality for some *fa'afafine*.

Personal Problems, Emotional Issues and Fears

The issues discussed in the previous section can have deeper consequences for *fa'afafine*. Some prefer casual relationships; some do not. As some *fa'afafine* mature and lasting relationships seem more remote, they have become resigned to having a series of affairs, which Mageo (1992) has also noted. Emotional malaise can derive from these kinds of relationships with men. Some older *fa'afafine* who have gone through devastating relationships advise younger *fa'afafine* how to take care of themselves emotionally, attempting to modify the latter's expectations that men will stay with them.

Samoans have told me that their language has no word for depression. The closest word is sadness. However, as many *fa'afafine* speak English, they know and use the word, "depression." Some have told me of their sadness and depression due to the instability of relationships. While one could find affairs, he was disturbed by the fact that "boys won't make commitments." This rude awakening for the very sensitive occurs at various stages in the life cycle. One person was hurt in his mid-twenties, another "devastated" in his thirties, and another in his forties. One is dealing with it currently.

One person described feelings of depression related to relationships with men in this way:

> Its very lonely you know, very lonely ... sometimes ...I just sit home and think about my life, how its going to be and growing [old] and getting ugly and all that. Nobody will like me and all that, and I said to myself, "well maybe one of these days when I look at myself that no more guys

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like me, OK, I'll commit suicide." Because when you get to that age you'll be rejected, you know. But I pray every night about it before I go to bed. I always pray [to] God to help me about my life and all that, because I don't think anybody can change what I am. I'll die with it anyway. – Pea

A well-known case who passed away years ago but who contributed to the

fa'afafine entering mainstream life in Apia in the 1960s had a long- term relationship. A

former associate describes the situation:

> Everyone accepted him the way he was, the way she was, and she dressed like a man but she had all the women's mannerisms and she did have a friend that she lived with, a partner, and I mean everyone accepted Lua the way you accept anybody else... What happened, Reeve, was that they separated. I think ... the male partner went and had a wife and left Lua and that broke her heart. In the end she died lonely and broken up in pieces. – Pata

Contemporarily, a case of suicide of one *fa'afafine* has been reported. It was related to an

unsatisfactory relationship. Suicide is a condition with which Samoans are acutely aware

(Macpherson and Macpherson, 1987).

While a framework for reflexive psychological analysis does not appear to be

widespread amongst the *fa'afafine*, a few of the current *fa'afafine* leadership have good

psychological insights, some do feel their situations, and as we have seen, they have

insight regarding their emotions. One individual who was indentured to the family and

not given the opportunities of other family members described *fa'afafine* in common

psychological terms.

> Well, we're very emotional people. I think it's the way we grew up. We...[went] ... through a lot of hard situations and it's really hard fighting to get to the top, you know, and getting what we want. So it's quite hard and its very painful when you come to a point where you get stuck. So its a very, very emotional ... situation.
> - Niu

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Niu has found the instability of her claims to womanhood quite painful at times and a source of depression:

> Yeh when you're in a relationship and you know, like somebody would say things, "Oh I wish you were a, you know,... a woman. ...Well if you're committed [and] you were born a woman everything would be much easier. ...Ah yeh, that can depress me. - Niu

A Samoan professional who is trained in psychology and has had professional dealings with *fa'afafine* described his perception of the psychological malaise of some. He suggests that it stems from a general lack of recognition, including difficulties within families:

> ... If they can't be able to be recognized in the families in the same level as others, they will do anything. Some of them... can go violent and become aggressive and become the black sheep in the family, like a self-imposed curse. Others would do other things, like in this area. So you know ... its ... a way by which they can be made known. Other times ... we're talking about, you know, psychological influence. It could have been they know that to have a *fa'afafine* in the family could be a disgrace ... and they're not happy with the way things are, so that they can get that self-imposed curse. I mean ... [they] will ... pay back a ... rebellious attitude to the family. – Paulo

Paulo, a trained researcher, felt that this was a hypothesis that was worth testing. I have also heard *fa'afafine* described as people without destinies. This theme pertains, I believe, to the fact that they don't marry, father children and in a Samoan sense, reach full maturity.

However, the notion of psychological malaise must be balanced against the fact that many *fa'afafine* have strong attachments to friends and family and are perceived to be creative, gregarious, outgoing, endearing, generous, sensitive, and compassionate. They provide a great deal of support to one another. They have been led and supported by compassionate and intelligent individuals. They also produce a great deal that is of value

to their society that is both appreciated and encouraged by others. The *fa'afafine* have had a number of allies and "patrons" over the years, in particular women. They belong to organizations in which they create their own solidarities, while at the same time contributing to society as a whole. More recently, professional status has provided a positive milieu for an increasing number, and a way out of the dilemma of "getting stuck" in social levels from which, at least in the past, there were few exits.

Fear of Growing Old

While age brings an almost automatic maturity and respect to the dimorphic genders, for some *fa'afafine* this project may have to be negotiated. For the dimorphic genders, old age initiates care by younger family members. Some *fa'afafine* have expressed a fear which is linked to the absence of children to look after them when they age:

> Of course it nags at you, you know... because you can't keep on doing this the rest of your life. You know, there's a time when you grow old, and when you're old... you can't do anything. You can't, you know, go around to nightclubs and enjoy yourself like what you're doing now, and so you sort of ...think about it and it crosses your mind sometimes and...
> Q: To settle down with a woman, you mean?
> A: No, no, not that. ...You think, "oh, you know, who's going to look after you." I'm saying on my own (about myself) because if other *fa'afafines* don't say it, is because they refuse to think about it or they're not even thinking about it, but in my case you know it is a bit of a worry for me, but who knows, we'll know when we get there.
> Q: You'll have a job, you'll have a pensions, you'll be able to look after yourself
> A: And I'm looking after my nephews and nieces really well, you know.
> - Misa

Some *fa'afafine* are educated and have jobs that pay pensions. However, old age pensions may be rather low and may have to be supplemented by other kinds of care and

by the presence of family members, for to be without family, even if one is materially

provided for, can be a source of psychological malaise. Thus, some hope that nieces and

nephews to whom they have been kind will reciprocate and care for them when they age.

> I don't worry about that because I think that I might not reach old age.
> [But if I do] my nieces and nephews should look after me when I'm old
> because they know I was looking after them while they were young. - Sasa

Some *fa'afafine* take great pains to care for nieces and nephews so as to position

themselves in such a way as to be taken care of in return.

> Well, I need someone, and maybe those nieces and nephews of mine will
> be the ones. That's why I treat them well. I feed them well; I do
> everything they want me to do for them. That's exactly why I do that
> because maybe they will be the ones who will look after me when I get
> old. When I sleep on the floor all the time hardly to get up. – Pao

However, nieces and nephews increasingly construct lives of their own when they grow

up, or move overseas and this kind of care is, therefore, not guaranteed.

There is also the possibility of the home for the aged in Apia, Mapuifagalele.

Operated by the Little Sisters of the Poor, it is a seeming anomaly in Samoa (Kotchek,

1980; Rhoads and Holmes, 1981). By custom, younger family members look after the

elderly. In spite of this, some Samoans feel that the best care for their elderly family

members is in the senior citizens' home. Urbanization, and perhaps the lack of available

family members at home may have brought about this position. Mapuifagalele may

become the only option for some *fa'afafine.*

Adopting Children

There are *fa'afafine* who adopt children to create normalized familial relations.

Heather Young Leslie (forthcoming) has reviewed the literature on adoption in Oceania.

Her work contains examples of adoption similar to those found in Samoa. Shore (1976)

distinguishes between two forms of Samoan adoption. A formally adopted child is a *tama fai*. A child who is simply fostered by others is called a *tausia* (Shore, 1976:166). Formal Samoan adoption is an acknowledgement by both parties, the adopters and the biological parents, or those who have jurisdiction over the child, that such a transaction has taken place. *Fa'afafine* have adopted in at least four cases of which I am aware. All other cases I know of have involved fosterage, although the term adoption is the most often used.

A number of reasons may motivate *fa'afafine* to adopt. To have children to support you in old age is a material hedge against incapacity (Schoeffel, 1979:100). It may also mitigate against emotional isolation as one *fa'afafine* respondent suggested. It is a further sign of *alofa*, esteem, of being respected in return after having served, nurtured or fostered others. As Schoeffel has pointed out, in Samoa it is said that people without children are to be pitied (Schoeffel, 1979:100). Adoption may also have a more materialistic aspect. As one respondent, who has a post graduate degree from an overseas university told me, adoption or fosterage is a system that also has investment parameters that are set within the traditional system:

> My wife's mother adopted another kid from [another village]. We're putting him through school. We're putting another guy through school too ... Now maybe that's where [the] Western system and our traditional system here in Samoa agree, right? But the way we go through it is different because we believe in *fa'alavelave*. We don't invest money in banks. For most of us, we invest in people. – Luka

Luka's explanation of investment is echoed throughout the country in various ways (Samoan politician, unpublished paper and personal communication). Some *fa'afafine* also adopt and foster in a manner that fits this investment strategy. Some want the experience of family and maturity. One in particular did not want to father children,

but preferred to adopt them. He explained that he was afraid that they might turn out like him, suggesting his resistance to being party to the genetic reproduction of the *fa'afafine*.

The *fa'afafine* who adopt or foster appear to be dedicated parents. Some have been able to construct their children's goals in a way that is compatible with both traditional and modern life. The children of *fa'afafine* are expected to serve (*tautua*) like other Samoan children. They prepare the meals, do the dishes, and tidy up the house. Most *fa'afafine* adopt from within their own families.

One individual has adopted a number of children from his siblings' families. Some live with him as his children. Some have grown up, moved overseas, and are supporting him through remittances.

Children greatly enrich the emotional lives of *fa'afafine*. Some *fa'afafine* have told me that they long for children or had a need for them. One person spent considerable time overseas with non-Samoan men and did not develop stable enough domestic situations in which to foster children and yet still longs for children:

> You cannot find anymore good looking guy or whatever, but if I have somebody to be settled down with, have a family, we can adopt a kid even though its too late. But I've always wish[ed] that I can have a kid, you know, like to adopt maybe a niece or a nephew of mine, because I love playing with children, sharing with kids and all that. But maybe for [the] long run if, I don't know, maybe I'll find somebody that wants to be settled down and start things again and of course I will. As long [as] ... it makes me happy. You know. – Nina

Lack of Respect and Struggles for Recognition

While this chapter has covered some of the issues that *fa'afafine* have experienced over time, these resolve ultimately into notions of recognition, inclusion, and respect.

Reflecting on the 1960s and 1970s, Fa'afetai points out that for many Samoans the issue regarding the *fa'afafine*, was one of the presentation of the body:

> It's the way they walked and the way they dressed up. Especially the half caste people. They didn't like that kind of person around. – Fa'afetai

I asked whether with more Western descriptions of the *fa'afafine*, perhaps garnered through contact with New Zealanders, such as "poufter", were ever applied to them. Fa'afetai replied:

> In fact that's what they used to call them. Poufters. But it was always more polite to say that they were *fa'afafines* than anything else. Or the *malas*. ... You know they don't mind, they know that they are talked [about] behind their [backs], [but] whenever they walked down the street they always are talked [about] behind their backs, [and people] were booing them....

One respondent who has seen the *fa'afafine* struggle and develop over the years has discussed the latter's historical search for recognition:

> And the need to gain respectability, you know, it's always [been] because ... the *fa'afafine* are always the ones that would do the work at home and do the *feau, tautua*, like that. So, you know, [their] main aim in life is to gain respectability. But its like any other problem in society, like any other minority group in society, the need to identify. – Ake

In Ake's account, respectability does not equate with domestic work. The issue of respect for the *fa'afafine*, became associated with their new independence and collective behaviors in Apia after Samoan independence where new forms of work could aggrandize status. In addition, during the large-scale migration into town that began in the 1960s, the urban and many rural *fa'afafine* attempted to find recognition, solidarity and respect for a new, more feminine identity. As an early *fa'afafine* leader put it:

> ...We [were] trying to tell them... we, [are] just like ladies. Whatever, we are men, but the emotions, the feelings we've got, you understand, just like ladies. –Lesa

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This lack of recognition, when it occurred in the early days, often related to the *fa'afafine's* non-Samoan "antics" and their erotic practices. As regards erotics, *fa'afafine* could be extremely vulnerable if they gave too much. They could be called unflattering names. Some also associated themselves with a few town women of various statuses, some of whom were elite and well educated or part of their organizational activities, and a few of whom, it is said, had similar, seemingly open interests in men. Impression management became important as their collective presence and informal organization in the town area began to develop in the late 1960s.

The 1960s and early 1970s saw an extended network begin to form made up of town and village *fa'afafine*. Some of these individuals feminized their appearances to a degree. Some of the now noticeable *fa'afafine* became objects of positive interest, mostly, it is said, by the "well educated." They also became objects of some negative attention.

Fa'afafine organizing of the time can be characterized by a gradual move on the part of an emerging leadership in Apia to create solidarities within this growing collective. They also attempted to find and project a public identity that demonstrated their usefulness to the community, and which to an extent masked activities that impugned their identities. They attempted to gain entrance into certain reciprocal relationships on terms that were palatable to them and others. Although these initiatives were intentional, they were not highly rationalized at first. The *fa'afafine* were also involved in creating, expressing, and, at times, defending new forms of feminine identity.

I have argued earlier why *fa'afafine* can differ from other Samoans in a structural sense and what the consequences of that difference has been for some. I have further

argued, as they have, that it is some of these differences, along with structural changes, that lead to the beginnings of their movement. Theirs was always a struggle for recognition and acceptance as individuals worthy of respect, but in an emerging form that they were beginning to project publicly. This struggle continues and has been contextualized in the following way by one astute pastor who knew them well:

> I think one of the things is the struggle for recognition as individuals. ...They [wanted]... to catch the eye of the public to whatever they are and what they can be. — Timo

The pastor has also caught the notion of the desire for the recognition of their potential in his remarks.

Summary

My intention, as I have implied in the introduction to this chapter, is not to overstate the case regarding the issues that the *fa'afafine* have faced, but merely to show that there was a case and that it contained a range of referents that has remained in the memories of both *fa'afafine* and other Samoans. I have argued that their issues were not sufficient cause to initiate the activities in which they engaged. They did, however, contribute to the circumscription of the personal and collective identities of this group and informed some of the remedies regarding inclusion that they produced.

Having provided some background on Samoa and the *fa'afafine*, the next four chapters draw upon history, biography, and social theory to present the *fa'afafine's* collective behaviors and activities from the period circa the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s, which is the main focus of this study. The data for these chapters relate to identity, the mobilization of resources, leadership, and sites where identity could be constructed

and maintained. Structural instability in Samoa, sport, and the projection of the drag queen form will be explored as elements that became part of the *fa'afafine's* search for recognition of an identity of an idiomatic kind. This identity was based, in part, on their Samoan identities, experiences overseas, "cognitive liberation," their notion of rights, unique goals, and an attempt to endear the *fa'afafine* to the Apia community. These chapters will also consider the role of local political processes, pre-existing networks, leadership, and elites in the *fa'afafine's* activities.

Chapter 7: "Hollywood" and the Origins of the *Fa'afafine* Movement

They were really struggling at times because they weren't understood by a lot of people. Whereas, before they may have existed in their villages ..., there was no network between the villages, but during my time, and I think it was during that village to city movement, that a lot of them came into town, stayed there, and set up headquarters you know, so there was a lot of networking then during that period.

> - a *fa'afafine* describing the early 1970s

Whenever a *fa'afafine* would come to town they would always look for Hollywood.

> - a mentor of the 1970s

A number of scholars have discussed the role of havens, sites and free spaces in social movement activity (Melucci, 1989; Evans and Boyte, 1992; Gamson, 1992; Herbst, 1994; Fantasia and Hirsch, 1995; Taylor and Whittier, 1995.) As we shall see in a later chapter, sport has also produced examples of the use of free spaces as sites in which collective identity can be displayed and constructed through forms of embodiment. This chapter will explore one particular space that became pivotal to the development of the *fa'afafine* as a collective entity in Samoa. It was a small tailor shop in the Saleufi district of Apia. That shop became known as "Hollywood."[25]

Networks: The Origins of Hollywood

All of the schools of social movement scholarship posit the importance of pre-existing networks in the development of collective behaviors and movement activity.

Hollywood and the *fa'afafine* movement started with a network of friends who eventually became tailors. The *fa'afafine* tailors occupied the Hollywood space from the mid-1960s until 1978.

One individual remembered *fa'afafine* tailors in Samoa as early as the 1940s. The first that anyone could remember by name was called Nancy. She is remembered as a person who was feminine but who did not cross-dress. Nancy died in the mid-1960s, having first turned her shop over to a younger *fa'afafine* friend named Toma. Nancy was by many accounts a popular tailor whose clientele included elite members of the pre-independence *afakasi* group as well as highly placed Samoans. Through her contacts with this elite, Nancy had access to venues that other Samoans did not. She was occasionally invited to the Returned Servicemen's Association club, known as the RSA, that restricted their membership to high society, the norm in colonial Samoa.

Prior to its move to the Saleufi district, Nancy's shop was on the second floor of a building on Beach Road, across from the aforementioned RSA. Nancy briefly utilized the Saleufi property. Toma, who occupied the Saleufi property after Nancy's death was friends with four other *fa'afafine*: Elisa, Doris, Lesa, and Anita. Toma passed on his skills to some of them.

The tailors at the Saleufi venue developed an excellent reputation for their work. They had many clients from all walks of life, including elite families. They were also very sociable, had established networks into both the *fa'afafine* and the general community in Apia. As a result of these associations and their skills as tailors, Hollywood, which acquired its name circa 1968, soon became more than a tailor shop. It became a meeting place for the friends of the group, other town *fa'afafine*, and *fa'afafine*

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who visited town. It also became a "salon" for other Samoans, males and females, somewhat analogous to those that Herbst (1994) writes about in her discussion of alternate social spaces in pre-revolutionary Paris. Women who appreciated their talents as designers brought their tailoring to them, while at the same time enjoying their company. Women who sought distance from their husbands could also be found there. Other women were networked to Hollywood through kinship ties. Some men came for tailoring.

Overseas migration, which produced many changes in Samoa after independence, resulted in changes to Hollywood as well. By the late 1960s, two of the four original tailors had moved overseas. Once the immigration dust had settled, only Anita and Lesa remained as the principals at Hollywood, a space that they would occupy for more than ten years. Anita, who, as we shall see, had remarkable qualities of leadership, had by her mid-twenties matured into a capable and astute individual. Although she was younger than Lesa, a status which would normally diminish one's rank in the generalized Samoan gerontocracy, Anita became, due to her talents and maturity, the primary leader of an emerging *fa'afafine* collective which, by the late 1960s was beginning to take form.

Anita's leadership skills were powerful, and I shall return to a description of her later. First, however, I would like to describe Hollywood in more detail, using the recollections of a few generations of Samoans from both the town area and the villages who experienced it or were changed by it. I would also like to suggest the significance of this space in the *fa'afafine* transformation as a metaphor for some of the transformations happening in general in Samoa at that time that have been modeled, in part, in the chapter on complex reproduction.

How did the space get named "Hollywood"? I have heard a number of explanations. This is the most consistent one:

> Like we look at the movies and call ourselves, "Oh this is where all the actresses [are] from". So we called the place Hollywood. - Moli

One respondent suggested that Anita herself, with her known creativity, may have named it Hollywood. The notion of the Hollywood *fa'afafine* as actresses may refer to the modest cross-dressing and feminine activities being expressed there. Another possibility is that the name came as a result of the *fa'afafine's* obsession with the movies. Many of them would regularly attend the Tivoli theatre. It was just a short walk from Hollywood.

The Tivoli theatre was Apia's all-purpose venue for movies, weddings, boxing tournaments, and the annual New Years ball. When the Hollywood *fa'afafine* attended the cinema they would mix with all levels of Samoan society. They sometimes sat as a group in the balcony where, it is recalled, some would react in their own ways to the movie being played. Some *fa'afafine* "girl names" like Anita, Mitzi and Sophia are said to have been appropriated from the names of actresses who acted in the films, or characters from films that showed every week at the Tivoli. One of the Hollywood group's first protegees recalls:

> So Sunday's always their movie night ... if there's a movie that's like a musical or something where an actress is ... very much involved ...those are the kinds of movies they always go [to]... like if there's an actress that comes with a lot of nice makeup, dresses. They wouldn't go to war movies. [They preferred] singing, musical types of movies. - Moli

There can be little doubt that the appropriation of the name Hollywood had to do, in part, with the notion of glamour that these individuals espoused and with which they

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wished to be associated. It also, in a sense, defined their niche in terms of the novel feminine display forms with which they were identified in the town area.

Hollywood: Collective Behavior and Emergent Norms

The Hollywood *fa'afafine* were perceived by some to be "outrageous" and fun. They appropriated outside cultural forms that were sometimes expressed in the body displays of Western women. The Hollywood space allowed them to ignore some Samoan dignity displays in ways that were endearing for some observers, if not for others. From Hollywood they networked into the general community, volunteering to help others and participating in community projects like the talent contest I witnessed in 1978. While the original group were town people and had already found a niche, their new behaviors also led to the type of denigration that has been discussed earlier and upon which Schoeffel (1979) has also commented. As some have said, they weren't well understood in those days. They would later teach other *fa'afafine* how to deal with this sort of negativity.

One of the clients of the Hollywood tailors discusses the Hollywood space and its social purposes:

> ... And that's why they stuck together in this little area at Saleufi so as they could all sort of back each other up ... so to speak, or get each other's support. ... Because I know they all used to congregate there and the more I think about it now, the more I can still see the building, the tiny little building and little rooms and each one had their own little, it was like little rabbit hutches you know ... Because I know they all used to congregate there. - Fern

One of the early tailors recalls the eventual transformation of the Saleufi venue from sewing shop to the more active space it was to become circa 1965:

> Oh. (he chuckles in disbelief). It's amazing. ... We all lived in there. We started off (by coming) over there in the day and work[ing] and then [went] home at night, get changed and [went] out [for the evening]. All of a sudden we start[ed] bringing our clothes, and bringing our clothes and all of a sudden we started to live there, and stay there all the time, work and sleep. ... So my bed was underneath the table where they cut the sewing. That's my bed. Toma's bed was on top of the table ... and in the room they were using as a sleeping room was Anita, ... and all the young new ones that [came] over there. - Elisa

Some of the shelves in the shop also served as bunk beds at night. The "young new ones" mentioned by Elisa were the *fa'afafine* who eventually came to use Hollywood as a kind of "group home" and meeting place over the years, some having left their villages or families. At Hollywood they came under the influence of older *fa'afafine* who helped them to take care of themselves in this new materialistic world which they did not entirely understand.

The Hollywood leadership had already appropriated the commoditized world of the town. They understood that money meant status. They were urban, relatively well educated, talented, and somewhat cosmopolitan. They collectively demonstrated conspicuous consumption, as did other urban Samoans.

The Hollywood tailors found self-esteem through their status as paid professionals. As Elisa, describing the 1960s put it:

> But once we know how to sew and all that sort of thing ...and we start to do that to earn our money...the same as those business people, ...what the hell... we've got the same money as them. We go to the bar. They buy their drink, we buy our drinks from the bar, so we don't look for anything from them. We can earn our own livings ... If a Samoan person smoked a Salem in those days you'll have a millionaire in those days, and here were [*fa'afafine*], we all smoke Salems. When we go to a bar, each of us got a packet of Salem(s) in front of us from the bar. We sit on the stool, you know, we said to ourselves "Why not?" Because people always think that we're just roaming the streets, we've got no money, we've got nothing. So let's show them we can earn our money and we can smoke the expensive cigarettes like them. - Elisa

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The early Hollywood tailors were alumni of the Marist Brothers school in Apia.

They grew up in the Taufusi district where a number of Catholics lived. Another

fa'afafine, also an *afakasi* alumnus of the Marist school who had her own business, but

who remained attached to the Hollywood group out of friendship and solidarity,

remembers the cohesion that was forming in those days at Hollywood:

> They all sort of come there in the evenings and they all sit around, tell
> stories and then later on they go out and "patrol," you know what I mean?
> - Lelei

"Patrol" was the pursuit of men and pleasure, a pursuit that was eventually to result in a

poor public identity and imputations of prostitution and thievery for some.

In a suddenly independent and transforming society, Apia was open to all

Samoans and Hollywood attracted *fa'afafine* from all walks of life, both urban and rural.

Village and family life was of the type we have described previously. It was

circumscribed by chores at home, *tautua* to elders, church activities, and sports. It was

also undoubtedly circumscribed for some by strict display rules. Patrolling for men was

something new.

One *fa'afafine* from a remote village describes the impact that Hollywood had on

him in the early 1970s:

> I was about thirteen, fourteen years old ... Well, as far as I can
> remember...I was very naive. But the only thing I can remember ... was
> ... we sort of relied on those [older ones]. We were the younger ones and
> we looked at them and they were our role models. ... Because Anita had a
> place (Hollywood). Everyone would flock around to her place and she was
> our role model. – Misa

We will see what sort of role model she was in the next chapter.

The appeal of Hollywood went beyond its influence on the young *fa'afafine*. A number of the Hollywood *fa'afafine* were well educated by the standards of the day. In fact a few were teachers at various stages in its development. For some, a life at Hollywood had been weighed against the status of the teaching profession and often won out. The expression of new sensibilities and identities that Hollywood enabled was too appealing, and some left the teaching profession to take up sewing and live a less constrained, somewhat more urban lifestyle at Hollywood. In addition, sewing could pay better than teaching.

Then, unlike today, the outer islands had no *fa'afafine* subculture, few if any bars, or hotels, and no equivalent to Apia. This meant that *fa'afafine* professionals assigned to these remote areas could only come into town once a week at best. One *fa'afafine* describes her decision to leave a steady job in a remote area and move to Hollywood.

> I really wanted to come to where my heart was, you know. ...It's not that I wanted to be a woman. I was a woman ... And despite my mom, you know, [asking me to] tell [her] of my whereabouts ... I just ignore[d] it, you know. And when I came back ...whether she scolded me, [or] told me off or what, I just didn't listen. I [didn't] care... I realized this is my right place. It really satisfied me and I was interested in it and I realized "Oh, this is where exactly I should be." Plus the friendship amongst the members ... and the understanding. We were really, we were as, we were girls. We were not called *malas* [there], you know. Once we were together, we were girls and we did all girls thing. - Marina

While some *fa'afafine* of the period were associated with indolence, because they had left home and were not supporting their families, some balanced the lifestyle emanating from Hollywood with their commitments to family. One person was deeply involved in the economic and social life of his family. He had a number of dependents, many of whom he eventually sent to New Zealand.

Hollywood began to grow in reputation and the number of *fa'afafine* who

congregated there increased. It was a place that nurtured the transformation of *fa'afafine*

from their traditional to an emerging new form. As a respondent, one of a few female

members of their collective observed, in just a few years after it got started Hollywood

> ... Was like the home for all the *malas* to come and go, you know.
> Wherever they come from they['re] always gonna find Hollywood. Once
> they get to Hollywood they might not be real, fully *malas* then, but the
> minute they get to Hollywood the whole thing changed. Their whole
> attitude changed. They started going out and then looking at other *malas*.
> Copying what the other *malas* are doing. - Fa'afetai

It appears from Fa'afetai's depiction that these emergent norms were taking effect

very early. Increasing numbers of *fa'afafine* became associated with Hollywood and

began feminizing their appearances, or began moving about in groups projecting a new

identity and solidarity in town. *Fa'afafine* who came into town with their families, for

education, or to sell agricultural staples at the market, would inevitably end up at

Hollywood for a visit. The *fa'afafine* held barbecues and parties with their friends at an

outdoor space behind Hollywood that was called "the courtyard." These friends included

men, women, and couples.

It has been difficult to determine the exact number of *fa'afafine* who were directly

involved or networked to Hollywood. The accounts vary from around thirty or more in

the late 1960s to early 1970s, to fifty or more towards the end of the tenure of the tailors

at Hollywood. These numbers would not necessarily include others who would come in

from remote areas and just drop in. However, one individual with an excellent memory,

recalled thirty-five *fa'afafine*, many of them by name, who lived in the town area in the

mid-1960s who were associated with the Hollywood tailors. A number of people have

mentioned that all of the town *fa'afafine* and many from the rural areas were part of this network. Another person recalled many *fa'afafine* "hanging out", outside the Hollywood building, in "the courtyard", or on the street, waiting to get in to visit Anita and the other tailors. They undoubtedly felt comfortable in the social and "moral space" that Hollywood and its environs represented.

The Hollywood leaders were individuals to be emulated. They were self-employed, knew the ropes and so impressed many of the rural and young, urban *fa'afafine* as to be irresistible. Fa'afetai, who was a regular there also observed that the *fa'afafine* in charge at Hollywood:

> ... Made everyone else feel welcome. The older *malas* were always there to try and calm the little ones down... [to advise] them [how] to have a better life, or keep them away from crime and all that stuff. And they always get told by the older *malas*, "If you got out with a guy, you do not steal their wallet! You do not do anything stupid because it's a small place. The cops will be on you." – Fa'afetai

If without employment, a few *fa'afafine* would sometimes get involved in crime. Thus Hollywood became a place where impression management would take place and where the negative identity imputations (McAdam, 1994) of others could be addressed.

Although throughout Samoa's recent history some *fa'afafine* became potential objects of police constraint in the legal sense, some of their positive associations in the early days were with policemen. Some policemen patronized the Hollywood tailors. Anita had ties to the police through friendships she had made. Respondents mention a number of high-status males, including members of parliament, as clients.

Hollywood was also a site that was known for pleasuring for them and their male friends. It is perhaps in the early Hollywood period that the identities of some *fa'afafine* became more closely associated with prostitution in the town area.

Solidarity And Community

There was, however, more to Hollywood than tailoring and erotics. The main purpose of the group that was forming around Hollywood in the early years, circa 1970, has been described as activity whose goal was to establish a community. I believe the following account by one of the early members of the Hollywood group best encapsulates the agenda of the leadership:

> ... They were trying their best to bring together all the *malas*. Once they [knew] that you're a *mala*, then they [tried] to attract you, and to build up this society, and to tell the world that we are what we are, and please accept us as what we are. And also so we can be friends, you know, so that no *mala* can hate the other *mala* ... don't have any negative feeling against each other. We were just [to] be friendly, strengthen up this body and tell the people who we are. – Molesi

Thus, the goal of the principals at Hollywood involved the production of identity and acceptance as well as solidarity. Another individual who became actively involved by the mid-1970s noted:

> It was a group of people with common interests, same values, same problems, so they came together and started up their own family and community, and it was really based around the older *fa'afafine* who were doing well, especially the self-employed ones in the dress-making industry. So from there they sort of met up with a lot wider sector of the society you know... and it grew. - Tala

The leadership at Hollywood remained by some accounts very Samoan in their outlooks, sensibilities, the ordering of their lives, and most certainly, in their relations

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with others in their families and the general community. Thus, a certain worldliness aside, the strength of culture in shaping actions that were both intentional and day-to-day, was in Swidler's (1986, 1995) sense, the context in which this change was produced. While Apia provided sites where new display forms could be tried out, these trials were embedded within some Samoan social forms.

Hollywood was organized into the age hierarchy that is characteristic of Samoa. The older *fa'afafine* undoubtedly excepted displays of respect (*fa'aaloalo*) from their younger associates, including those who were part of their more extended network. Yet, while minding these considerations, they privileged themselves, and received a certain privilege with respect to the differences for which they had become known, and in part accepted, amongst certain sectors of the population. These assumed privileges would also lead to an "antagonist field" (Hunt et al. 1994).

Not surprisingly, one participant has characterized the solidarities between *fa'afafine* as a kind of associative kinship and therefore quite Samoan:

> ... Our kind of people ... we don't think of getting married and have families and that. We are more like our own family. Another *fa'afafine* is our family... The older *fa'afafine* ... look after the young ones and try to push the young ones away from the life that we came through and let them go to school and educate themselves for a better future for the *fa'afafine*, you know? - Anela

Anela's notion is not unlike Weston's (1991) analysis of associative kinship among gays in the West. The family atmosphere at Hollywood was a combination of their sensibilities, common interests and problems, emerging lifestyles, and some fundamental elements of the Samoan family system which most if not all *fa'afafine* understood. They promoted, as Anela has noted, higher goals for some of the young *fa'afafine*, such as staying in school. At least two of the early group had been teachers.

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They undoubtedly understood what it was to be educated in the Western sense and the opportunities that education could provide, in particular for *fa'afafine*.

In cases of emergencies or tragedies amongst the *fa'afafine* or their consanguine families, other elements of the Samoan kinship motif related to the *fa'alavelave* would come into play. For example, upon the death of an associate, the *fa'afafine* would often gather as associative kin and participate in the traditional supportive *fa'alavelave* material exchanges as kin. Andrea explains:

> Because we don't have a wife and kids, we are that person's family. We are his kids, we are his wife, we are his whatever, you know, because in Samoa if someone died, there's something called a *paolo*. Like my brother died and then the *paolo* came. That *paolo* means that's the family of him. So when this [*fa'afafine*] friend of ours died we go as his family. So we give whatever we put all together, and take it for the family.

The notion of their associative kinship had caused me to wonder about the substantive differences between the "*fa'afafine* family" and the traditional Samoan family. Andrea suggested that it simply had to do with their emerging femininity and expressiveness:

> It's different in some ways. Different in some ways, because once we get together we talk freely, enjoy ourselves, we don't have to hold anything back, but in your family you can't talk the way you talk with your friends because some members of your family still don't accept you as a girl or whatever, you know. - Andrea

Another individual described their association at Hollywood as a fellowship.

Some display rules could be abrogated at Hollywood. They could talk and act out freely, while at the same time behaving as Samoans in terms of their social organization. To this day some remnants of this group emphasize the "Samoaness" of their sensibilities, while still displaying less-constrained behaviors at times.

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The gerontocracy that prevailed at Hollywood, characteristic of all Samoan families, is one in which the young *fa'afafine* served the elders (*tautua*), waiting their turn to graduate to positions of higher responsibility and status. I was not surprised to learn that the leadership usually took the initiative both informally and formally and left the younger ones to *tautua* in a fashion similar to a Samoan family. A traveler to Samoa would notice that when elders speak, the young listen, and this was deemed to be the case with the Hollywood *fa'afafine*.

The Hollywood group, while producing emergent forms of behavior, observed salient aspects of Samoan etiquette. For example guests, friends, or clients would often be fed, in particular at noon hour, should they be in the shop. Some came in just to chat, be sociable, and partake of a meal.

Resource Mobilization

The Hollywood group also mobilized resources. They raised funds amongst themselves for various projects. These resources were used for donations to others, travel to other islands and overseas, for their netball activities, parties, and running Hollywood on an informal social basis. They would later find human resources through their networks into the community. The traditional Samoan after-church Sunday meal held at Hollywood was also an occasion for some associates to bring resources.

> We have *to'ona'i* on every Sunday where each *mala* ... brought his own food. Whatever she could, she brought. We put them together. We donated money. We collected sums every Sunday. - Molesi

These informal gatherings would eventually become part of more formal forms of organization. Hollywood, ultimately, became a mobilizing structure for many *fa'afafine*.

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A Haven for Women

Hollywood also became known as a haven for some women needing comfort or support:

> Hollywood, too, was a refuge for women when they had their little *"misa"* (quarrel) with their husbands. And they found refuge in Hollywood. Anita and [others], they used to bring peace to the families. They either called the husband or brought the wife back to the husband and sort[ed] things out. Or the wife would take the older *malas* out for a drink in the bars and pour out their hearts. - Makerita

The reasons for these contacts with women were many. The town *fa'afafine*, like Anita, had a history of association with women. Some of their female supporters who could be found at Hollywood had been friends or associates from childhood, or had other contacts with them. These kinds of associations in this, a small community, readily carried over into adult life. Some women may have found the *fa'afafine* at Hollywood simply charming and "real," and more interesting than men. For the *fa'afafine*, the relationships with their women friends were likewise rewarding. They shared intimacies, gentle teasing, and confidences. Matters of conscience with respect to the *fa'afafine* and women were contextualized by deep-rooted affinities. This conviviality created solidarities which some women and *fa'afafine* value to this day.

Early Relationships With Elites

According to a number of respondents the *fa'afafine* tailors had supporters among the educated, as well as Samoan elites:

> In society in those days the *fa'afafine* were accepted by the educated people. They loved the *fa'afafine*. They were always out of the closet with respect to interacting with the educated. That's why they were so popular.

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> They were the people who introduced fashion to women. I'm telling you the truth because this is what happened. - Tauvela

"Out of the closet" in this case does not refer to erotics or identity, but simply means socially attached and accepted. It would be an exaggeration to say that all educated Samoans appreciated them and that all of the *fa'afafine* were appreciated. Tauvela's point is well made, however, as Hollywood was undoubtedly a comfortable place both for the *fa'afafine* and their protagonists and friends. These were tolerant Samoans who either through tailoring, friendship, education, kinship, or acculturation, had grown used to, enjoyed, and appreciated them and the creative and affective projections that emanated from their shop.

Arbiters of Fashion

Another, perhaps as important, link between *fa'afafine* and women, and some men, was the fact that the Hollywood tailors were very much arbiters of fashion. They would show appreciation to women for their looks, or fashionable attire, and would design flattering fashions and accoutrements for them. Compliments were something that males would not usually provide. There was a bond between *fa'afafine* and many women over style. One woman remembers this:

> ... They will always be the first one to admire "the lovely earrings, the beautiful dress, where did you get your shoes." They have the eye for this quality you know ... But its very hard for a male in our society to go up and say "Gosh you look beautiful." Just to any stranger. ... But I mean for a *fa'afafine* it's very easy to move, to walk straight up to a woman that would look beautiful. - Ake

Some *fa'afafine* had the status to banter with elite women and compliment them in a backhanded way which was appreciated by both. As Ake jokingly explains:

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> [They] either admire [you] or [are] very catty. They say "Oh I hate you!"
> or something like that. (We both laugh)... And then the women would say,
> "Yeh, I hate you too...!" (we laugh).

Hollywood became a center for men's fashions as well.

Hollywood As Salon

Hollywood as it developed in its urban setting also was a center for local news:

> Everybody has to meet over there, you know. If you want to know the
> latest news ... that's where you go, cause ... all the girls go there to [get]
> their clothes [sewn] and the *fa'afafine* always interview them for what was
> blah, blah (current), so if you want something about Samoa or the latest
> news, you just go to Hollywood. That's where you get [it], its a gossip
> place, you know (she laughs). - Pea

With the growing amount of activity surrounding it, Hollywood became known to

a wide variety of people, and for some it was a local icon:

> So wherever you are in town ... you hop into the taxi, just tell them to take
> you to Hollywood. Taxi will take you right there. - Moli

Mentoring and Resocializing of the Young

As part of their commitment to their younger associates, the Hollywood

leadership began to manage the lives of some of the younger *fa'afafine*, based on the

potential that they saw in them, as well as the vision of merit for all *fa'afafine* that they

had been developing. The problematic of "potential" is by many accounts quite typical

of some Samoan families: they delegate various tasks and roles to family members based

on what family authorities think best for the family. Those families that could afford it

sent those deemed educable on for further education. Upon graduation they were

expected to contribute to the family through their work. In the Hollywood paradigm,

potential was somewhat more individualistic.

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One of the commitments of the Hollywood leadership was to foster some *fa'afafine* who had showed potential, as well as those who were somewhat lost in the modern world that Apia was becoming. There was also an attempt to develop skills that were transportable, and which could serve families if need be, but if *fa'afafine* had been ignored by families, they could utilize their developed potential as individuals.

The Hollywood leadership also stressed the importance of education. A person who was attracted by the lifestyle emanating from Hollywood in the late 1960s was taken to task by the leadership and forced to abandon his extra-curricular activities in order to concentrate on his formal education. This attempt to get him to prioritize his goals meant education first and the *fa'afafine* life second. The Hollywood tailors also tried to teach sewing skills to some of the younger *fa'afafine*.

A *fa'afafine* who came to Hollywood in 1969 and was one the first "graduates" of the Hollywood "school" of tailoring recalls the tack taken by the leadership.

> Well [at] that time we tried to help the little ones that went out of school without jobs. So we [took] them in and then started them cooking the food, cleaning the house, hemming the dresses and then teach[ing] them how to cut and sew. That way they'll have a job for themselves instead of going on the street. So that ... was the purpose... - Moli

This motif was reproduced over at least a decade. Typically, the young *fa'afafine* who became involved in this apprenticeship/mentoring system served the elders while learning at the same time. Moli describes this relationship in more detail:

> [Anita would have] me stay ... at night-time and work and she'll go to a movie and then [she'd say], "I want you to finish all this ... by the time I come back from the movies." I have to stay and finish all the stuff.
> ... And when it was our time, when the [new ones] come in, then we'll go with [the older ones] to the movies and let [the new ones] work and do the cooking and ... all that stuff... clean the house, hem the dresses, put the buttonholes on, and then when they know how to use the machine and

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> stuff, the [next batch] comes in, they come up see, ... and [eventually] they get to go to the movies. It was nice. – Moli

This relationship was "nice," I believe, because it was predictable and stable and was reproduced somewhat like a Samoan family, in addition to providing skills. At work was a modified Samoan motif that was familiar and comfortable. The young who were involved in this hierarchy undoubtedly wanted to serve the elders in order to maintain normalcy in a Samoan manner. That is, they would have trusted that *alofa* and *tautua* for others would result in esteem and stability for them. They appear to have lived the Samoan adage that service would eventually lead to, if not authority, most certainly privilege. If, however, they got out of hand, they would be punished.

This arrangement was a powerful one and was reproducing itself outside of Hollywood until mid-1998. However, with the untimely death of one of the original apprentices in August 1998, almost thirty years after she first became involved at Hollywood, the *fa'afafine* tailoring trade as it was organized at Hollywood has, for all intents and purposes, come to an end. One of her former *fa'afafine* apprentices is now tailoring as are two older tailors, but it remains to be seen whether the former reproduces this form of mentoring or not. A number of the graduates of the Hollywood school of tailoring eventually set up their own shops or businesses, or moved overseas where they continued in the tailoring trade.

Within the core group at Hollywood and its extended network was a range of skills for dealing with both the public and the *fa'afafine*. These individuals emerged and left over the years. Some have been called "intellectuals," one individual was described as "the psychiatrist," and another "cracked the whip." Early on, another individual who

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was networked to Hollywood, insisted that the *fa'aSamoa* be taken into account in their dealings with the public, other Samoan entities, and with one another. As someone suggested, that individual came into the group on the "*fa'aSamoa* ticket."

Recruitment

Recruitment into this network usually occurred by word of mouth or invitation. Village *fa'afafine* may have heard of Hollywood or seen the town *fa'afafine* feminize their appearances. A few of these individuals would try to carve out territory of their own in the town area. The leadership at Hollywood were territorial themselves. They felt that the young *fa'afafine* from the villages were certain to get into trouble, which was sometimes the case. There was also the matter of authority or *pule* and the management of impressions. The Hollywood group wanted to regulate the subculture. For reasons of impression management they also wanted control over the "identity imputations" of others in order to save reputations from the influence of the unsophisticated *fa'afafine*. They were always watchful for those who attempted to glamorize themselves without coming to Hollywood.

The leadership made a point of meeting and involving the younger *fa'afafine*, especially those from the villages. One *fa'afafine* who became involved with Hollywood in the late 1960s recalls:

> Once they knew and found out that you're a *mala* then they started to grab you. So I was really accepted, and also when I came there, they used to have these netball games. It was just friendly games every evening … And that's where also I started to sneak away from home during night-times and spend time with them, and sometimes when I was sent to go to school, I didn't go. I went there and have fun with them during the day, and when … I knew school was over, so I just went back home, pretending that I was in school, but I was not. - Lama

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I did not find out whether or not the leadership took Lama to task for skipping school.

Young, village *fa'afafine* who came to Apia sometimes faced ritual hazing if they did not conform to the expectations of the Hollywood leadership. One individual put it this way with respect to the aggressive initiatives to involve the new arrivals:

> It also [was] a very straight and forceful way, you know ... of meeting them. – Ioane

Boundary Markers as Solidarity

Besides the weekly trip to the movies, the bars, netball, and the production of "girl names" for the *fa'afafine*, the elder *fa'afafine* would satirically appropriate Western terms for their hierarchy and for the various tasks that were to be performed at Hollywood. For example, during one period in Hollywood's evolution the young *fa'afafine* tailors at the bottom rung of the hierarchy were called "typists." These young people did the hemming or installed the buttons. The people taking clients' measurements were referred to as the "secretaries." Those who were responsible for starting the morning pot of tea were referred to as "tea ladies."[26] This humorous "cultural appropriation" was one of the ways in which the Hollywood tailors created solidarity and collectively signified hierarchy and their differences from others.

They also developed "the *malas'* secret language." Those who were "in," as some females were, learned the secret language. There may now be a number of "languages" based on the transposition of phonemes within individual Samoan words. There was also, early on, a *fa'afafine* signaling language, which appears to me to be somewhat analogous to cockney rhyming slang. In the Hollywood version, lines from popular songs in English became onomatopoeic metaphors for descriptions of others or

the intentions of the *fa'afafine* which outsiders found undecipherable. This "language" was shared by a small group of *fa'afafine*.

Reaction From The Community

By the early 1970s the thriving but still small subculture under way at Hollywood, and its expanded network, was about to come out into the open as the larger community in Apia gradually discovered it.

> Then the whole community ... heard about this. Then they sort of tried to put their ears on the door, and you know [find out] what's going on and then all of a sudden the *mala* appear in town and all the people ... just [made] fun of them and then they feel angry, you know. How can the whole community know about this ... All of a sudden the community reacts. - Ioane

It may have appeared "all of a sudden" in retrospect. It is more likely that the general community's exposure was more gradual as the number of *fa'afafine* in town increased and cross-dressing became more salient. A number of respondents have commented that the "well-educated" appreciated them. An *afakasi* respondent has reported tolerance and accommodation of *afakasi fa'afafine* in the town area before independence. It is also possible that conservative, less educated, village Samoans who had migrated to town may have given the *fa'afafine* some trouble. This analysis has been supported by one *fa'afafine* intellectual, but is a subject for further study.

Although few *fa'afafine* actually dressed in drag during the day, with some notable exceptions, some feminized their appearances in public to a degree. They wore their *lavalava* in a feminine manner; had their shirts tailored in a feminine style, and wore flowers over their ears. Some plucked their eyebrows and used mascara and rouge. Penelope Schoeffel (personal communication) remembers seeing some of these

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individuals in public in the mid-1970s, as I did in 1978. Some cross-dressed much more

dramatically in Apia bars. One late *afakasi fa'afafine* bar owner is known to have

accommodated cross-dressing *fa'afafine* in his establishment, although he was not the

only one. Some *fa'afafine* entertainment groups from Hollywood would perform as

dancers or singers in various venues. They sometimes performed at fundraisers of the

kind that I witnessed in 1978.

With the *fa'afafine* phenomenon as salient as it is reported to have been, the

negative reaction from some of the urban public was understandable. Many *fa'afafine*

became the butt of jokes, innuendo, teasing, and insults. Whether justified or not, they

were also inexorably linked to prostitution, possibly, as one respondent argued, because

they would often be seen in the company of "ladies of the night" in some bars. Some of

the early Hollywood *fa'afafine* would cruise the docks, looking for sailors. At the same

time the *fa'afafine* were collectively involved in activities of a more serious nature, such

as sports.

To review their evolution at Hollywood I refer to an informant who was their

long-time client, whose brother was a very involved *fa'afafine*. She observed this

transformation occur:

> It was just a little space of room with Anita's sewing machine and she
> would have a person who sews the overlock or a person who hems, or the
> person who's preparing the food and the person to clean. It's ... like a
> resting place for us. I mean we would go there to [get our clothes sewn]
> and at the same time eat. And it's a place to gossip ... because they know
> more news than what we [knew] and I think because they were private
> (discreet) persons themselves you know, and I think a lot of people never
> took them for granted after they got to know them, and I guess both old
> and young, you know, went over to Anita [for] the reasons that, not
> because they were *fa'afafines*, but he could make ... a better dress than
> the women do. And he used to pay for relatives, children's school fees, or
> electricity bills and food and so forth, and when you ask him for

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something, he'll always support you. Right with it! And after awhile the place started to grow. ... And I think what Tony did, he wanted them, instead of wasting their lives just roaming around, bumming off the road and that,[to acquire] the talent of, you know, sewing, and that's what he did. I think he helped them to buy sewing machines. I mean they were pedal ones, but at least they were something that runs, and from then on it just expanded, and then more and more *fa'afafines* from overseas and from all over the islands sort of got together, and it was like a meeting place and I think then it started. I think that's when they started to build up a good relationship between all the *fa'afafines* and to give their views of how they felt, and what's to be done, so that some of them can make [better] use of their lives, you know, to become better persons, and it was a success. – Maria

Fa'afafine from all walks of life became part of this network. Visitors included village and town *fa'afafine*, women and men.

Summary

Hollywood was a site and haven for the *fa'afafine* where a collective identity and new sensibilities began to develop. At Hollywood, *fa'afafine* were reproducing forms of modernity, aspects of cosmopolitanism, and new expressions of their personae that were appealing to certain segments of the population and undoubtedly confusing to others. Hollywood was also the focal point for solidarity within the expanded *fa'afafine* community. Some of the urban community found compatibility between themselves and the Hollywood group. The *fa'afafine's* ability to organize themselves, as well as to reproduce certain lifestyle forms that some of the affluent or regularly employed could also reproduce, was the beginning of a newly found self-respect for some.

Village and town *fa'afafine* began coming to Hollywood, sometimes as runaways, or as part of coming to town for studies, with family members, or just for the weekends. Hollywood became their meeting place as well as a haven. The Hollywood *fa'afafine*

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promoted a new, somewhat Westernized persona for themselves and others, while remaining within the *fa'aSamoa*. They became exponents of fashion for many urban townspeople. Other *fa'afafine* in the town area became part of this extended network. A number of people who lived in the town area became clients, friends, and allies. Some feminine display forms could also be found at Hollywood.

Given the expanding economy of the 1960s and early 1970s, and social spaces for emergent kinds of activities, the Hollywood *fa'afafine* and some of the young people whom they mentored extended into the community through the sewing profession. They were also known for their participation in the nightlife of Apia. *Fa'afafine* who had gone overseas would often come back to Hollywood. Cross-dressing as Western women also characterizes some of the activities of a number of *fa'afafine* in town.

In the next chapter I will explore in some detail the life and qualities of Anthony Schwenke, called Tony, but known almost exclusively by the "girl name" of Anita, as pieced together from the memories of *fa'afafine*, relatives and women who knew him well and whose lives he influenced. He was the de facto leader of the *fa'afafine* in Samoa from the late 1960s to the late 1970s, whose influence was felt into the early 1980s. This exploration will reveal another piece of the puzzle necessary to understanding the formation and transformation of the *fa'afafine* as they progressed into the mid-1980s.

Chapter 8: Leadership: Anita

> To me she was everything ... She had the
> brains, she had the money, she had the
> attitude, and she [could] gain respect from
> anybody ... She was one of the brightest
> persons I've ever come across.
>
> - a *fa'afafine* from the 1970s

This chapter explores the character and attributes of the *fa'afafine* leader, Anita,

whose informal, intuitive, humanitarian tactics made her the ideal agent of organization

for the *fa'afafine* beginning in the late 1960s. Leadership has been little explored as a

theoretical problematic in the social movement literature (Klandermans, 1997). When

discussed it has mostly been read as the formal relationship between cadres and rank and

file, or as part of the informal relationship posited by the collective behavior literature.

While this perspective has some value in the exposition of the *fa'afafine*

leadership, leadership in this particular case also has aspects of the heroic which can be

found in Hook's (1943) notion of "the great man." Ingham (1979) describes the great

man as a person who has qualities that can emerge at the confluence of historical events

and individual agency. The work of G.H. Mead ([1934] 1961) also addresses leadership

of the type that Anita exhibited. Mead argued that charismatic, transformational

leadership emerged from the "I", an outcome of what Honneth (1995) has described as

"I-demands". From my understanding of Honneth's reading of Mead, leadership that is

transformational proceeds from an "I" that is in opposition to aspects of the "generalized

other" in which it can either no longer ethically locate itself, which is deemed unfair, and

which the "I" can no longer tolerate. I would suggest that the notion of charisma that

Mead describes could also call forth emotions such as compassion, good-heartedness, and the desire for transformation.

There is some evidence that Anita's leadership had aspects of greatness, circumscribed by charisma, compassion, notions of fairness, and events. History and new social spaces would allow that leadership an expression that could not be found in a traditional village setting. The circumstances of Apia proved essential to her leadership.

I first learned about Anita in December of 1986, approximately three years after her death. My informant was traveling with me across Apia by bus. He had recognized me from the drag queen contest where I had been a judge, introduced himself at the bus stop, and offered to sit with me. I remember the great care he took during our short journey to inform me of an individual, whom he described in words to the effect as "a tailor of German descent," who had led, nurtured, and socialized the *fa'afafine*, until his death a "few years ago." No name was mentioned at that time.

What struck me most during our bus trip was the sadness in his voice at his recollection of this individual. I soon was to visit my travelling companion at his village, where we spoke of other things. Four years after that conversation I learned more about this tailor, Tony Schwenke, who was almost universally referred to by his "girl name," Anita.

As we have seen, leadership in Samoa at the traditional level is linked to rank and titular status (Shore, 1982). Although rank gives one *pule*, or authority, to be effective it is often accompanied by factors such as charisma and ability, and more recently by education and wealth (O'Meara, 1990). In the town area, a more European and non-sacred space than typical villages, a hybrid of leadership styles is possible.

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Although lacking a title, Anita had authority based on a number of qualities. She had some aspects of high status in the modern sense: she was self-employed, had a good tailoring business, and was from a modest but hard working half-caste family in town. Anita appears to have succeeded at business. One of her *fa'afafine* colleagues recalls that "she ended up having a real good business ... She had a lot of customers...."

Anita was born in late 1942. After her mother died, she was raised by a grandmother. Anita, it appears, remained committed to her family. As an adult, she provided for them materially in many ways. While this is part of the duty of all Samoan children, I believe, as do others, that it is also a way in which *fa'afafine* in particular have gained and maintained status, esteem, and social worth and have fulfilled their sacred obligations to family. By all accounts, Anita was a "giver."

By her early teens Anita was exhibiting the creative, mischievous, and socially alert qualities that she was to employ as an adult. She attracted young people of both genders to her circle. She was already recognized as a leader and socializer of *fa'afafine* amongst friends, and had a reputation as a dependable person who could be relied upon to carry out tasks and projects. Even at an early age it seems she had the qualities of a go-between, as well as the ability to network.

Anita was well-known for her creativity as well as her ability to manage people through her humor and intelligence. One individual who knew her in the 1950s noted:

> [She was] creative in anything. She's a person that, as we sit and talk now, the mind is working on something else, and then all of a sudden Anita just pours in an idea with something very funny to make us all laugh, you know. - Semisi

One of her protegees recalled an instance of Anita's networking before independence. Still a teenager, Anita was asked by an Apia family of small-time

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impresarios to help find young *fa'afafine* to play the girls' parts in an upcoming show. One of the individuals who was in the show said that in those days young girls would not be let out at night to play in a "professional" production. This individual also implied that the motivation behind choosing *fa'afafine* may have been to increase the production's appeal to the audience. Anita found two younger friends who agreed to take part in the show. Their interest was in showing themselves off to the public. Andrea describes it this way:

> In those days they only [usually do] those sort of things ... for fundraising. ... But this family, they only want to have a concert to use the *fa'afafine*. ... Because we wanted to expose ourselves and show ourselves off, so that's why we came over there and this family was taking advantage of us ... as the way of making their money ... So the first person they talked to [to cast this show] was Anita because Anita [knew] everybody.

Although they were being exploited, the opportunity to display their femininity was motivation enough.

Physically, Anita was tall. Prematurely bald, she wore a woman's wig. As far as her leadership qualities are concerned someone remarked that Anita had "forward vision." The words "charming" and "manipulative" have also been applied to her. One respondent described her as a "powerful person. She had power," which I take to mean charisma and influence. In addition to her canniness and "street smarts," it is her warmth, compassion, and sensitivity that have been mentioned most of all. To the young *fa'afafine* that I interviewed, some now in their forties and fifties, she was "like a mother." It is in the notion of "mother" that we find part of the root of her activism. It was through mothering that she was able to accomplish in a kinship-based society the affective conditions necessary for an as yet uncrystallized movement.

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The label of "mother" for Anita has a number of connotations. One is the qualities of what a mother should be, or what some *fa'afafine* believed was necessary in a mother. Some *fa'afafine* report a closeness to their mothers which appears to be incompatible with the distancing displays between parents and children that Gerber (1975) observed and Mageo has commented upon (Mageo, 1991). Some *fa'afafine* may have been privileged in that way.

Some witnesses to the socialization of *fa'afafine* report their being indulged, or taken over by mothers or grandmothers. In contrast, some *fa'afafine* report corporal punishment and indenturement to the family, which is a general motif explored by Gerber (1975:4) and Schoeffel (1979:126). My own experience with Samoan mothers has been mixed. I have witnessed some harshness towards children, by current Western standards, as well as what appears to be a warm and empathetic flow from mothers to their children.

No "mystique" or myth surrounds the Samoan mother, unlike, say, the imagined traditional European Jewish or Italian mother. According to my academic respondents, as well as some non-academic Samoans, the common model of the Samoan mother is of the Christian mother. That is to say, she is ideally a monogamous follower of the husband. Her role is often home and church bound, supportive, and expressive. The mother's role has also been mentioned as a nurturing role.

Real mothers often distance themselves from childrearing, in particular as their children descend the birth order. I have observed that, after weaning, care of children can become the responsibility of a child's older siblings, the mother's unmarried sisters, her sister's daughters, and the child's grandmother. However, as Samoan families nucleate, even in the villages, mothers may have more direct and longer contact with children.

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As has been reported, the exchange of love or *alofa* between Samoan children and their parents has both a material and an affective side (Gerber, 1975). There is little doubt that Samoan parents love their children in the affective sense. They say they do, sometimes describing them as "gifts from god." Parents take pride in the accomplishments of children who are able to achieve, although praise is often faint.

As discussed earlier, a material side plays a large a part in the parent-child relationship. It can be contextualized as an inverse relationship between a child's age and his/her physical or material contributions to parents. There is another factor that contextualizes Samoan mothering. It is commonly held that intimacies with respect to the body are not to be discussed between children and parents (Schoeffel, 1979; Tcherkezoff, 1993). The "facts of life" are often learned from others through observation or participation.

A comparative picture of Anita as a mother, albeit a fun-loving, yet serious, bright, dress designing mother, can be fleshed out in light of the above few paragraphs. Anita would have offered a modified alternative to the Samoan mother. She extended mothering into the modern sphere by teaching new forms of self-expression, the emergent norms of the *fa'afafine* group at Hollywood, as well as ways in which new displays could be "bricolaged" and maintained in the face of reaction. She would teach about the management of erotics.

Transformations of the type that the *fa'afafine* were undergoing, and the kind of support that Anita was offering, contextualized as mothering, may be analogous to acceptance, and empowerment in this transforming kinship-based milieu. It was also a form of esteeming. For Anita to show many *fa'afafine* the way to behave, to feed, house,

train, socialize, love, and lead them, is to indicate that the individual was appreciated. Thus, charismatically, through example as well as through discipline, a confidence and a stability were instilled in individual *fa'afafine,* which gave them a certitude about their personal and collective qualities and potentials. They had someone to go to who was like them and who made them feel secure in these ways. Ultimately they gained a collective identity that was stabilized by this powerful but gentle individual.

Anita also understood the public "audience" very well. I think she sensed what it would take to capture that audience or to convince it that a worthwhile human being inhabited the anomalous, feminizing personae that the *fa'afafine* represented to some. She was not front and center a political leader in the Western sense, but her "mothering," as I discussed it with a *fa'afafine* intellectual who had been her neighbor, was powerful politics with respect to socializing *fa'afafine,* explaining the world to them, caring for them, organizing their activities, creating solidarity, and managing the new *mala* identity. This kind of activity was transformational and undoubtedly lead to confidence, empowerment, and independence and helped to establish some *fa'afafine* as more complete human beings.

Anita may have led many *fa'afafine* through a Meadian "game stage." She provided a new game, new rules, and a new "ballpark," as well as instructions as to how to play this new game. It was often done in fun, which led many *fa'afafine* to seek her out. One *fa'afafine,* now in his late fifties put it this way:

> Anita is a sort, like a mother, motherly, she's like a mother. All the young ones, it's like a magnet thing. That as soon as they know how to pronounce the name Anita they sort of start moving ... to find where that name is. - Pea

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One *fa'afafine* recalled the following in the context of mothering:

> A: Oh, she's a mother to every one of us. She's good. She always gave us good advice.
> Q: What advice did she give you?
> A: Well, be a good girl. Don't do this. Don't do that. You know she's always proud of us when we got top [marks] from classes at school. She always gave us good clothes because she's the best tailor on island [at] that time. She helps us fix our makeup when we go out: shoes, dress, everything. (and then wistfully she says as an afterthought:) We miss that one. She's a good one. – Oli

Anita was not a soft touch as a mother. She was a strong and occasionally a harsh but fair disciplinarian and the young *fa'afafine* listened to her. In fact, a former sports associate was shocked when the person she thought of as the normally mild-mannered, dignified Anita began to berate one of the younger *fa'afafine* for misbehaving on the netball court. This may have been a public performance, but when Anita spoke to *fa'afafine* who had misbehaved, as it seems to practically everyone she met, she got their attention. She was known to swat some of them if they got out of hand.

I also have a sense that, because of her compassion and sensitivity, "mothering" the younger *fa'afafine* must have been very satisfying for her. Anita also did some formal Samoan "mothering" in the traditional sense. She fostered some young *fa'afafine* over the years that she was at Hollywood. One respondent referred to this relationship as adoption, although there is no sense that arrangements were made with parents. Anita provided for some of the adoptees and most certainly guided them, as she would for many others who required it. In the 1960s she "adopted" a young *fa'afafine* who had left her village due to tensions in the family, and for a few years in the mid- to-late 1970s, a group of educated *fa'afafine* whom she "took under her wing." Anita's former neighbor mentioned that some older *fa'afafine* who now live in New Zealand who came under her influence in

Samoa, still refer to themselves as Anita's children. This suggests the power and status of Anita that still remains in memory and the positive effects of this mentoring. I have met a number of Anita's friends and former protegees, and all have expressed reverence for her.

Anita's mothering was also an attempt to help the *fa'afafine* come to terms with the conflicts in which they were involved, either with their families or with the public. For Oli, whose self-control was limited and who had a propensity to retaliate physically for slights that she received, Anita had certain kinds of advice:

> ... Because we're trying to defend [against] the people, because they're always teasing us [in] those days. ... When you walk on the road (street), oh, they're always teasing you, so you know we'll swear to them ... So we had to watch our mouth because nobody can stop our mouth when we argue with someone, so those kind of things ... better be good. Good behaviors...
> Q: What else...?
> A: ... `specially our clothes.
> Q: What about your clothes...?
> A: Well, when you wear a lady's dress, well, you must act like a real lady and not wear a lady's dress and act like a man. Because I'm telling you we can fight boys. Nobody can beat us, you know, that's us. Because ... we don't care, well the time for trouble when you're still in ladies' dress, well, you don't care about the dress. - Oli

This may be impression management in the Samoan context. No matter what, one must act dignified. I have been told that in chiefly displays, the slights of other *matai* are often met with restraint and a gentle modulation of the voice. I have noticed that the more one wants to make one's point, the more quietly and calmly one speaks. A less obstreperous respondent put Anita's interventions in a similar but more refined context:

> Q: What did you learn from her?
> A: Etiquette.
> Q: Tell me some instances of that learning process if you can remember anything.
> A: It was the way how I should react to people. Naturally you get flack from people that don't understand and who have things against *fa'afafine*,

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and she taught me how to react to those types of situations. You know, in a most peaceful and a most educated way. That was one of the most important things that I learned from her.... - Mani

I deduce from much of this material that Anita was, more than anything, attempting to contextualize this new unSamoan form within the Samoan motifs of respect and dignity that she herself possessed. There can be little doubt that this was an intuitive, yet culturally-based strategy that she felt the younger *fa'afafine* should have. Some respondents have supported the contention that some *fa'afafine* had to manage themselves with respect to *fa'aaloalo* and *mamalu* more than it was perceived that they had been doing.

The notion of respect comes up quite often in connection with Anita. There was respect for her from her specific group, as well as from outsiders that encountered her. Asked how Anita could manage to organize the *fa'afafine*, Misa responded in the following way:

> Because she's committed to it and she [could] gain the respect of everybody. Every queen and every *fa'afafine* in Samoa. Its because she knows how to handle the younger ones and she knows how to handle even the *fa'afafine* her age. Everyone respected her. - Misa

The following further contextualizes the extent to which Anita was associated with the respect motif among her friends and contacts. Misa became very emotional when recalling this:

> I get so sentimental when it comes to Tony (Anita), and, you know, very emotional. 'Cause you can't meet a better person, you know. And she took me around when she [went] to nightclubs, to hotels, to functions and all that. And you'd be amazed ... at the respect she [got]. ... It's the way she responds to people and the way she socializes, ... the presence, and its just the way she talked, and the way she reacted, and socialized with people around her. No matter what status and what those people are, Tony had the respect of those people. -Misa

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Anita obviously "owned" a wide range of Samoan display motifs.

Anita was relatively well located in Apia. Although she was from a half-caste family, she was not part of the highest elite. As part of the Catholic community, however, and as an individual with recognized talent and charisma, she was able to make use of her various contacts, to call in favors as the *fa'afafine's* activities progressed.

Yet another individual illustrates Anita's capacities to advise and stabilize the *fa'afafine*, and to help them make sense of their world. At the time, in the late 1970s, this person had just returned from overseas:

> ... So that was the time that I met up with Tony and I sort of realized then that all the [overseas experience] I had didn't really prepare me that much for the practical and the life of a drag queen in Samoa, and so I really welcomed her, you know. She was my mentor when it came to the ways of the world and giving me advice on how to get by and how to survive, how to get along... - Tele

Anita and the older Hollywood tailors also promoted other tactics relevant to the situation of some *fa'afafine*. They began to impression manage the *fa'afafine's* erotics. The range of possible erotic practices produced by the *fa'afafine* had begun to detract from their public identity as hearsay spread as to what they were prepared to do for their male partners. There can be little doubt that the *fa'afafine* continued their erotic relationships with men. The question became one of what and what not to do.

The preceding discussion of Anita's relationship with the *fa'afafine* in Apia is built on the points of view of *fa'afafine* respondents of different status, occupations, and educational levels. This data is also consistent with responses from non-*fa'afafine* who were in contact with Anita. In total, it illustrates that, in addition to her compassion, it was her capacity to network, which she cultivated throughout her life, that allowed Anita,

as she matured, and as Samoa transformed structurally, to position many *fa'afafine* with whom she was associated as advantageously as she knew how.

As has been indicated, much of what she accomplished was probably based on intuition and kindness. However, Anita may have been a smart tactical thinker, although not necessarily a strategist. There is a sense from what some have told me that, throughout her life she went after what she wanted, including convincing people of her seriousness and her integrity. In her own circle at Hollywood, her public displays of *mamalu* notwithstanding, she could undoubtedly be as lively as the rest.

It is important to reiterate that Anita's initiatives throughout her adult life were in many ways affect based, pre-political, and not necessarily completely rationalized. They were reactive, based on her feelings of fairness and her good-heartedness, and were constructed with people with whom she had already formed social bonds. They were localized in the sense that, despite her "forward vision," there seemed to be little idea of where these initiatives might lead, the desire for protection of the *fa'afafine*, esteem, empowerment, and respect notwithstanding. Typical of Samoa, it was the personal that became the transformational for her, a workable and perhaps the only motif in a kinship-based affective society for a group like the *fa'afafine* at that time, who had no role or standing in the traditional Samoan oral charter other than as men. Fale, one of many *fa'afafine* who was close to her, summarized Anita's intentions in this way:

> She probably didn't sit down and say, "I'm going to do this to change the world," but what she did was out of her heart and her own contacts. She had a lot of contacts —*faifeau* (pastors), government officers. She was invited to government functions like Independence Day parties. She would be invited only for her own works, loyalty to people, how she came across. She was a very interesting person. I wouldn't be talking about her 16 years after her death if she wasn't the person she was. - Fale

Finally, in a paraphrased recollection of Anita's own words by a former associate of the 1970s, are Anita's feelings regarding the *fa'afafine's* individual worth, together with a sense that, at least for many of the younger *fa'afafine* with whom she was involved, the old arrangement was not satisfactory.

> He said, "You know what I want to do? ... I want them to be useful. I want them to know, for example, how to dress - make ... if they're so inclined. I want them to ... know how to cook, for them to be independent so that people don't look down on them, so that, you know, they mix with other ordinary people." And that was Tony. – Makerita

The above statement also resonates with the notion that, in the case of Anita there was not only an understanding of, and in many ways an attachment to aspects of the modern, but also the need to make use of it. It is one salient example of the many emergent norms that were to emit from Hollywood in the years of its existence.

Anita died in the autumn of 1983. Her passing was devastating for many. She had been travelling throughout the South Pacific that year, returned to Samoa in late summer and early autumn to attend the South Pacific games, suddenly got sick, and died. One associate recalled:

> And every other *mala* came to her funeral. And even the girls... It was a shock to them because they only knew that she was sick, but they didn't believe that this is her ending. It was. – Tala

One member of their circle recalls the effect of Anita's death.

> Well, to be quite honest, when Anita died, my hopes died, you know, for the *malas* because she was the one that we looked up to, to lead these young ones ... - Tele

Anita actually left Samoa towards the end of 1979 for reasons that we will explore in a following chapter. This was not a permanent move, but it did take her overseas to New Zealand, the United States, and American Samoa where she began tailoring. She

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continued to keep contact with Samoa and to be involved in *fa'afafine* activities. What Tele, one of a number of associates of the *fa'afafine* over almost the entire history of the Hollywood era is referring to, above, is the lack of a monistic, focused leadership after Anita's death. The fact of the matter is that there would always be leadership, but none like Anita's.

In the early to mid-1970s the *fa'afafine* movement was to take a further step in its evolution. In the next chapter I will examine how the expanded network of *fa'afafine* further entered public life in Apia through sport. Although some had had a brief association with women through sporting activities in the 1960s, it is through sport in the 1970s that many *fa'afafine* became more formally aligned with women in town and in the villages. The sport of netball, in particular, enabled them to make an entrance into a portion of the emerging public sphere in the Samoa of the 1970s.

Chapter 9: Networks And Conscience Constituents: The Integration of The *Fa'afafine* Through Sport

> ...the *fa'afafines* were beginning to come out a little bit more openly ... but most of their association was mainly with girls, with women ... Wherever there were women, they would sort of move in, and netball was one ... of the places that they were drawn to.
>
> - a netball associate of the 1970s

The *fa'afafine* network centered at Hollywood was, if not yet "a longstanding activist culture" in the sense that McAdam (1994) has discussed, was certainly a collective which had a number of years of activity under its belt. Some of this activity occurred within Hollywood and also involved excursions to other public spaces. Anita's gentle but powerful "mothering" and the growing subculture at Hollywood had created a mobilizing structure for this new community that had some potential for expansion. Hollywood had become involved in a number of networks. These included *fa'afafine* from the villages and the town; some well-to-do, educated, and high-born Samoans who came for tailoring and young women who were either related, were clients, or friends. A few of the latter, in particular, became closely associated with the Hollywood group in various ways and participated in some of their activities.

Some *fa'afafine* had earlier become involved in the sport of netball, then a women's sport, which they played amongst themselves. They would often gather at the netball courts in town in the evenings to play. They also played cricket and softball. However, it was netball that would become the main focus of their sporting activities over the years.

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Identity and Solidarity Through Sport

There were a number of *fa'afafine* netball players in the town area prior up to the mid-1960s. The *fa'afafine* netballers were, in the context of the sport itself, considered to be good players. Some would be asked to play against female teams or to be part of pick-up teams involving some females. A few *fa'afafine* who were schoolteachers were asked to be referees by the netball governing body. Although a number of people have mentioned the difficulty that the *fa'afafine* had in establishing themselves in mainstream sporting activities in the early days, on two occasions some of the better *fa'afafine* players were invited to train women's teams being prepared for the South Pacific games held in Fiji in 1963 and New Caledonia in 1966.

The best estimate is that, prior to the mid-1960s, there were at least a dozen *fa'afafine* players in the town area at any one time. As Hollywood became the center for *fa'afafine* social activities and *fa'afafine* from the villages began moving to town, the number of players increased. One *fa'afafine* who grew up in the Taufusi district described some of their interest in netball at that time as a device for creating solidarity within their emerging community.

A number of scholars from the critical perspective have discussed sport, not only as an important site for the production of solidarity and companionship, but also for the construction of gender identities. "Masculinity" has been seen to have been constructed in part through "rough and tumble" and outright violent embodying experiences (Connell, 1995; Messner and Sabo, 1994; Whitson, 1990). A significant theme in the literature is the association of femaleness and docility of the body, contrasted with the sense of empowerment that sport can bring to women, the latter notion applying in particular to

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resistance to dominant gender discourses (Deveaux, 1994; Theberge, 1987; Hargreaves, 1994).

While the aforementioned contributions are theoretically rich, few studies have actually addressed the substantive processes involved in the production of solidarity, emergent norms, and transformation. Two exceptions are Birrell and Richter (1987) in an article on softball as a site for the creation of group solidarity and resistance to hegemonic masculinity amongst women; and Prendergast (1978) who has demonstrated a similar use of the sport of stoolball, a form of cricket, in Great Britain.

The group of women whom Birrell and Richter studied employed softball as a "ritual of resistance to dominant male structures and values" (Birrell and Richter, 1987:395). One objective of the softball group was the establishment of embodying rituals and expressions of companionship and solidarity that were feminine, as well as absent from the "male gaze." These examples can be construed as adding to the collective behavior and social movement perspective where identity is concerned, for they imply activities that can promote resistance, change, identity and esteem.

The case of the *fa'afafine* of the 1960s and 1970s may be yet another substantive example which in part supports the critical theoretical perspective that frames sport as an activity of identity-based exclusion. On the other hand, *fa'afafine* sporting activity was also assimilationist and promoted inclusion. That is to say, if the *fa'afafine* created solidarity on their own through netball, the game was also a vehicle with which they were eventually able to "get into" the civil sphere and find some recognition there.

One informant suggested that the *fa'afafine* used netball to both mark and embody their effeminate physicality and sensibilities. It is important to note, however, that these

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were not necessarily rational choices. They were choices that may have felt "natural," or were reactions to being excluded from other spheres. These choices may also have emerged out of effeminate interiors. They may have been extensions of identities produced by *fa'afafine* involvement in women's other instrumental activities in the domestic and village spheres, as well as their connections with women in the town area, as the quote which opens this chapter implies. Some village *fa'afafine* also played netball. Valelia, an observer who eventually became extremely close to them in the early days, recalls their reasons for playing netball:

> Well, they picked netball because I think they seemed to identify themselves with girls. And they [felt] that they can be just as good players as the girls. - Valelia

Netball, according to Melissa, a long-time player, became and still is a site for the development of companionship, solidarity, and social support amongst *fa'afafine*.

> Netball ... not only is it a game, but ... we get to meet together as people [with] the same or common need(s) ... and we get to help out each other. - Melissa

In addition, as with softball for Birrell and Richter's respondents, netball provided the *fa'afafine* with another haven, "a place of seclusion" for personal and group development as one person described it.

Some respondents felt that sports such as rugby were too rough-and-tumble for their sensibilities. One respondent, a witness to some *fa'afafine* activities, suggested that males may have pushed them out when they tried to enter "male" sporting activities. Whitson has commented on the effects of rejection from certain sports as motivations to discredit those activities as unworthy of one's status position (Whitson, 1994). I have met few adult *fa'afafine* from the early days who ever played rugby and continued it for long.

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There can be little doubt that, in the early days, the general teasing and chiding of the *fa'afafine* would carry over into a sporting scene that was considered by some to be masculinist[27].

Serendipity

The *fa'afafine's* interest in regular involvement with other players was known in parts of the netball community. Serendipity was to strike circa the early 1970s. A group of female netballers who had broken away from the national organizing body known as "the mother union" were looking for practice partners. This group named themselves, "My Girls." They met at a recreational area reclaimed from the sea, filled with the debris from renovations to Apia harbor. Situated between Beach Road and the ocean, it is still known simply as the "reclaimed area." This space was on a main thoroughfare and in full view of the town. Used as rugby, field hockey and cricket pitches, it could also be divided into netball courts.[28]

As the My Girls practices and scrimmages continued, lack of competition became a problem for the women. One player, a close associate and confidante of the Hollywood *fa'afafine* and part of their expanded network, suggested that the latter be invited to come down and provide them competition. This invitation initiated a formal association of the *fa'afafine* with a larger network of netball players and wider entry into a part of the public sphere in Apia that has persisted to the present day.

The *fa'afafine's* reputation as practice partners began to grow. Soon other women's teams became involved in these scrimmages. This arrangement grew into a larger organization which by the mid-1970s had become a mixed netball league that

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included women and *fa'afafine*. It was called the My Girls competition[29], after the founding women's team. At its height it encompassed at least ten teams from the town area and the villages, which may be a conservative estimate. One individual who was an organizer felt that as the league developed there could have been even more teams, estimating that the number could have been as high as fifteen. Most estimates are that there were around ten players per team, including substitutes. There were also a few *fa'afafine* teams in this league, perhaps starting with two at the outset. However, as more people became involved some people have estimated that there could eventually have been up to four *fa'afafine* teams. Another account suggests that there were two or three *fa'afafine* teams plus mixed teams of *fa'afafine* and women. *Fa'afafine* would also be called on to fill in for the women's teams that required extra players.

Both *fa'afafine* and women were part of the organizing committee. Organizational meetings were usually held at the reclaimed area. Trophies were awarded annually for the best teams and individual players.

These activities also involved the larger community. Part of the public sector became sponsors to pay for uniforms, some sewn by the tailors at Hollywood. Some sponsors also provided refreshments and travel expenses. Some team names that were remembered are the Seven Stars, the Rainbows, Morris Hedstrom, and A&R Electric. The My Girls league was to last for the better part of the remainder of the decade of the 1970s.

As one observer noted, some people passing by the reclaimed area may have had a good laugh at watching *fa'afafine* play. Some people remarked that the My Girls league

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led to expanded positive awareness of the *fa'afafine*. As one early spectator, who now holds a number of chiefly titles, observed:

> I mean [they were] cheered by people who love sports but there were other people who came just for the fun of watching *fa'afafine*. - Moana

A female respondent described the effect that this league had on her in the 1970s:

> And I tell you ... I had to, you know, do all the house chores and what not. Mom tells me to do the washing. I do it every Friday up to midnight ... get everything done so that I can get away on Saturday. I mean I just can't have enough [of] just sitting there looking at them playing. – Fa'i

Eventually a player, she describes how the *fa'afafine* went about their business:

> They ... organized things so well. Like the courts were well set out and everything. I mean the uniforms so neat, neatly worn by all of the teams... they were so strict about it ... and the balls were all there set at each court and they'll be yelling out because they didn't have any megaphones (she mock shouts): "Team number 2 go to that field! You know..." – Fa'i

This respondent, as have others, also went on to discuss how people were confident that the *fa'afafine* would protect the girls:

> You know, I wasn't worried and mom wasn't really worried that I had to find my way home because I had the [*fa'afafine*] "boys" there to look after me and all that. – Fa'i

As the *fa'afafine* became a mainstay of the league their reputation as people who could be counted on to support expanded within the netball community. As one organizer suggested, whenever their services were needed on or off the court, they would offer to help. They didn't have to be asked. These services included court maintenance and putting up and taking down the netball rigging. They also raised funds for the league, and as one person indicated, they found the resources for the acquisition of the netball rigging.

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As the My Girls league continued from year to year, some *fa'afafine* also felt a growing confidence in displaying their femininity on the netball courts.

> [We wore] skirts and all that. Standing [in] the center of the town in your skirt playing out in the sun with so many people watching. ... We were so free ... We did what we wanted to do, you know. – Molesi

Netball and the *Fa'aSamoa*:

Intersubjectivity in Samoa, whether located in modern or indigenous structures, is for the most part conducted traditionally. As the relationship with the female netballers initially developed, the antics of some *fa'afafine* carried over to the netball courts. Some of these displays were somewhat antithetical to Samoan display forms and were eventually addressed through sport, through the intervention of the *fa'afafine* leadership and significant females in their group. Thus, sport brought the *fa'afafine* netballers into contact with agents of Samoan authority and further into the *fa'aSamoa* and forms of respectability.

The agency of the *fa'afafine* leadership was both modern and traditional in its aspects. The agency of Anita was modern in that she and the Hollywood group had taken on and participated in certain Western urban motifs. It was traditional in ways that we have already described.

The Hollywood network included some individuals who were village based and very traditional in a public sense, despite their involvement in feminine expressions in the town. That is to say, while the town *fa'afafine* were not untraditional in their interpersonal relationships, but had aspects of the modern and Western, some *fa'afafine*, pursued the traditional life at home and could "escape" to Apia for the "other life."

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One of these latter individuals eventually became a *matai*. He would become important to the *fa'afafine*, as through him they were able to contextualize their activities to outsiders in terms of the *fa'aSamoa*. As one person put it, if a *matai* was known to belong, then the group's good behavior would be explained by the presence of that *matai*. If the group was contextualized as exhibiting bad behavior, then it would be suggested that there was something wrong with the leadership and the specific *matai* should do something about it.

The *fa'afafine matai* could also represent the *fa'afafine* as traditional Samoan entities. One individual describes the past role of a *fa'afafine matai* in one of their organizations:

> Because ... [he] is a *matai* [and] holds the title ... all the *fa'afafine* ... look up to [him] because he's a chief. So [he] is playing a very good part and a very good role in the association ... because he is the one who faces ... the [other] *matais* on behalf of the association ... so [he] is uplifting the association [by meeting] the *fa'aSamoa* requirements. – Ula

The *Fa'afafine*, Women and Netball

Gay men and lesbians in the West, stigmatized into becoming "exiles from kinship" (Weston, 1991:3), seek alternate forms of family and alliances despite class-and gender-related tensions with the very groups with which they are attempting to associate. Similarly, some *fa'afafine* have had issues with kin and have also considered themselves to be a type of family. However, *fa'afafine* remain embedded in their family system, as it is this system that is the prevalent form of Samoan social organization, and can provide them with affective and social reinforcement.

In addition, in the broader structure of Samoan society, the *fa'afafine* and women are associated by ties related to femininity, kinship, or the discourses regarding kinship.

Friendships and to some extent affective proto-alliances between *fa'afafine* and women are in a real sense, conducted within the generalized "Samoan family."

To recontextualize G.H. Mead ([1934] 1961) both females and *fa'afafine* are generalized kin in a society predominantly organized along kinship lines. This helps to explain, for example, the framing of esteem, empowerment, acceptance, and fostering in terms of the "motherhood" motif that we encountered earlier. By the same token, the *fa'afafine* also become potential allies of women because, while possessing male bodies, they identify themselves with women, and some participate in their non-sacred activities. Similarly, although they may compete with women, they are not involved in the latter's repression in either the private or public sphere, while men, and/or the latter's consanguine families, can be seen to be as some respondents and Schoeffel (1979) have indicated. Some women have described their relationships with *fa'afafine* as affective alliances.

> [It's] the emotional support that you can get from the *fa'afafine* being your ally. Then, especially if a woman is feeling down, them offering to do this and do that for them, including, you know, cleaning the house or taking care of the family which become a big load off [you]... so it's that kind of partnership... and that can be very helpful to ... a woman who is stressed out, ... mostly from the husband. That can really be a life saver for some women. - Timu

The notion of alliance is, of course, a Western term. However, alliances are familiar to Samoans and most certainly contextualized interfamily as well as political relations of various kinds throughout Samoa's history. Alliances in Samoa are based on already established affinities, as well as calculation. These affinities are perhaps best understood with regard to the *fa'afafine's* relationships with women as supportive or sisterly/motherly friendship. This kind of support in the villages and particularly in the town area, where it assumes proportions beyond family duty, is characteristic of many of

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the *fa'afafine's* relationships with their women friends. Sia describes the early netball relationship in this way:

> I think you can use the word alliance to describe this relationship. We looked at them as sisters and protectors ...Also it was an alliance because they were our only netball friends as well. [They were] sisters and allies. We shared time, clothing, jokes, money, everything. - Sia

The notion of fictive or associative sisterhood, then, plays a part in these affective associations. It was this general relationship, their extended networks with women, along with their own agency that provided a basis for the *fa'afafine's* incorporation into the growing urban community in Apia through sport.

Alofa: A Cultural Basis for Association

> So when we asked them to come and practice ... you know, give us training, that's how they were exposed and started to make a name for themselves ... and their interest was drawn only on netball, because it's a female game. - Tauvela

In the 1960s, as we have seen, some *fa'afafine* were invited to train women's teams. Their value as practice teams was acknowledged. However, as Tauvela implies in the above quote and others have discussed, the My Girls experience was to change everything.

To paraphrase Whitson (1990) in a Samoan context, the *fa'afafine* had been playing netball and reinforcing their unique sensibilities, at the same time aspiring that these sensibilities could be accepted into Samoan public life. They wanted to be contextualized as valuable contributors to society, and netball was one way in which this could be accomplished.

One netball associate who knew them well had observed their efforts to become established:

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> The *fa'afafines* were really wanting to find some outlet in which they could be recognized ...and so this was a form... which they were able to use, and they were very, very happy any time they were asked to take part ... They were more than eager to hop into the opportunity. - Fern

To recontextualize McAdam et al. (1996) netball became one of the "opportunities" that helped enliven the *fa'afafine* emergence. Inclusion in these activities, however, could be problematic at times. Fern notes that in the very early days while

> They always did offer themselves ... they knew that it was like a battle to get in. - Fern

One way of "getting in" was to provide something useful to the netball community. One person referred to this initiative as one of their "hidden agendas". Some respondents have maintained that appearing to be useful contributors was always one of the motivations behind their involvement in various public activities. Sala, a long time player and official discusses why the *fa'afafine* were important to netball in Samoa and why their relationship with female netballers has persisted to the present day:

> And I guess [it's] for [the] simple reason that they're supportive of us. That they're there. Not only in terms of providing the opposition that we need, but also with support such as fundraising and stuff like that. – Sala

It is important to view the relationship with the women netballers further in terms of one of the major cultural themes under which Samoa is organized, which has been described as *alofa*, or love. As we have seen, *alofa* brings out both affective and material considerations. Another of the connotations given to *alofa* by Milner is "favour" [sic] (Milner, 1993:17), as in doing a favor for someone. The *fa'afafine's* relationship with the women has also been described by one *fa'afafine* netballer for its reciprocal aspects. He mentioned that the girls from the My Girls team wanted help from the *fa'afafine* and the *fa'afafine*

> ... were here on this side trying to get something, so it's give me and I'll give you. - Tracy

What the *fa'afafine* desired was inclusion and respect.

Others have described this relationship as affective *alofa*. The *alofa* the *fa'afafine* demonstrated to the women made an impression on some of the female netballers. It has been referred to in their case as a form of Samoan reciprocity and sharing, *fetufaa'i*, a word that is also sometimes heard with respect to emotional sharing. Two Samoan scholars in discussing *alofa*, suggested that *alofa* may connote an expectation of reciprocity based on attitudes, feelings, goods, and esteem. Thus, they suggested, *alofa* can have some political aspects related to impression management based on any of these factors. According to one netballer, if *alofa* is given, then *alofa* must be returned. She continued, with respect to *alofa*, that in addition to their emotional affinities with women, the *fa'afafine* became further appreciated, included, and esteemed by the women and others through this reciprocal sharing in the netball community.

One netball associate who had not initially known the *fa'afafine* well became attached to them through their love of the game and their interest in its fine points.

> And I felt that because of their keenness and their own sort of socializing and interest in netball, I think it sort of drew me towards them ...And so I think many people came to accept them for their ability and their interest in netball.... - Tauvela

Two *fa'afafine* who were there at the time were able to further explain part of the motivations that applies to this notion of reciprocity. Pita was a regular part of their network and was heavily involved in netball. Lelei who was networked to the Hollywood group through friendship was an informed witness to the *fa'afafine's* activities in that time period. Lelei is translating for Pita while adding his own remarks:

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A: It's their help. It's because they feel they're giving them (the female netballers) something far better than what they've known already. It's all part of ... bringing themselves up to help out and that sort of thing. It's how they want[ed] to represent themselves in society. How they want[ed] to be accepted in society.

Q: Including their contribution to netball?

A: Yes, that's [what] everything boils [down] to: bringing themselves up to the standard it is now. How we pulled it off, being accepted, getting respected ...

Q: I can see that.

A: Yes, that's what they did.

Q: And ... you're saying that would be part of the same motive.

A: Yes, ... it all boils [down] to the same motive. Everything they did at the time was sort of the same thing. ...to be accepted, to be acknowledged. ... This is why they want[ed] to have projects to help whatever is needed in order to make people think that there's good in them. – Lelei and Pita

Not only did they want to "get in" as Fern suggested earlier, but they were eventually invited in, as Tauvela has indicated. It is important to note, however, that their desire for inclusion aside, the *fa'afafine* netballers played for the fun of it. They were fierce competitors as well as allies, friends, trainers, coaches, and referees. Their affinities with women through netball, if the past and current situation are any indication, must have resulted in their inclusion in a warm, socially comfortable milieu.

Sport as a Site of Impression Management and Resocialization

While the above discussion generally contextualizes the relationship between the *fa'afafine* and the female netballers in a structural sense, their relationship had other, substantive aspects. One in its early history was particularly problematic. As we have seen, many *fa'afafine* were staking claims to effeminate performances both on and off the netball court. Some had been acting out in ways that tended to give the *fa'afafine* a bad

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name as a group. Some of these "bad behaviors," such as swearing, or not listening to elders and not respecting the women, extended to the netball context in the early days.

As one female netballer indicated, if the women were to benefit from their association with the *fa'afafine*, the latter's numbers and support notwithstanding, it could not be contaminated by the negative perception of them that existed amongst the public at that time. Personal considerations aside, their "antics" were deemed to be unSamoan by some of the women.

As Whitson has pointed out in an analysis of sport in the construction of gender identities in the West, "the interactionist concept of 'impression management' directs us to consider the social construction of behavior at the interpersonal or small group level" (Whitson, 1990:27) where sport and gender are concerned. Whitson's ideas also resonate with the notion proffered by Hunt et al. (1994) of "identity imputations" that are often reactions to identity-based collectives. These ideas have some application to the netball case.

A number of scholars provide evidence for the kinds of impressions that Samoans have to manage. Gerber (1975) notes the effect that shame, due to the behavior of children, can have on Samoan adults. Keesing and Keesing (1958) examine some aspects of impression management in their larger work on communication between Samoan elites. Gerber (1975) discusses child-rearing in terms of the acquisition of obedience and compliance routines. As St. Christian argues, Samoan custom requires a range of considerations:

> Samoan action is a complicated tangle of collaboration, sympathy, mutual assistance and encouragement, and obedience and deference. (St. Christian, 1994:159)

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The *fa'afafine* netballers were soon to be incorporated into this "tangle."

Obedience and respect for authority were Samoan motifs for the organization of life that could be re-socialized in the context of netball. Other aspects of Samoan custom could also be re-enforced in this way. As Crosset (1990) has pointed out, the rituals of sport have been thought to have the capacity to promote certain societal metaphors. What is required for the indigenizing of sport are agents that represent and encourage particular cultural or societal themes.

An Elite Attachment

Some of the older *fa'afafine* had become known to one sporting elite who was briefly involved with them in the early-to-mid -1960s. Valelia was well educated, well located in the town area, and commanded a great deal of respect. She had been the coach of the national team. She was now the coach of the My Girls team. Thus, when the team formed in the early 1970s, the *fa'afafine* players from Hollywood and its now expanded network had female supporters, including the coach, who were open to their contributions.

Valelia had not been especially fond of the *fa'afafine* initially. Although she had utilized them briefly in the 1960s as practice teams, she told me that it was during the My Girls period that began in the early 1970s that she "opened her heart" and became openly committed to helping them. She has been described by one *fa'afafine* netballer as one of their "mothers."

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The Re-socialization of Samoan Identity Through Netball

The initiatives of the coach Valelia, described below, recall the poet Iosefa's concern about loss of cultural identity. This is precisely what was feared for some obstreperous *fa'afafine* in the early 1970s. Some of the female netballers felt that if these individuals could better manage the impressions they were making, life would be better for them. More acceptance might follow through compliance to custom.

In a sense, to paraphrase Kimmel (1990) in the context of baseball in the 19th century United States, there was perceived to be a crisis with respect to the contamination of basic Samoan values where some *fa'afafine* were concerned. This general sensibility has been described by a Samoan scholar as their "aggressiveness ... and ... a certain amount of defiance in their attitudes." It was not a crisis of "manhood," as Kimmel describes the 19th century United States dilemma, but a crisis that centered on their Samoan ethos. They had to be "recivilized" in the context of Samoan custom. Valelia felt that netball was one vehicle in which resocialization could take place.

The use of sport in the "civilizing process" in the West is certainly not novel. Examples such as "muscular Christianity" (Kimmel, 1990:58) and the association of scholarship and sports and their production of conformity and obedience to authority are by now well known in the literature. The role of specific sports in this process is also familiar. Describing the 19th Century United States Kimmel wrote about baseball:

> ... One central feature of the values that were instilled by playing baseball was that they appeared on the surface to stress autonomy and aggressive independence but they simultaneously reinforced obedience, self-sacrifice, discipline, and a rigid hierarchy (Kimmel, 1990:61).

Kimmel's description of baseball resonates in the initiatives of Valelia as she recalled the process of reshaping the *fa'afafine* through netball:

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> They needed to be taught to be Samoans because ... so many of them ...had left their families ever since they were young. And so I said to them, "There are certain things which I expect from you. I want you to respect me. I want you to respect yourselves ... and then you'll know how to respect other people."

Valelia described an example of what this entailed:

> We put two games on the court and I had to see that they behaved. That they did not swear at other people on the court or off the court, because they tended to do that before, because I heard them. And so I said, "all right, no [name] calling, no rudeness, no swearing. You play the game. You obey the referee. Even if you think that you know better than the referee you will do what the referee tells you."

Valelia is referring to two important aspects of Samoan social relations: *fa'aaloalo*, or respect; and *usita'i*, or obedience. In addition, as Valelia pointed out, the antics of a few *fa'afafine* were extreme, and their attitude towards some of the female players disrespectful and offensive, violating in the behavioral sense the generalized sacred relationship between brothers and sisters.

> ... Shall I put it this way? Problems which arose from the "My Girls," that's the original team ... of all young women, problems which arose when they competed against the *fa'afafines* was felt by me as well as the girls as being rude and impolite and unSamoan, because a brother would never ever swear in front of a sister, because we have in Samoa what they call *o le feagaiga*. - Valelia

It is interesting that Valelia expresses the general relationship between males and females in terms of the idealized relationship between Samoan brothers and sisters. Thus, as regards the applicable etiquette, the females on the My Girls are contextualized by Valelia as "sisters" in relation to the *fa'afafine*, and the *fa'afafine* as "brothers" in relation to the women, therefore the *fa'afafine* as brothers had to act accordingly. However, one woman in the My Girls at that time contextualized the *fa'afafine* as "sisters," even though they were acknowledged to be men. The designation "like girls" or "like women" applies

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often to the *fa'afafine*, but as regards the *feagaiga*, the demand for respect for the women as generalized sisters by the *fa'afafine* as generalized brothers applies to the deeply embedded displays that circumscribe this sacred covenant. So the "bad actors" had to be made to behave accordingly.

In addition to socialization on court, Valelia and the *fa'afafine* leaders spent off-court time correcting *fa'afafine* behaviors and attitudes and re-establishing dignity (*mamalu*) with respect to Samoan formal interactions. Some of the women also visited Hollywood, bringing sheets and pillows for the *fa'afafine* who lived there. However, the first piece of business was re-establishing certain forms of Samoan public etiquette. Anita was involved in this, as well as another *fa'afafine* leader from the villages who would later take a *matai* title. Valelia continues:

> So for two weeks we talked after practices ... I said, "Sit where I can see all of you. Sit facing ...All right," I said, "the first thing you do is learn to sit the proper way in the *fa'aSamoa*, not putting one leg up on the top." So they sat that way. So I said, "The second thing is for you to learn how to take a cup of water to someone who wants a cup of water. Walk. Don't run. And no swaying." I said, "You will walk properly."

Valelia refers here to customary Samoan foot etiquette where the legs are crossed and the soles of the feet point sideways. Sitting in an outstretched position with the soles of the feet pointing outwards towards others is considered to be the height of bad taste. Life away from kin and the public may have resulted in the abandonment of some customary forms of etiquette by some *fa'afafine* in their own social spaces. The feminine "sway" of the body that seemed to come naturally to some *fa'afafine* could be seen to be exaggerated, and while reinforced within their own circle, on the streets, and in some public places, its display was not always appreciated nor understood.

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An Invitation to Play

Over time other forms of resocialization took place. For example, in a rather farsighted move, Valelia, with the help of another female participant, arranged for some female players and *fa'afafine* to undertake a formal *malaga*, or excursion, to Savai'i, one of the outer islands of Samoa. A tournament had been arranged in which *fa'afafine* would also play. Valelia explains her motivation as follows:

> So, you know, they came to sort of play games and they didn't have, as I said, a [Samoan] identity and I refer to the trips that I organized for us to go to Savai'i and for us to act as hostesses here for the Savai'i people. You know, that's their [identity] and they thoroughly enjoyed being Samoans because they were recognized. They were recognized by not only the village, but the whole district when they came to welcome them formally in the Samoan way when we got there. And so when [the village teams] came here, you know, they enjoyed playing hostess in the Samoan way to the teams that came. ... You know a feel[ing] of belonging ... I had to try and make them feel that they are accepted, once they know who they are, and what they are and take an interest in that, you know. - Valelia

We see in Valelia's description an example of the nub of the problem as it was emerging then: the need of the *fa'afafine* to be recognized and accepted in part on their own terms and the juxtaposition of contending identities that was creating dissonance in the public sphere in a Samoa that had just emerged from the end of the colonial period. Valelia's solution to the identity problem was to Samoanize it in the context of sport, and a traditional cultural exchange.

Some respondents recalled their enjoyment of the *malaga*. They remember the fun they had playing netball and cricket and a few events that stand out from that trip. One of these, an issue that the whole group was to face, further illustrates the contention for identity that has marked part of the *fa'afafine* history. One *fa'afafine* on that trip was consistently contextualized as a girl. However, come evening, the *matai* of the village on

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Savai'i assigned her to sleep with the other *fa'afafine*. In her mind she was a girl, but was being forced to sleep with "boys." This turn of events greatly upset this person. She wept copious tears to no avail. Later that evening the visiting group of girls brought her to the *fale* assigned to the girls and had her sleep with girls surrounding her. One participant suggested that this signified the honored and protected space that the "princess" occupies in her sleeping quarters.

However, Valelia found the traditional aspect of the trip and the *fa'afafine's* reactions to her initiatives most salient. She recalls that in preparation for the trip, that she had to teach them more of the Samoan traditional etiquette. Valelia explains:

> I had to teach them how to behave, how to eat, not to move about while eating, how to serve people, where to sit, where to sit where there were *matais* . [Not to] come and sit in the middle or the front. They go and sit at the back. So all these things were taught before we left for Savai'i. And I said, "when we go we have to give money because they will greet us with an *ava* ceremony. ... I want you to fundraise so that we can give money that we can present to the village." They met us at the wharf with their band. A big ... grand Samoan *fale* was filled with *matais* from the whole district. -Valelia

In traditional public life, when one Samoan entity formally visits the territory of another, a ceremony called an *ava* is performed. This ceremony includes the drinking of *kava*[30] and involves the presentation of a *lafo* or contribution by the visiting delegation and the exchange of ceremonial honorifics between the traditional representatives of the delegations. In this case the gift was money, demonstrative of transformations of the exchange motif that have taken place over the years (Samoan politician, personal communication).

For the *fa'afafine* to raise their part of the *lafo* proved important to their standing, as concern had been expressed as to whether they would be able to mobilize the resources

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required for the contribution to the Savai'ians. However, Valelia was aware of the kind of resource mobilization that took place at Hollywood.

> ... They measured up to the money that we had to give to the village. You know, they put in their share and I was quite pleased because the women said "But they have no jobs," many of them. How are they going to earn the money to [give to the village]?" I said, "Just don't worry. We will look to, you know, Pita and to Anita ... the bigger ones, Lesa and Pili, and they will, well they will make them work in their businesses and they will earn the money." That's what they did. -Valelia

That, of course, is exactly what some had been doing for some years.

One the *fa'afafine* netballers would eventually take a title and represent the *fa'afafine* group in formal exchanges. However, for their first visit a *tulafale* from outside the group was engaged to be the group's orator in exchanges with the host village. He was a relative of one of the female members of the visiting netball delegation.

The *fa'afafine's* excursion outside the urban *fa'afafine* community and their acceptance as a Samoan entity by the village on Savai'i made an impression, according to Valelia. At the conclusion of the *malaga* many *fa'afafine* showed their appreciation:

> Many of them cried. They just cried. They said, "Now we understand what you have been trying to say..." And the village *ava* was beautiful. After the *ava* they served us with beautiful Samoan food and [they] kept looking at me and I had to give them the nod, which meant we can eat. See, they had learned obedience. They had learned to respect their culture. – Valelia

While Valelia may be idealizing this transformation somewhat, as it was an agenda of hers, there is undoubtedly importance attached to her account. The Savai'i group paid a return visit. Various exchanges continued throughout the 1970s, perhaps providing some consistency to the use of cultural forms by the *fa'afafine*. Some respondents have reported that aspects of traditional ceremony and honorifics, where applicable, often accompanied their exchanges with other delegations and *fa'afafine* groups overseas. One

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of the members of the first *malaga* who has confirmed Valelia's account, recalls that the visit to Savai'i also had an influence on some *fa'afafine* from that island who may have begun to take an interest in the new lifestyle that the urban *fa'afafine* represented. One *fa'afafine* netballer recalled how their visits to play netball against village teams, which were sometimes conducted outside of the My Girls umbrella, helped to expand their network.

The trip to Savai'i and subsequent exchanges undoubtedly provided a harmonizing of the urban *fa'afafine* form and the *fa'aSamoa* expectations at least in these instances. As in all things in Samoa, the *fa'afafine* netballers had been subsumed, and it seems quickly, under authorities who represented the *fa'aSamoa* and the reciprocal relations that characterize much of Samoan life.

The My Girls league and the involvement of Valelia and some of the women ultimately provided the Hollywood *fa'afafine* and their netball playing network consistent affective acceptance. It was one thing to be mothered and organized by Anita in terms of feminine performances, impression management, and the provision of opportunities, life chances, and lifestyles. It was quite another to be accepted, taken on, and mothered by Valelia who some have referred to in words to the effect as "that great lady," and "a friend of the *malas*."

The Continued Reproduction of the *Fa'afafine* through Hollywood and Sport

The popularity of the My Girls league led to further integration of the *fa'afafine* into the public sphere through sports. The antics and personae of some notwithstanding, the *fa'afafine* of Hollywood and other associates in Apia and those from the villages who sometimes gathered there, had become to a degree institutionalized in the town area in a

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public arena. They continued to reproduce their value to the community through netball and played other sports such as volleyball, cricket, and softball. They had their own dance and singing groups that performed in public on occasion. They mobilized financial resources and manpower for their own activities as well as contributions to others. These activities included trips overseas to network with effeminate men throughout Polynesia, and to host incoming groups. Their serious contributions to the "mother union" as practice teams resumed in the late 1970s as netball was reincorporated as a sport in the South Pacific Games.

Additionally, a new generation of *fa'afafine* netballers, some now in their late forties and early fifties, became referees and coaches during that period. These activities contributed to expanded identities and notions of social worth. Some *fa'afafine* have expressed pride in these accomplishments, which affirmed their seriousness and value to the community. Thus, while their antics on the court were often a source of amusement, some Samoans took note of their contributions. Educated *fa'afafine* and others returning from overseas study were to later take make significant contributions as new activities were projected into the growing public sphere.

Concurrent with their establishment in netball in Apia and the villages came two other developments. The first was more open cross-dressing, particularly by the mid-1970s. Penelope Schoeffel (personal communication) recalls witnessing cross-dressing in the town area in the mid-1970s. This corresponds to what I saw in the late 1970s or heard about from others and have viewed in photographs. Dr. Schoeffel remembers pantsuits being worn by *fa'afafine*, a report that corresponds to what I have been told about that time period.

The second development was the return of a number of educated non-*fa'afafine* scholarship students who began to use the Samoan constitution and the notion of individual rights to confront various national issues. In addition to new ideational packages brought back by *fa'afafine*, these developments would later lend some substantive support to the town *fa'afafine*.

By 1974 a number of key people who had been part of or associated with Hollywood had migrated to New Zealand. Economic reasons are sometimes given for this migration. These *fa'afafine* continued to maintain ties to Hollywood as part of an expanded network. They also took their interest in netball to New Zealand. In fact, netball was one of the activities around which they organized themselves and created solidarity in those early days abroad, beginning in the 1960s. The bar at the Great Northern Hotel on Queen Street in Auckland was noted as an important venue. Between 1971 and 1978 visiting teams of *fa'afafine* netballers occasionally came from New Zealand for competitions, and American Samoans who had learned the game from Samoan *fa'afafine* came over on *malaga* to Apia. The *fa'afafine* network expanded to include other Pacific island communities such as Tonga and the Cook Islands. Such activity was one way in which solidarity and identity were maintained and expressed in Samoa and abroad. Bengt Danielsson (1978) mentioned such an excursion of the effeminate men of a number of Pacific island countries to American Samoa. My Girls was the name given to the *fa'afafine* group from Samoa.

By the end of 1979 Anita had left Samoa. The female players and organizers in the My Girls group were either leaving to raise their own families or had joined the national organization as players or officials. Others had to attend to family business. The

league that had given recognition and some structure to the *fa'afafine* began to peter out. Although it is not certain exactly when the My Girls league ended, the late 1970s has been mentioned as the relevant time period. The *fa'afafine* continued to play netball amongst themselves.

The dissolution of the My Girls netball league may have had some effect on the structure of *fa'afafine* activities. One individual suggested that the fact that they did not have to be involved in its organization may have been a welcome break, allowing them to concentrate on their own developing interests, a sign, perhaps, of a growing independence and new sensibilities within this group. Outmigration of leadership may also have influenced their organizational activities to a degree.

Outmigration, however, provided at least one opportunity for the *fa'afafine* netballers in the form of an invitation to be the practice partners for the national women's team for the South Pacific Games in 1979 and 1983. There are actually two accounts of this. The first account attributes the *fa'afafine's* training of the national team to the Samoan scholarship program to New Zealand and Fiji. In some years a number of girls, either on the national team, or of that caliber, left on scholarships, or went to New Zealand to work, thereby depleting the talent level for the national team. It could be difficult to muster a second practice team of the required skill level. According to the second account, some players not selected for the national team would be offended and wouldn't offer their services to the "A" team. It is also most probable that the *fa'afafine* were seen to be the best possible competition and were chosen for that reason. It must be noted that Valelia, the coach of the teams in the 1960s, was also the coach in 1979.

Migration can be a two-way process, however. The *fa'afafine* community also received an infusion of *fa'afafine* returning from overseas. This "return home" included at least one tailor who had moved overseas and returned, returning students and more worldly *fa'afafine* with overseas experience. Other individuals had received teaching certificates in Samoa and were considered to be well educated. This infusion of talent and experience would propel the *fa'afafine* for a number of years.

Yet another development was the emergence of more entrepreneurs in the town area. One such entrepreneur had sponsored one of the teams in the My Girls league, had earlier been associated with the Hollywood *fa'afafine* through ties of kinship and friendship and began to become involved in some of their activities. She was one of their new "mothers" and "conscience constituents" during this period. As we shall see, the combination of returnees and one business elite provided resources, expanding cultural opportunities, as well as forms of cognitive liberation for this emerging movement.

Summary

By the late 1970s, the Hollywood group had been a long-standing culture that was producing and reproducing new cultural forms which many of the town *fa'afafine* were expressing. They were part of an extensive town-area network that also extended into the villages. They had experienced a transition of collective behaviors in a haven in the Saleufi district to a condition of being increasingly recognized through sport. They were using common sites in the town, including the reclaimed area. Their access to elites developed through netball, as evidenced by the involvement of Valelia, one of their early "conscience constituents" and protagonists, in their activities. Netball was used as a

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device to create solidarity within their community as well as to re-incorporate some *fa'afafine* into certain cultural motifs. Their dominant core, their leadership, was seen by some to be effective. Some of the leadership was involved in the resocialization of *fa'afafine* on the netball courts.

Netball became a site for the further construction of public identities seen to be useful to the sporting community and therefore worthy of esteem. The *fa'afafine* netballers were also able to mobilize resources in the organization of the My Girls League. This league activated the interest of parts of the general community and commercial sphere in sponsoring netball activities. They also networked with other overseas effeminate men.

Fa'afafine who returned from overseas were bringing new "ideational package" with them. In the sense meant by Tarrow (1996) and McAdam et al. (1996) new opportunity structures were beginning to crystallize. Things were in place for something different to occur and that was to take place in the early 1980s.

The following chapter will explore the emergence of a dramaturgical initiative in the form of a drag queen pageant. The contextualization of the drag queen pageant as a Samoan form, the demise of Hollywood, and the further impact of new ideas brought home by *fa'afafine* who had been abroad will also be examined.

Chapter 10: The Drag Queen Form as a Gentle Politics of Recognition

> I came back to a country where ... I was very
> familiar with everything, but inside, you know, I
> knew of other ideas, the knowledge that I had which
> I could actually exercise here [even though I could]
> not really get away [with it]. Still it was within my
> rights to actually exercise it, and because I was
> *fa'afafine*, you know, people [thought] we didn't
> have rights...
>> -a *fa'afafine*, active in the 1970s and 1980s

> ...there was this enlightenment ... generally of the
> population. There was an enlightenment within the
> *fa'afafine* movement as well... Our declaration of liberation
> was the fact that, hey, we are going to be public about this,
> not just going to walk around Apia in miniskirts. We're
> going to let people pay to come and see us walk around on
> stage as women. And we did.
>> - a *fa'afafine* describing Samoa in the early 1980s

The Miss Samoa Drag Queen Pageant, first held in 1983, culminated the

collective projection of the *fa'afafine's* sensibilities into the general community in Apia

that had begun in the mid-1960s. Since 1983, at least one drag queen pageant has been

held annually in Samoa. I have attended four such contests and been a judge at two of

them. They take the form of most beauty pageants, with a winner and runners-up, but in

many other respects they are uniquely Samoan. These pageants developed at the

confluence of changes in several sectors within Samoa and experiences of *fa'afafine* who

had migrated overseas and returned.

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Dramaturgy as theatre, as seen in an earlier chapter, has been described as part and parcel of social movement activity (Gusfield, 1994) and can be contextualized as having a political aspect related to persuasion and identity projection. It can also be contextualized as being akin to impression management.

In the West, drag queen pageants are often fringe activity. Effeminate men represent a small portion of the gay constituency and may occupy a lower rung in its hierarchy. Recently, television has co-opted and commoditized "drag" characters in North America. The program *Kids in the Hall*, produced in Canada, has projected pastiche using "gender benders." It appears to me to exemplify the accommodation, denigration, and commoditization of male effeminacy, as does the eponymous television character Dame Edna Everage. Such productions, while they may entertain, also satirize the form, and the males and females portrayed in them. The transgendered appear less often as "real" characters worthy of serious exposition. By comparison, "gay pride" days or "Hero's parades" are salient political actions that attract attention from the media as they project the notions of identity and solidarity within the gay movement. However, these too demonstrate a hyper-reality with respect to gender identity and boundaries. They appear to be confrontational displays, both of alternative forms of the presentation of the body and of a demand for recognition of lifestyles associated with marginalized interior sensibilities and erotics.

In this chapter, which is the account of the *fa'afafine's* first drag queen "action," it is argued that the drag queen pageant in Samoa has a somewhat different sociology than in the West. In Polynesia, where effeminate men have a central place in their families, although not necessarily total respect for or understanding of their personae, the

drag queen form had a plausibility in 1983 that could benefit the *fa'afafine* and their supporters. Although considered by some to be to be a rather radical event at the time, it would play to an audience of kin and generalized kin whose sympathies, with some effort, could be won over.

Amongst other things, the drag queen pageant allowed the *fa'afafine* to utilize a newly found cognitive liberation as regards rights and identity, as expressed in the two quotes that begin this chapter. The notion of rights was a "master frame", already present in Samoa in the 1970s and 1980s, which would partly support the *fa'afafine* in this novel projection of identity. The drag queen pageant also allowed for the creation of further solidarity within the *fa'afafine* community. It ultimately became a gentle politics of recognition and persuasion. As Cerelu (1997:393) might describe the situation, it was an opportunity for the *fa'afafine* to further "...self-name and self-characterize"... their identities in a large, public venue, something that they had been trying to do in other venues for some time.

Cross-Dressing as a Cultural Phenomenon

Cross-dressing was not new to Samoa. The drag queen pageant must therefore be understood not as a complete import, but in terms of a range of factors, both cultural and decorative. Western female decoration was appropriated early by Samoans, as photos of 19th century Samoa indicate. Some *fa'afafine* also appropriated Western feminine style. One *fa'afafine* who was born circa 1895 and died in 1990 was known to wear earrings and to feminize his apparel to a degree. The *fa'afafine* whom Margaret Mead (1928) observed was feminine looking. In Apia of the late 1950s, the *fa'afafine* say that they

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cross-dressed very little, if at all. Some feminized their shirts and *lavalava* to a degree, and wore some make-up.

During more than twenty years of travel in rural Samoa, I have occasionally noticed the dressing of some small boys in frocks. In these cases apparel was not a marker of gender, and hand-me-down frocks on little boys were considered to be acceptable (see also Schoeffel, 1979). Once children were sent to school, however, the school uniform tended to partly demarcate gender identity as Schoeffel (1979) has also noted.

One respondent recalls being dressed as a girl at three years of age, in the early 1950's. Another, his effeminacy recognized early by his parents, sometimes wore frocks sent by relatives in New Zealand.

Cross-dressing of a circumscribed variety was also assigned to the *fa'afafine* in public forums. A former volunteer schoolteacher in Samoa noted that while the *fa'afafine* whom he knew faced derision, they were not looked down upon *per se*, and in the absence of girls they were often utilized in public performances for their femininity. This sort of activity included dressing in female attire.

One *fa'afafine* respondent remembers playing the part of the Virgin Mary on White Sunday, an important religious and gerontocratic ritual that occurs every October in Samoa. At Avele College, when it was exclusively a boys' high school, *fa'afafine* played the parts of girls in school plays. Some were also given some of the duties that characterize the *taupou* role. When the College became co-educational, the real girls were assigned all the girls' parts, excluding *fa'afafine* from those expressions of femininity.

Thus, one should suspect a mild gender politics between *fa'afafine* and girls on the basis of performance. This suspicion will be dealt with later.

Substituting for girls in public performances appears to have been historically promoted and accommodated in some instances: when young people were involved; when the "script" was in the control of school or church authorities; and when the performances themselves have remained within the dignity displays of the *fa'aSamoa* as defined by those authorities. However, cross-dressing does occur in adulthood. It can be institutionally supported as long as it too does not violate rules with respect to decorum for public display as defined by the authorities of the particular institution or by the norms and values of the particular village. There is, however, perceptible ambivalence towards cross-dressing amongst some of the public and *fa'afafine* alike.

Recent Historical Accounts

We should recall the use of young *fa'afafine* in plays, arranged by Anita in the pre-independence era. One former teacher remembered a subtle transformation to slightly more feminine personae of *fa'afafine* at her school in the early 1960s. In the early 1960s, some town *fa'afafine* occasionally staged fashion shows in the yards of neighbors in Apia. Penelope Schoeffel (personal communication and in her 1979 thesis) recalls *fa'afafine* dressed as females joining in women's performances in a particular village with which she was familiar in the mid-1970s. *Fa'afafine* have always been known as entertainers in the town area. These were occasions where they would cross-dress in some forms of feminine attire. Contemporarily one sees the occasional village activity on

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Samoan television in which a *fa'afafine*, dressed as a female, participates with village women.

Currently, *fa'afafine* dressed as females can be found in some churches in the town area. They sing as sopranos or altos in church choirs and wear women's apparel. This also occurred in one village with which I am familiar. In the cases in which cross-dressing is accommodated in church, the apparel is modest and parallels the idealized white Sunday dresses that Samoan women wear. While one could interpret these accommodations structurally, such an interpretation might be too simplistic. As we have seen, Samoa is not a society that holus-bolus accommodates such expressions. According to some respondents, in some, if not most villages, and within many families, it is just not allowed.

In the 1960s Samoans were very strict with respect to girls' public activities. In the town area this provided *fa'afafine* with opportunities to substitute for girls and wear some female costume. The strict regulation of girls also gave *fa'afafine* certain advantages at town dances where they would partially feminize their appearances:

> Oh we wear the ... the lavalava. We have it very tight you know. Round, very tight. We have it in the other way to make the splits down, [the sides] ... my figure was nice and all. I pulled my shirts up and all ... You know you tied [it] over there (he does a tying motion around his tummy).
> Q: And what did you do with your hair and your face?
> A: Oh, the face, well [in] those times we hardly had any face powders. We don't [didn't] normally use those. Or else we just used lipstick (he giggles) and just put a little bit and then rub it and ... that's it. And the eyebrow pencil, we hardly [had any].
> Q: And you're pointing to your cheeks. You would rub the lipstick into your cheeks a little?
> A: Uhmm, so we would make it red...
> Q: Did you ever use lipstick on your lips?
> A: Hardly. We were very [modest]...
> Q: So why would the boys choose you over the girls? Why?
> A: [for] dancing.

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Q: You were better dancers?
A: Better dancing, and at that time too in Samoa [they were] very strict to girls. No school girls are allowed to [go] dancing and [if] its a village dance its accompanied by parents ... - Sasa

Some *fa'afafine* are remembered as popular entertainers, hired for private functions amongst the elite or at local public venues. Entertainment at private functions and in clubs provided opportunities to cross-dress, often in "island style," and sometimes in a more conservative manner as exemplified by the missionary-inspired *puletasi*. One of a number of former entertainers, who otherwise dressed as men, recalled the occasions when they would cross dress full-blown:

Unless we go having fun somewhere or we entertain, so some of us dress like women... when we gave birthday parties, wedding parties, you know? And these oldest *mala*, they [didn't] dress like women. – Tito

Tito is noting a transition period, from, say, the time of Nancy the tailor in the late 1950s, to the Hollywood group and its network, which initiated a new kind of feminizing in the town area.

By the 1970s, cross-dressing became associated with prostitution. Prostitution could supplement the incomes of a few and was possibly also a marker of sociability, status, rebellion, and empowerment of a type for some *fa'afafine*. Cross-dressing has also been mentioned as being associated with attracting men and signifying one's availability for erotics. It has also been contextualized as expressing interior feminine sensibilities without any attendant erotic connotations.

The nightclubs of Apia that began to emerge after independence also provided venues for cross-dressing. Generally, however, if cross-dressing of any kind were to take place in the public sphere, it would tend to be of the more sedate kind described above.

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Cross-dressing and the Law

Cross-dressing, like other aspects of the *fa'afafine* identity, entailed some struggle, in particular as some town *fa'afafine* became associated with prostitution. A handful of *fa'afafine* were dressing as Western women with the intent of stealing from members of the public. There were complaints to the police, in particular from outsiders. In addition to prostitution, impersonating a female was against the law. As a result, the police, performing their duty under the law, would intercede. One respondent remembers an episode from 1977.

> I was in Apia with my mother. We went to my mother's relatives. I think it was a birthday. It was about nine or ten at night. We were on our way home. And then we saw that four *fa'afafine* were being thrown into a policeman's van. I didn't know why until, as I grew older, I asked around of some of the old ones ... why that sort of thing happened. And they said that *fa'afafine* who dressed up as women were not allowed at all in town and they were locked up for that. – Hana

Fa'afafine who were not responsible for prostitution were also, understandably, subject to police scrutiny for cross-dressing. Some *fa'afafine* were cleverly defiant of the police in various ways and would cross-dress in spite of the law. Wearing pantsuits, which looked somewhat androgynous, was thought to be one way around the problem of female impersonation.

While this relationship with the police became a long-standing grievance for some, one must look at the other side. The law, inherited from New Zealand, was clear on female impersonation, and the authorities, according to one police informant, while not unsupportive of the *fa'afafine*, were just doing their jobs. Others have felt, however, that the *fa'afafine* were often singled out by the police. This negative relationship with the

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police has remained strongly etched in the memories of some *fa'afafine* and other Samoans. It appears that the slight feminizing of appearances was not a problem.

Samoa's First "Drag Queen"

By the 1960s, one individual who has since passed away began to cross-dress regularly in modern women's garb. Another began to do so in the 1970s. The former individual's "girl name" was Sophie, after the actress, Sophia Loren. She is well remembered as a brave, complex and physically beautiful individual. Although she was known to be capable of defending herself physically, Sophie was murdered in the late 1970s. She is remembered as both a hero and a martyr.

Sophie was one of the few *fa'afafine* who pushed the envelope, as it were. I have been given to understand that her projection of femininity, and her attitude could provoke some negative reaction from some of the Apia population. Others found her sensitive and kind. Her effect on the memories of some contemporaries is strong, and like Anita, she became a role model, but of a different kind, for some of the young *fa'afafine* at that time. Sophie was one of those individuals who was subject to police scrutiny.

Sophie's "career" as a girl may have begun in elementary school when, dressed as a girl, she entered a contest staged at one of the schools in the Malifa compound in Apia. This may have given encouragement to a young person who was so very feminine and is also a further sign of both the use and the accommodation of this form in the young in some institutions.

Another well-known *fa'afafine* was a female performer at Aggie Grey's Hotel in the 1960s, as well as an excellent entertainer who dressed "island style" in her

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performances. Another person who worked in a local shop is also known to have cross-dressed. Other individuals reserved their cross-dressing to the evening night club scene.

I believe that the above rendering of cross-dressing is background enough to support the claim of some *fa'afafine* that Samoan forms of feminine performance and garb, and ultimately the drag queen form, while undoubtedly having some Western influences in terms of style of dressing and performance, was and is compatible with some Samoan forms of projecting femininity for the *fa'afafine*. That is, to make the claim that the drag queen form is entirely a Western form imported into Samoa to change sensibilities would be, I believe, an oversimplification.

Overseas Influences

The above argument notwithstanding, a number of overseas influences certainly affected the form and content of the Drag Queen Pageant of 1983. By the early 1970s some *fa'afafine* had already gone overseas for work or education. A few in the sewing and other trades could afford their own travel abroad.

The sensibilities of some of these individuals were expanded by these excursions. One individual, who was sent to New Zealand for education, performed as a dancer in clubs in Wellington. A well-known drag club in Auckland was frequented by a number of *fa'afafine* who had immigrated. These individuals had earlier been part of or networked to Hollywood. One *fa'afafine* who had moved to New Zealand became a performer there. Yet another individual who has passed away became a performer in drag clubs in Sydney, Australia.

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It is also important to note that some *fa'afafine* who had migrated to New Zealand in the 1960s and early 1970s brought a Samoan version of feminizing appearances with them. In New Zealand, some encouraged the effeminate men from the Cook Islands who were part of their network to put on make-up. They also invited effeminate men from various Pacific islands into the growing New Zealand *fa'afafine* netball league which continued to be a source of solidarity for them overseas.

A Confluence of Returnees: Cognitive Liberation and Master Frames

As we have seen in social movement theory, new ideas, referred to as cognitive liberation, can contribute to new activity. New ideas were certainly significant to the *fa'afafine* transformation as it impacted the drag queen pageant. By the mid-1970s to the early 1980s there was a new milieu in Apia that made the drag queen form as an expression of identity, at least possible, in spite of the fact that its presentation would entail some struggle.

For example, some young non-*fa'afafine* lawyers, teachers and intellectuals, trained overseas in the post-independence waves of scholarship migration had returned. They were full of new ideas, had new cognitive mindsets, and some were ready to confront aspects of the traditional system via the constitution. Some would push the rational-legal further into areas of the *fa'aSamoa.*

Issues related to voting and human rights were tested in the courts (Meleisea, 1987b; Samoan lawyer, personal communication). As one of my informants who witnessed some of these activities told me, the notion of individual rights was sometimes set against the traditional collectivist sensibilities of the system as vested in the authority

of the *matai*. The issue of the constitutionality of voting procedures was brought to the fore through a number of hotly contested cases in the 1980s (Meleisea, 1987b:220-223). Meleisea has referred to these events as a "constitutional crisis" (Meleisea, 1987b:220). Others also advised the Public Service Association during the sometimes-acrimonious strike of 1981.

The notion of individual rights, human rights, and merit became a kind of "master frame" for some, a widely held thematic, certainly in the town area. The name of the HRPP, the Human Rights Protection Party, the current Samoan government, may have earlier reflected these growing sensibilities (So'o, 1996, and personal communication). Letters to the editor of the *Samoa Observer* during 1982, regarding the "constitutional crisis" related to suffrage, addressed the merits of the existing, versus a proposed new system of voting. Submissions that were village based came from people who did not owe their subsistence to paid labor. They mostly came down on the side of the existing system of electing members of parliament. That system was based on the votes of *matai* only. Samoans who were foreign educated or who worked in government bureaucracies or for private firms, were generally not in favor of the existing system (Meleisea, 1987b:227-228). They preferred universal suffrage.

There were also a number of *fa'afafine* returnees who began to trickle back to Samoa beginning in the mid-1970's. They included some educated individuals who had been too young to have experienced the beginnings of Hollywood and one *fa'afafine* who had been a seamstresses under Anita at Hollywood who had come home from overseas to start a business. Also within this group was a *fa'afafine* who was part of the highest traditional Samoan elite and had pursued a cosmopolitan life overseas. One of the young,

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educated returnees had gained a sense of individual rights and was not shy about expressing his views. In addition, some younger, locally trained *fa'afafine* teachers were becoming active in the *fa'afafine* community.

By the time this group began to coalesce in Apia, Anita was still active. Her shop remained the center of the *fa'afafine* network and the My Girls netball league was flourishing. Some of these young people were attracted to Anita, as others had been before, and she took them under her wing. Anita resocialized even the educated ones, teaching them how to position aspects of their identities in relation to others. They were new blood. By 1979, however, the situation changed.

The Loss of Hollywood

The late 1970s seems to have been a fateful time for the *fa'afafine*. In mid-1978 the landlord decided to demolish the building that housed Hollywood to build a more modern structure, and the *fa'afafine* tailors were given notice to vacate. One of the most interesting sites in the social life of Apia was soon to disappear.

Anita, along with an associate, first tried to work out of her family home. While she could work at home, the venue was only moderately successful as a meeting place. By late 1979, she left for New Zealand, visited the United States, and eventually moved to Pago Pago in American Samoa. One of her partners may have left a little earlier, setting up a sewing shop in Pago Pago which he also named Hollywood.

There was leadership, however, including *fa'afafine* from both the early and later Hollywood periods. Anita still visited, was visited by others, and remained sought after.

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Some of this group, although a talented bunch, were also aided by another individual,

Peta, a woman who could help them mobilize certain resources.

One More Mother

Peta had been very close to Anita since childhood. Her ties to the *fa'afafine* had

also been established in part through kinship, and through her association with netball as

an organizer and sponsor of one of the teams in the former My Girls league. She had been

front and center at Hollywood as a friend and participant in some of their activities. She

was part of the Apia business elite.

Like Valelia before her, Peta has been contextualized as another of the

fa'afafine's "mothers." She helped them mobilize resources and arrange occasional

public activities at local clubs and bars that would utilize the entertainment skills of a

few. Her elegant home became a meeting place for some *fa'afafine* on occasion. As one

observer put it, she was also the one "who cracked the whip" at times. I take that to mean

she was well organized and focused.

Thus, many of the elements were in place to make the drag queen contest work.

The *fa'afafine* themselves wanted to project their collective identity further into the

public arena. Cross-dressing had already been on display in Apia (although it was

contested at times) for many years. One returning *fa'afafine* who had been involved with

or experienced the drag scene overseas had the artistic skills to help put on such a show.

Others in the business community could contribute financial support and infrastructure.

One of the well-educated *fa'afafine* felt confident that their interest in putting on the

pageant was justifiable in the face of some perceived opposition. Traditional and business

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elites from within the *fa'afafine* network were thought strong enough to dignify such an action through various forms of support. In addition, Peta was there to help keep them organized.

Dramaturgical Initiatives: Objectives of the Drag Queen Pageant

Although a seeming cultural appropriation from the outside in one sense, the drag queen contest had a dynamic of its own. It had a purpose, theme, and complexity to it that the *fa'afafine's* earlier collective activities did not have. Not surprisingly, it also had a proto-politics in terms of its organization and presentation that, as we shall see, was local. I have made the argument to Samoans and Samoan scholars that the *fa'afafine* drag queen pageants could be contextualized as kinship rituals, conducted outside of sacred spaces, with both exogenous and endogenous motifs. There has been general agreement on that point, I believe, because the *fa'afafine* links to kin is one of the keys to the accommodation of these spectacles.

However, the specific objectives of the pageant have been variously suggested depending on the perspectives of the individuals who were involved at the time. For one individual, a well-educated *fa'afafine* who spent many years overseas, the pageant was the culmination of a long-standing *fa'afafine* culture in Apia. He refers to that culture as a movement. For Peta, the female participant of the group, the purpose was to create a more permanent solidarity for the *fa'afafine* based on activities and venues. Her material goal was to recreate Hollywood on a permanent basis, using money raised from the pageants to purchase land in the town area for a venue for the *fa'afafine*. The purpose of the pageant for one of the young, educated *fa'afafine* was to project an updated version of

their feminine collective identities more saliently into the community and to express their "right" to be the way they were. They also wished to show off skills and talents, and their ability to organize an event that the public could not help but appreciate. They would also contribute to the community and hopefully receive positive recognition through this event.

Some of the organizers were an interesting new development. They were not only well educated, but their social situation was potentially unstable vis-a-vis the *fa'afafine* community. That is to say, some had the professional credentials to go back to New Zealand or had a desire to return for further education. It is possible that they were confident of identities that could be contextualized in terms of their mobility, based in part on education and marketable skills. They had not been part of the early seamstress group that started this movement, although they eventually became strongly attached to Anita. They may have, justifiably, sensed some of the impracticalities in trying to make a permanent home for the *fa'afafine*. As one of them suggested to me, Hollywood may no longer have been a necessity for the *fa'afafine*. By the time it had disappeared as a venue, it was already deeply ingrained in their sensibilities and as one person put it, Hollywood had become "a state of mind." Another person suggested that wherever they would meet in Apia, whether at a home or under a tree, that would be "Hollywood."

Time, education, and experience had produced both the human resources and the motivations for staging the pageant. One respondent has produced an overview of the transformation of the *fa'afafine* at that time as it related to the pageant's purpose and its eventual presentation:

> It was around there that we started to see ... it was more than just to organize the pageant. There was more [to]... what we just did. The ball

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was all out there for us ... Our eyes were much [more] open now. There was [a] wider ... scan of opportunities for us and that's when we started taking note, started to sort of say, "You know, now what do I have as an individual? What kind of talent do I have? What do I have to offer for the benefit of others and in return will benefit me?" And then that's when the queens' [values] started to ... go a little bit higher ...They were changing. They were a little bit more meaningful. They were becoming diverted from what they used to be traditionally. To me it was more like... a new horizon of opportunities never before seen or experienced by the previous queens. The talent. There was a massive pool of it ... now beginning to come to reality. - Tala

The actual origins of the first pageant in 1983 can be traced to the young educated group that had become attached to Anita in the mid-1970s. They had produced a smaller, private event a year or so earlier at somebody's home which showcased a few of the *fa'afafine's* performance sensibilities. The general public had not been invited.

In addition to the educated group, the organizing committee of the 1983 pageant included a number of other key individuals from within the *fa'afafine's* network. They included their female colleague, Peta, as well as Michele (Michael) Peterson and Mulinu'u Mata'afa, both now deceased. Mulinu'u was sometimes referred to by the shortened version of his name, Nu'u, but was mostly known by his "girl" name, Ponty.[31] Anita also became involved to an extent in the pageant's development.

Another individual recalled the development of the 1983 contest:

... So we had ... people ... that had been in New Zealand, Fiji, either on courses or schooling, so we kind of pooled all our ideas together and that's how, you know, it eventuated. And we also, 'cause during that year, sometime in August or September, our friend Tony Schwenke (Anita) passed away, so we actually worked really hard and dedicated that Miss Drag Queen to her. I mean she was the one who did a lot of the background work also with meeting up with people, connecting with people, networking with a lot of people, and then we saw this as a culmination of, you know, of what we've been [doing]. Like I say, it was a showcase, not only physically but it brought in a lot of ideas, fashion, entertainment and also the money that we had for charity, and plus, you know, the money that we got helped different individuals. ... - Fono

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As outlined earlier, the pageant took on various forms of significance for different individuals. Peta had specific objectives for the pageant:

> ... I thought well, it would be a good thing to get them all working [together] and... so for a few months they were really occupied and focussing [on] the pageant... It was the first time ever in the history in Samoa that they could display their talents, the things that they were actually [good at], their skills, and also it displayed a lot of the sewing skills from the ones that were actually doing the garments, because the garments were just outrageous, they were really fantastic. You saw them yourself. It created a lot of business for our talented sewers ... most of the costumes were all mainly done by the *fa'afafines*. A lot of them got invited to parties to entertain because of that. Because they could see that they were not just as a *mala*. It was that they had talents too, you know, to share with others. And a lot of respect [came] out of those pageants and a lot of appreciation from the public, and not only that, they got what they wanted. You know, being exposed as how they were dressed. As women! (emphatic). - Peta

Peta's contribution did not involve artistic input or the design of the show. She contributed resources and infrastructure. However Peta had a larger goal for them. She wanted some of them to be able to continue to benefit through the earning of their own resources. She also wanted to establish a permanent center for their activities. But that was not to be, as Peta describes:

> I wanted to have a solid thing for them and that was my intention, to ...
> buy something, put them all into there and ... have [it] be their thing.
> Q: Buy a building?
> A: Yeh. That is really where I was setting my goals for so that [it] will just be [like] Hollywood, and that's where every *mala* can go to as a home. Every one of them. But it didn't work out the way I wanted it. - Peta

For some *fa'afafine* there were other goals. For those such as Moli it was a matter of certain basic rights that they felt should be theirs. They felt that their reputations had been tainted by the behavior of a few *fa'afafine* in the town area in the 1970s.

So [we] decided to have the drag [queen] thing as for us to try to put something into the community, plus our freedom ... Because some of the drag queens were using the dress to go out and fool the people that comes from outside, you know. So the law has to stop it... See, we weren't the one[s] that did it. So that's why we started this just to get our freedom back... Just because one of them did it, and then all got the blame. ... It took about three months to put the thing together and then we had the aim to donate to the Mapuifagalele, the old people's home, and the children for the retarded, and the Red Cross. So that is how it got started. Plus Peta wanted us to save some of the money so that we could buy a place for the drags. For the young ones that doesn't have work.
Q: Like a drop-in center?
A: Like if they drop out of school and there's [a] club. It's like we wanted a club so that they could come and work and get their money instead of going on to the street. And by the end of the pageant, probably half the club didn't want to save the money. Because they said they're going to leave. ...So we end up splitting the money and leaving some of it for the following year. Then we had a party afterwards, the following week ...
- Moli

The issue of life on the street was a problem for some *fa'afafine*. The Samoan economy was in difficulty at that time (Shankman, 1993). Some *fa'afafine* were poorly educated and could not get work. Money from casual prostitution may have contributed to various personal efforts for a few. Those *fa'afafine* who were stay-at-homes may have lacked spending money as compared to their confreres who worked. And then there was the issue of the police, who, as has been discussed earlier, felt obliged under the law to constrain prostitution and female impersonation.

Another, tangential motivation for the pageant may have been related to local gender politics itself. The real girls of Samoa had been part of beauty pageants since the mid-1970s. I have attended a number of them. The Miss Samoa contests showcased Samoan costumes as well as Western dress such as bathing suits and gowns, and various expressions of talent. The young women were judged on their Samoan dancing which was performed in traditional costumes.

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There had been a mostly congenial competitiveness of sorts between the *fa'afafine* and real girls on a number of fronts. The first was the performance of duties in the home. Political economy aside, there is a general feeling in Samoa that the *fa'afafine* do these things better. As far as some *fa'afafine* were concerned, they were also in competition with the girls in certain ways for the favors of men. Some have boasted to me that they outshine the girls, even in beauty, and some do. Despite having an advantage due to their stronger bodies, some *fa'afafine* still claim superiority over the women in netball, a claim which some females receive with bemusement. On the point of femininity, only a few *fa'afafine* could surpass a woman in beauty, but in dance and production values they excelled. In the collective attempt to show that they were at least as talented and a better-organized group than the girls, points could be scored with the general community. One person argued that the girls were always dependent on outsiders for organizational and artistic support, whereas the *fa'afafine* could justifiably claim that not only were they as entertaining as the girls, they did most of the work themselves.

1983 was a year of celebration in Samoa. The South Pacific Games had been held there for the first time. Spectacle, it appears, was in demand that year. The Miss Samoa Drag Queen Pageant was to be a partly Western-style beauty pageant but modeled in part after the Miss Samoa contests held by the real girls.

Community Reaction and the *Fa'afafine* Response

It was after rehearsals began that word got out that a *fa'afafine* pageant was to be held. Many people probably had no idea what a drag queen pageant was, but there was a perceived reaction from some of the public. It has been hard to determine its exact

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strength, but it is mentioned as being important and something that gave the committee some pause. It was also feared that the police might prevent the show from being presented. Public perception of the urban *fa'afafine* was still contextualized by some as something that was odd, unSamoan, or at times offensive. On the more positive side, while there was a sense of more accommodation of this modern form, perhaps a better appreciation of their "pure talents" as one person suggested, there was a need to have the accommodation of the *fa'afafine* re-affirmed in public. They desired more than the appreciative or amused gaze of a passersby at netball at the reclaimed area, or in nightclubs or talent shows. As one respondent put it, there was a need for a more "totalizing acceptance."

Impression Management

The organizers knew that great care had to be taken in contextualizing the drag queen expression in a way that would be palatable to the population. The Samoan motif of *tautua* became one of the spin-offs of the pageant's activities. The decision was taken to donate a portion of the proceeds to charity. Mapuifagalele, the home for the aged, run by the Little Sisters of the Poor, was chosen as a beneficiary of the pageant's proceeds. One individual has contextualized these donations in terms of impression management, in particular with respect to the authorities:

> So we might as well do something for the government so that [they] know that we're spending the money on something [useful], and because we're thinking of the next, of 1984, ... so the next time we have it, so everybody will be donating, and the government will be very pleased with what we did with the money. - Iona

Iona equates their caution with respect to the public with anticipated responses of the government. Iona is probably alluding to notions of impression management with respect to authorities and opinion leaders in general.

In line with Iona's fears, Tesi, who attended some of the organizing meetings, and was one of the new, well-educated *fa'afafine*, speaks of the deliberateness of the decision to donate to charity:

> I remember distinctly the discussions pertaining to the charities that were going to be given, and the reasoning behind why they were going to donate to charity, 'cause there were a couple of people who didn't want to give any money to charity. It was a deliberate, calculated attempt to win over the public in terms of reaffirmation. It was. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind about that.
> Q: Through this *tautua*,
> A: Through this *tautua*. It wasn't that they just sat down and said, "Ah it would be nice you know, it makes a good name." They calculated it and they deliberately said "this is what we're going to do because this is what's going to happen." they knew what they were doing.

For another person, it was the practicalities of choosing Mapuifagalele.

> A lot of us said well, Mapuifagalele, knowing its a social and traditional concept in Samoa whereby we have to look after our parents and the elderlies, so they just said, "Well we've got the elderlies up at Mapuifagalele. Why not make it a priority." We said, "OK, that's one." And one other queen said, "And that's where most of you will be ending up in." And its a big laugh, and I mean, now if I think about it I'd say, we did laugh about it, but if you think about it now, because we don't have any kids to look after us when we grow [old], it may be the only possible place. I mean we do have our own families to look after us, but I mean ... some of us who now have much higher education said look, "I don't want to intervene with your privacy. ... You've got your kids. They're growing up. They'll be having husbands, children of their own. They need privacy and I do not want them to look after me. It's a burden for them." - Sila[32]

Tautua

As we have seen earlier, the notion of *alofa* connotes affect, empathy, reciprocity, and material support. Service or *tautua* to the collective is also of prime importance in the

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Samoan culture (Macpherson, 1994; Shore, 1982). Some respondents have regarded the *fa'afafine's* contributions to Samoan society over the years as *tautua*, or service to the country. Certainly, in the broader connotations of the term, the reciprocal relations found in *tautua* apply to the relationship between the *fa'afafine* and Samoan civil society. As Macpherson has understood remittances, a form of *tautua*, as a "...visible expression of commitment" to "...spiritual and social bonds..." (Macpherson, 1994:84) so the *fa'afafine's* support of various charities would tend to deflect the "deviant" label attached to their perceived individualistic, indolent, and hyperfeminine activities that were in opposition to traditional Samoan collectivist sensibilities.

Like a number of fundamental Samoan motifs such as *feagaiga*, the connotations of *tautua* have greatly expanded over a century and a half of contact. A high chief first explained the importance of *tautua* to the *matai* to me as a cornerstone of Samoan cohesion, along with the terms *fa'aaloalo* (respect) and *alofa* (love). The service by children to their elders is also a fundamental form of *tautua* (Macpherson, 1994). As the educated increasingly became the beneficiaries of more Western cultural and monetary capital, *tautua* through financial and status advantages has modified the playing out of service to the *matai* compared to activities such as plantation labor (Meleisea, 1987b).

Tautua has become decidedly commoditized as has the *fa'alavelave*, which we explored earlier. Businesses now speak of providing good *tautua* or service. In its playing out, as Macpherson (1994) has noted, *tautua* is still a deep expression of fundamental reciprocal relations. The entire Samoan nation can be seen to be a potential beneficiary of the service or *tautua* of others. *Tautua* in the modern sphere has also been contextualized as good deeds.

The range of connotations of *tautua* can be more broadly understood in terms of the following observations, first from a local scholar:

> There are names given to different kinds of *tautua*. For instance, one kind consists in preparing the food for the chiefs; another consists in donating money and goods to *fa'alavelave*; yet another is fighting ... on behalf of one's chief. But the concept remains ever that of service, of giving without expectation of a reward. The irony is, of course, that one does not expect a reward because custom dictates it must be given anyway. – Samoan scholar

His last idea sets up the conditions of *tautua* which would also apply to the *fa'afafine*. As they served the community through their charitable contributions, custom would dictate that they should have something in return. The "something" in their case would be a kind of recognition, respect, esteem, honor, and acceptance in the general community as people who had fulfilled their sacred corporate obligations. With the expansion of the connotations of *tautua*, we can see how that might take place as Timu, a well-educated professional explains:

> Well, first of all the notion or the concept of *tautua*, it can be a narrow perspective; it can be a much wider perspective. Certainly within our families, you know, its service to our families, but also has a general meaning where you could do *tautua* to the nation through a business that you provide. You could do *tautua* to the people of the country through community work that you do. For example, with respect to the *fa'afafine*, this fundraising for charitable work, it's *tautua* to the community and to the country.[33] -Timu

A number of other respondents have viewed the *fa'afafine's* contributions as *tautua* to the community. Valelia of a generation earlier has also contextualized this form of contribution on the part of the *fa'afafine* as *tautua*, whereas she contextualized their contributions to the My Girls as part of the reciprocal *alofa* motif. The *fa'afafine* as Samoans not only were viewed as providing *tautua*, they have also deliberately tried

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> ...to do something that's beneficial to [the] community. To establish the *tautua* form. – Lea

Whether deliberate in the political sense, as the well-educated Tesi has implied, or just a necessary or "natural" part of being affirmed as party to the obligations of the *fa'aSamoa*, as another person inferred, the consequences of these contributions, as *tautua*, were very positive.

The Presentation of a New Identity

Tautua notwithstanding the *fa'afafine* had other impressions to manage. With respect to the first pageant, Iona, along with some others organizing or helping out, was concerned with the impression that the public had of the *fa'afafine*, and felt that it had to be made more aware of their ability to contribute to the community at large through this production. They wanted to present a more positive version of their public identity.

> We wanted to show them that ... we can do it, and because, as they kept on making fun of us and all that, then why not show them, and that would keep [their mouths] shut. – Iona

One of the participants in the pageant suggested that there was a deliberate attempt to couch things in Samoan feminine terms and put on an excellent production. Another suggested that there was only one way to keep "mouths shut," namely decorum:

> There was a lot of families that came to watch, but whether the message was obvious or not or implied, I think it was a way of getting ... the queens to be confident that they could ... dress up like that, providing that, you know, they take on ... responsibilities of behav[ing] accordingly. You know, you didn't want them to be dressing up and walking around [the stage] kicking up their legs, you know. There was that decency element to it. – Fala

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Yet another individual commented there were also old scores to settle with respect to identity imputations that had been current about them, which the drag queen pageant could help address:

> We wanted to switch the whole thing. ... There were a lot of well-educated queens, a lot of well-economically-stationed queens. We wanted to have the community see us as more of a different character than what we used to be seen as, you know: entertainers, you know, pieces, [and erotic objects]! You know, that kind of an image. So that was an invisible goal of [the pageant] which was a big accomplishment. We switched the whole view of the community. ...
> Q: You mentioned professional.
> A: Yeh.
> Q: That's interesting. What do you mean by that?
> A: OK, we wanted people to see us as being people with much higher values, you know. People who are capable of doing something for others. People who can be self-sustained, people who are high intellects.
> Q: And the notion of entertainers and [erotic objects] is obviously a lower identity.
> A: It's a very low identity then. You know, they only [got] to see us as being, you know, domestic creatures, good domestic people. They never get to see us as being people who have pure talents.
> Q: Pure talents?
> A: They see us as women. The kind of women they see us being... were just to wash the dishes, do the washing, look after the kids, look after the grandparents, clean the houses, we'll do the weaving. Those kind of female roles.
> Q: The *tautua*.
> A: The *tautua*, yeh.
> Q: And you, I sense, wanted to, I mean you didn't mind *tautua* because tautua is part and parcel of this society...
> A: Yes, we're going to *tautua* in a different way. From a different perspective. A more modern one. Different from the old one, you know. Go out. Pursue what you're best in. Serve the community. Serve your family. Do what is best for you, not for the benefit of others but for you as well. You know, get a good reputation at the same time. That sort of a thing. - Niu

The *fa'afafine* had gradually emerged into the public sphere through netball, tailoring and professional work. The drag queen pageant, however, would be something different. It would move the *fa'afafine* and the organizing committee to another level.

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They intended to take control of a set of public venues of their own choosing, and on their own terms, for a specific, rather radical purpose, and invite the public. This initiative included renting prime pieces of real estate. These included a practice hall for rehearsals and the facilities of a local hotel. They staged the show, made many of the costumes, designed the brochures, and sold the tickets. They located the judges and looked for sponsors. In other words, they mobilized a comprehensive set of resources and did it with competence. They also had an audience to convince and felt that they would have to use this opportunity well. As one informant put it, the key for the *fa'afafine* over many years of emergence as a collective in the urban area was to be seen to be competent and to excel. They would speak to one another in terms that for them, failure, or a shoddy performance, was unacceptable.

There was little doubt in the minds of some of the organizers that this initiative could go either way. It could be rejected as soon as word got out that they were going to present it. There was some trepidation that the police might put a stop to it, given the law on cross-dressing, earlier police interventions and some persistent rumors. Anita, who had been visiting Samoa had just died, and her networks into the police department were no longer available to the *fa'afafine*. The owners of the venues could refuse to rent them space, or it could go off without a hitch. Not all of these fears were realized, although some were. In the first place their venue of first choice refused to rent them space. The organizers settled for the Tiafau Hotel, a venue since demolished.

Whereas business support was easy to find for the real girls, and some local businesses were accustomed to sponsoring netball and rugby teams and contributing to various causes, it was difficult to secure business support for this event.

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The first pageant everybody was a bit scared to ... have any connection, to be known in that they were actually helping out the *malas*. Everybody was scared ... I noticed that everybody did not want to be known to be connected to any of that, any of the pageant ... It took a lot of guts for anybody to give us any prizes. – Peta

A community that normally supported public activities through donations probably had little idea what the drag queen form was or if it would be an embarrassment, given still current impressions of the *fa'afafine* amongst some. A major sponsor that took a chance on them was South Pacific Island Airways (SPIA), now defunct. Polynesian Airlines, a locally owned carrier, provided a prize of a free trip to Honolulu for the winner. The *fa'afafine* simply had to rely on many of their own resources. The *fa'afafine* seamstresses, however, had no hesitation in providing both the material and the labor for the dresses and gowns that would be worn.

Connection to Elites

Another important resource from a cultural standpoint was the eventual patronage of the late Princess To'oa Salamasina Malietoa of the Samoan royal family. She was one of the most highly regarded women in the country. The presence in the *fa'afafine* group of Ponty Mata'afa, the son of Samoa's first prime minister, who came from a family of the highest rank, it is felt also helped. In a real sense, the *fa'afafine* had moral support through both direct and peripheral elite connections. Another person from one of the highest traditional elite families was a judge at the pageant. It has been suggested that these connections were effective in impression management.

Princess Salamasina, whom two people remember being in attendance in the first year, had by the following year lent her wholehearted support to the pageants. She has

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been referred to by some organizers as "our patron." At the first contest her support was felt in the form of some of the costumes worn by some contestants, which were made at Paupatea, the girls' school where she was the principal. Two *fa'afafine* organizers of the pageant who were also contestants were employed as teachers at her school. Princess. Salamasina also supported other activities such as the real girls' beauty pageants.

Princess Salamasina was a *taupou*, the highest feminine personage in the country. She represented the epitome of the decorum entrusted to females in Samoa. One respondent proffered the following:

> Well, basically [she was] a humanitarian and I think
> She was the last great one [who] ever lived in this country. She was
> very aware of the dilemma that confronts *fa'afafine* in our society and also
> the service that they, you know, that they've done to Samoa. Well, like in
> every home there is a *fa'afafine* and in Samoa it's sometimes regarded as a
> *mala*, I suppose you know all [about] that one.
> Q: From the word *malaia*.
> A: Yes *mala* is, you know, *mala*, you're a curse or something like
> that... I think [she] was very aware of this. And also apart from
> supporting, she also felt sorry for them. ... You know her
> feelings would run very deeply in this because of the ambivalent nature
> of the *fa'afafine*. Predominantly a *fa'afafine* wants to be a woman and
> adopt the woman's side of life, so she respected this too. She was a person
> that whatever walk of life you are she would welcome you with open arms
> and look after you and, you know, this was her philosophy in life. You
> have to be kind to somebody because you don't know where your feet will
> take you. Someone else will be kind to you. So I think likewise, she treats
> the *fa'afafine* just like her girls at Paupatea school. ... But during the time
> when she was the president or patroness of the *fa'afafine*, some *fa'afafine*
> group, she just treats them like everybody else. – Ake

Princess Salamasina can be said to be one of the *fa'afafine's* most important traditional elite conscience constituents of that period. I was present in 1990 when one of the organizers asked her to be a judge at that year's drag queen pageant. The Princess attended and added dignity to the event.

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Constraints

The organizers of the 1983 pageant felt that decency as regards language and body displays had to conform to the community's standards. Socially acceptable displays would be paramount for contextualizing this pageant. Impression management, evident through the pageant, was related to the dignified presentation of Samoan femininity as well as the *fa'aSamoa*. As female body displays had been performed or visualized by *fa'afafine* as representing their sensibilities, there was no notion of faking anything:

> I think a lot of what we eventually end[ed] up with, the final product is really part of growing up. You know, when you were young there was dancing around you. You decided, you know, you didn't want to do the masculine dance. Well, you didn't decide, it just look[ed] normal that you did the feminine dance, and you weren't actually asked to go up and perform, you know, because girls were there to do it, but in-built, you know, you were that. If you're given the chance to do it, they're surprised that you could do it really well. Some people did it much better than actual girls ... And so up we went and did it, and that was it. You know, it wasn't coached. It was there. ...
> – Niu

Being the second choice for this sort of performance has been a sticking point for some *fa'afafine*. They had male bodies, but some could perform as well as women. If given a chance, part of their "essential" identities, the feeling of being feminine, could be projected as a claim to a more authentic femininity.

One respondent reminded me of the oft-repeated theme, that while there were predispositions in Samoa for support for the *fa'afafine* as kin, they felt that the public could turn against them if they weren't respectful. The public had to be won over. On the other hand, Samoan families can be very supportive of their kin, especially if they have dutifully served the family and acted respectfully. While the pageant organizers couldn't

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predict how the general public was going to react, their families were likely to be their best supporters.

One of the contestants recalls one of the choices he had to make regarding his own personal identity vis-à-vis the audience:

> A: We were treading on nerve, you know and,
> Q: Thin ice as they say?
> A: Yes. Because we really didn't know what to expect from the audience ... I remember [the emcee] ... introducing me and ... I didn't make a secret of my profession and what I was (a *fa'afafine*), and where I work as well, you know. I tell you, I wasn't going to, what do you call it, delete some of the facts about myself because I was afraid that people would find it offensive or would be offended. I said "tough," you know.... My mother was there in full support so that was that. And... [the emcee] said [later] ... [that] some people in the audience ...sitting next to people that I knew said, "Oh, what a bloody politics."...What was I doing parading up here, you know, being a *fa'afafine*. So I sort of, I found it rather amusing (he says with a chuckle in his voice) when I learned about it after (he chuckles). - Toma

The notion of "a bloody politics" captures the significance of interpersonal politics, persuasion, and impression management that the *fa'afafine* had to address at this event. On the other hand, they had support from significant individuals who were in attendance. One young *fa'afafine* at school in Apia was a spectator at the pageant. He recalls the speech of one official which described the *fa'afafine* as special people with gifts, talents, and abilities to serve the family and society. One professional who was an advisor to the *fa'afafine* has referred to some people at the contest as supportive of the *fa'afafine* "cause."

Still, impressions had to be managed. One organizer recalls one of the older *fa'afafine* urging the contestants to return to their families and begin to *teu le va*—that is, to make sure that their relationships with their families were in good order, in part to get

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their short-term support. This person felt that the point was to minimize the risk of failure by ensuring this sort of family involvement. It was also understood that some of the families would have to be relied upon to help the contestants construct the elaborate traditional wear made of Samoan leaves, flowers, and plants.

The Costumes

The organizers not only set up strict codes for dress and decorum but also for the style of apparel to be worn. For example, some advocated a swimsuit event, while to others that was an anathema. One participant suggested that they felt themselves to be too chubby to parade around in swimsuits. Another found it too far removed from the dignity of the *fa'aSamoa* to be palatable, not only to the audience but to the contestants themselves. In the end there was no swimsuit event. They decided to leave swimsuits to the "real girls."

In addition to the traditional wear, the contestants would have to wear a *puletasi* (the type of female dress introduced by the missionaries), a modern casual dress, and a gown. Each costume had to be constructed according to certain specifications.

While a number of individuals contributed ideas to the overall presentation of the pageant, including the costumes, Ponty Mata'afa is mentioned as being a substantial contributor to the show's design.

A Question of Rights

Shortly after word of the contest got out, the organizers heard that the police might shut them down. The alleged grounds for this resistance to the contest was the

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long- standing issue that they would be impersonating females. It has been suggested that certain unnamed antagonists had reacted negatively to the prospect of the pageant being held and had alerted the police.

The notion of rights was something that the younger, educated *fa'afafine* had brought back with them from overseas. It was also a general motif, certainly in the town area. The young lawyers who had returned to Samoa by the mid-1970s, had been using the constitution as a source of furthering certain individual and collective rights. The paralyzing Public Service Association strike of 1981 (Shankman, 1984) and the "crisis" surrounding the constitutionality of the voting system, in a sense, had provided somewhat of a master frame in the country regarding rights. Some *fa'afafine* were not immune to these new sensibilities. However, as Peta points out, while their movement was not an agitating, rights-based movement, the younger, well-educated *fa'afafine* contextualized things in terms of rights:

> It's the ones that have the Western influence that would say "yes of course, we want our rights to be what were are". To dress up ... and be accepted the way they dressed, the way they walked, the way they do things.
> Q: But then they wouldn't put that in a group and say, "Ok group we are going to protest for our rights."
> A: No! Never!
> Q: And that's the sense that I have. There was a sense of rights but it wasn't translated into [confrontational] action like that.
> A: Possibly now with Melinda coming along in the picture, she might influence [a] few of them to go into a march to say, "We want our rights." But in those days, back then... [no].

At one point during the preparations the organizers decided that they had to get some advice with respect to their right to actually put on the contest, as the rumors regarding a shut down were persisting. They consulted an advisor who was well-known

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to them. He decided to consult the police for clarification. He recalls discussing the issue with the police:

> ... I found out from the police that the only objection that they had was that "a crime is about to be committed." And I said, "Well which one?" And then they pointed to me this section, that they're impersonating, dressed up in public as females. And that's when I looked at the section and said, "put me over to the commissioner" because the sergeant I was talking to couldn't understand what I was talking ...[about] – Saofa'i

Their advisor made the argument that impersonating a female was not a crime in this case. It was only problematic if it were for some sort of gain. Everyone would know through the event and the advertising that these would be males who would be acting as females. Nothing would be hidden. The police agreed. Prior to the show, however, their advisor vetted parts of the dress rehearsal for potential illegality.

In my discussions with him he recalled that the notion of rights was uppermost on the organizers' minds:

> Q: But with the *fa'afafine*, when they came to you ...
> A: It was [about] their rights.
> Q: You talked about rights.
> A: That's how they felt. That they had been discriminated against. That all this (female) beauty pageant were put on without any problems and now they want to do this ... It was their rights. And they wanted the constitutional argument or whatever argument that, because they do have a right and you're quite right, they felt that with everybody else taking the matters of their rights to court and having it questioned, they felt, well, they have the right to defend too and to be established, yes. – Saofa'i

I tried to establish if there was any sense of a relationship between this action and notions related to the gay rights movement overseas. Saofa'i answered:

> We were aware of what was going on in the West, but we were aware of it as something that was happening out there, and something that will not happen here. – Saofa'i

Saofa'i also made sure to register the drag queen pageant as a legal entity. Rights notwithstanding, the pageant, which included the public presentation of a femininity that would have Western imagery, also had to be palatable to the sensibilities of Samoans.

The Presentation of Samoan Femininity

In the drag queen pageants, each contest performs choreographed numbers that demonstrate a heightened sense of Samoan femininity and Western elegant status. The presentations that I have seen are not lascivious but tend to be dignified, the essence of the signification found in the *taupou* motif.[34] Tesi describes the importance of these presentations in terms of this motif:

> And part of …the need to be accepted as a woman within the Samoan context is the concept of *le* taupou. *Le taupou* is the epitome, as we spoke yesterday, of womanhood. She sets the examples for the rest of the women in the village to follow, and she's the one who the rest of the women will be measured against. And anything and everything relating to the ideology of taupou has to be considered by the *fa'afafines* if they want to emulate this epitome of womanhood or *le taupou*, this notion or this abstract concept of *taupou*. And if they wanted to be accepted, or if they wanted this affirmation or confirmation of acceptance from the community, then the actions and everything that they [did] relating to the ideology of *taupou* [had] to be on par or better than what the girls [did].
> - Tesi

In the drag queen contests that I have witnessed in Samoa up until 1996, the *taupou*-like form and the illusion embodied in the conservative missionary-inspired *puletasi* dress are displayed with great respect. A calm, dignified, "virginal" look often accompanies these presentations.

Traditional Samoan wear can take on many forms. It often constructed from natural materials, like leaves and flowers, that represent the materials used in Samoa's pre-and-post-Christian past. Of late, variations on the *taupou* costume, with the *tuiga*, the traditional headdress, can be seen. On one occasion one contestant wore an elaborate

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flower dress. It was constructed from hundreds of leaves of the ginger flower, glued to a paper inner shell, and painstakingly prepared on the day of the pageant. In many cases the pride and support of the family is expressed through their participation in the construction of the traditional costumes. At the first contest, the only requirement was that the costume be made of natural materials.

In the early contests many of the *fa'afafine* tailors' skills were shown off. Only a few *fa'afafine* tailors now work in Samoa. The rest have moved overseas or have passed away. Increasingly, female couturiers have showcased their talents at the drag queen pageants.

Although the overall motif of dignity is maintained at these pageants, the evening's entertainment is also humorous and at times hilarious to the audience. Some of the contestants who look a little "odd" as females, turn their performances into pastiche and self-deprecating humor. Some, with excellent senses of humor, send the audience into gales of laughter. Others do both; they turn certain portions of their performances into humor while acting in a dignified manner in other portions. A few performers clown, due in part to the fact that they are not beautiful, nor talented, are perhaps a bit insecure, or because they have excellent senses of humor.

The Samoan *siva*, danced in a very feminine and traditional manner by the contestants, is an important motif. The audience customarily shows its appreciation during this part of the contest by ascending the catwalk and donating money, based sometimes on the excellence of the performance, and at other times because it is kin who are performing. The money is sometimes thrown onto the catwalk or tucked into the contestants' bodices. This part of the pageant is an opportunity for friends and family

members to show support for their kin. It can also be a demonstration of family's ability to contribute and thus their competitiveness with other families, a kind of institutionalized local politics. It is also an opportunity for family members to dance with their *fa'afafine* relatives, embrace and kiss them, public displays that are reserved only for certain occasions. A competent presentation calls forth much attention from the audience.

The projection of the *taupou* motif, the dignity and propriety embodied in the *puletasi*, and the more modern casual wear and gown were all to involve apparel that had already been seen in Samoa. There had been many venues for its exhibition. These included the New Years Eve Ball, held at the Tivoli theatre in the old days; official colonial and later Government dances; dances and ceremonies held in the villages; or the beauty contests held annually by the real girls of Samoa. *Fa'afafine* as well as female couturiers had been reproducing these motifs for years.

As mentioned earlier, the desire to project femininity with all of the acceptable means at hand was already current amongst the *fa'afafine*. As one participant suggested, each contestant became an individual projection of a Samoan woman. This projection depended on knowledge of the culture and of its public feminine display forms, plus the notion of what it was to be a Western woman and a beauty pageant contestant.

Some important aspects of the drag queen contests are reminiscent of Davidson's (1967:199) account of Apia in the 1950's. He noted that Apians often had little to do in the evenings that was recreational. As Apia has expanded with migration from the villages, families have nucleated and business has grown, traditional ritual appears to have softened somewhat as a source of cultural solidarity (Samoan scholar, personal

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communication). There seems to be an increasing reliance on television and movies as a source of entertainment. A night out can also consist of a trip to a nightclub and a few hours of dancing, even for villagers. Spectator sport such as rugby, as well as participation in other sports is an outlet for some.

The drag queen contests seem to have provided a seasonal buffer against what Jameson (1984) might refer to as the "waning of affect" in the absence of traditional forms of sociation in the urban area. In addition to the femininity being projected on stage, the pageants I have seen are also a source of Samoan values, ritual, and decorum, albeit in a rather hybridized form. The *fa'afafine's* striving for perfection in their performances, their eagerness to entertain and to project Samoaness in various forms also creates, in a real sense, a conservative vehicle for aspects of Samoan culture. Their pageants can serve as a reminder of performances and cultural splendors long since set aside for other pursuits in the urban area.

The drag queen pageants, as they project classical forms, both reproduce the culture and reinforce the imbededness of the *fa'afafine* within that culture in novel ways. They also expand aspects of the identity of the *fa'afafine* which the latter wish to have understood. I believe that the drag queen pageants are made more salient because of the tensions engendered by the accompanying maleness of the performers, even though some are dead ringers for women.

The pageants can also be a humorous public spectacle. I have witnessed audiences literally hold their breaths for the very gifted performers, in awe, transfixed, as a traditional feminine performance is splendidly executed on stage by individuals with male bodies. The audience may laugh at a performance that is less successful. Humor can

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be deliberately built into the evening's entertainment, sometimes in a quasi-political sense. As one organizer put it, the point was to initially "hook" the audience with an entertaining spectacle. At the end of the performance she would then introduce the message that she and the contestants wanted to project—a message of serious, dignified femininity.

The First Pageant is Finally Held

The first pageant was held at the end of December 1983. For a period of time prior to the pageant, the public had begun to attend the dress rehearsals. Word had gotten out. On the day of the pageant, the Tiafau hotel was packed. A Christmas theme was part of the evening's decor.

The pageant's emcee had been carefully chosen for his humor and charm. Judges were selected from amongst members of the community. One foreign visitor was invited to judge, as was one traditional elite member of the community. Other important people had put in appearances, families were there, and the contestants and the organizers went about their business. As it turned out, the pageant was a hit. The overall winner was Ponty Mata'afa. One of the teachers at Princess Salamasina's school won the prize for "Miss Personality."

For the *fa'afafine* and the organizers, the pageant culminated a progression that had started in the 1960s as collective behaviors that had been consistently projected into the community, albeit sometimes contested. The success of the drag queen pageant was a sign of a liberation to some. To others it was a sign of further acceptance.

> You know, we got our freedom back. We were allowed to dress from that first pageant. You know, the next day everybody was in town with mini

skirts and we got our freedom back, so I think that's mostly what we wanted from it. – Moli

Moli's is just one of a number of viewpoints. For Peta, the success of the pageant was a relief, as she had worried about the outcome. She had hoped to see the *fa'afafine* become more respected. She had invested time and material resources, and had put her reputation on the line.

> I was very pleased. Everybody said, "Oh, you did a marvelous job." I was really pleased with the results, and not only that, [when] the second pageant came along [it was] so easy. Everybody was there to help. Whenever we asked for prizes, nobody hesitated. They didn't mind then to be associated with the *malas*. - Peta

The support from kin was also very gratifying. One informant described the feeling after the first pageant in the following way:

> And it was fantastic. Everybody had a wonderful, wonderful time and the *fa'afafines*, I think from that time onwards were looked upon with [a] somewhat different perspective. And I think everybody was happy. One of the most touching moments ... was a *fa'afafine* who had entered as a candidate in the ... show, who had her friends to come and dress her up, because her family would not support the *fa'afafine*-ness. [The family] all turned up.
> Q: The family all turned up?
> A: They came up.
> Q: Ultimately.
> A: Ultimately. They came on the night, apparently with no prior notice to this *fa'afafine* and when she walked out and looked at her mother, her mother got up and ran up, and oh, it was a touching moment. There were tears in everybody's eyes because, as everything else in Samoa, everybody knew what was going on in the background and it was no surprise that when the mother got up and ran up [on to] the catwalk ... that they all knew the background ... and they all joined into this, ... this one moment of togetherness ... Well, I still get goose bumps when I think of that ... - Moana

One participant, reflecting on the progress of the *fa'afafine* movement over the years, has suggested that the pageant reaffirmed what they had been trying to accomplish

for some time regarding the acceptance of their new lifestyle and feminine identity. He

saw it as one step, although perhaps the most significant one, in its gradual emergence

into the public sphere. Another participant, having later become informed in the theory of

struggles for recognition, put an analytical reality to the proceedings of that year as she

looked back:

> In hindsight, at the time we just [were] caught up in the excitement of it
> all. You know, but we can only reflect now and look at it and say, hey
> that's what we did. Maybe that's not what we intentionally did ... but that's
> what happened. And I think that there are also some cases, you know,
> throughout different struggles in the world, where you didn't know it at the
> time, but you know after looking at it, you think, "Wow, that was actually
> something that we did." And it was. I didn't realize the ramifications of
> what we did until maybe, you know, a little bit later, later on in life when
> you're in a position to appreciate things like the struggle for freedom ....
> [When you're] seventeen or eighteen you don't realize stuff like that.
> You're just happy to get up and have people look at you and think, "wow,
> you're gorgeous." You know, that's all you were worried about. That's all
> your major concern.
> Q: What about your leadership, do you think they ...
> A: I think in some respects they did, they did see it as empowerment, but
> ... I don't think they actually realized what they started. They didn't realize
> how much they ...empowered the *fa'afafine* movement [from] within, and
> declared, "Hey, we're coming, you know, the coming of age of *fa'afafine*
> in Samoa." They didn't realize the depth of what they'd done. – Tesi

While the drag queen pageant had the effect of increasing solidarity within the

fa'afafine community in Apia, a denouement soon followed, and with it, a fragmentation

of their community. While I have heard similar accounts from others, Tesi provides the

best general account:

> There was an increasing awareness of ourselves as a collective identity, as
> a collective unit, and we became particularly involved in things as one,
> you know, as a group, and used to be all centered around Hollywood[1] for
> discussions and for awhile that was the case. You know, there was this
> oneness about us, you know, and it's a feeling that is a remnant of the

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[1] This was a new Hollywood, a tailor shop operated by Michele Peterson circa 1982-1984, in a different venue, after the demise of the old Hollywood in 1978, and Anita's move to Pago Pago.

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success of the first drag queen pageant. But that didn't last so long, I'm sad to say, for a variety of reasons. But you know, in hindsight its [a] good thing it happened the way it did. And like they say, nothing good lasts forever, but for a while there, we were on a high, and we rode as one unit. And then the wave died down, and we broke off and did our own little thing I guess.

Q: How long in a sense were you one unit after that.

A: It was only for a period of three or four months. It all was to do with the money. ...

Q: So what you're saying is that sense of solidarity, the emotional, it disappeared.

A: Definitely.

Q: But you're not saying that the organization disappeared.

A: No, it didn't, it didn't disappear. It was just the high after the collective unit became two separate camps. One camp was divided in two. - Tesi

Some of the proceeds from the drag queen contest were presented to Mapuifagalele, the home for the aged. The *fa'afafine's* adherence to societal values in terms of *tautua* was recognized. In particular, their contributions to Samoa's only home for the elderly had its effect on the community's perception of them over time, as one well-educated individual has noted:

> Another important thing that I believe has helped endear ... the *fa'afafine* movement and what they're doing is the [financial] contribution, the money they give to Mapuifagalele. And Mapuifagalele represents the elderly of Samoa and they've touched the nerve, you know what I mean? We, as a people, you know ... our parents ... they might be at Mapuifagalele but that doesn't mean that we don't love them and care for them. But they represent the elderly of Samoa, our parents, and the fact that these *fa'afafines* raise all this money and the very next day go and make a presentation to the Mapuifagalele ... I think is another major [reason why they are appreciated]. – Tasi

The *fa'afafine's* contributions were appreciated by others in the community:

> ... It was announced on the radio for everybody to know that the *fa'afafines* have donated the money toward the help of the home of the aged. And there was some older people who wrote to us, thanking us for what they've done, and this is the first time that they've come up with something like that. It really brought us up to acceptance. That's their way of knowing that it's been appreciated.

> Q: Is that something that they hoped would happen? Did they hope they would get that kind of recognition?
> A: The reason we donated the money, we don't want people to think that the *fa'afafine* has no use whatsoever to the society. – Pita

A number of *fa'afafine* have noted the effect their contributions have had on the public's perception of them over time.

> Before, [in] those years we were not treated fairly. But now I think the community [is] accepting us 'cause of the work that we do and the money that we donated to various things here, so I think we are noticed now. – Ela

Summary

In this chapter we have explored the further development of the *fa'afafine's* fluid, esteem-and identity-based movement. This history involved a number of elements. These included a gentle politics of recognition, the further projection of femininity, and the honoring of cultural obligations through *tautua* or service to the community. Other elements included the confluence of well-educated returnees, their preparedness to explore the use of their constitutional rights, the appropriation of outside cultural forms and their contextualizing in Samoan terms, the presence of a long-standing activist culture, and a long-standing issue with respect to cross-dressing. They were also involved in the mobilization of resources such as financial and community support for their activities. This history paralleled the cognitive liberation of other Samoans in that time period. The pageant brought together a number of value streams, both Western and traditional.

Sympathetic advisors supported the drag queen pageant. They included individuals involved in a master frame of resistance generated by the civil service action in the early 1980s and tests of the constitution with respect to existing voting structures.

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The *fa'afafine's* relationships to elites were also important to this development. Business, professional and traditional elite individuals were involved in their emergence to varying degrees. We also saw the attempts of one person to formalize the *fa'afafine* activities in an omnibus organization with its own venue, reminiscent of Hollywood and the beginnings of some fragmentation of the *fa'afafine* movement.

The *fa'afafine's* drag queen pageants have differed from those in the West. They became a kind of kinship ritual. They were embedded in aspects of the *fa'aSamoa,* and attached the *fa'afafine* to certain Samoan reciprocal motifs. They helped overcome widely-held identity imputations with respect to the *fa'afafine's* perceived irresponsibility, perhaps their erotics, and their ability to self-regulate. Ultimately, the drag queen pageants made many *fa'afafine* central, and not peripheral, to the amusement and cultural milieu in Apia. These were all discreet and immediate results of a singular action that has been reproduced in various forms since 1983.

The concluding chapter of this dissertation provides an epilogue to the present account. It includes a description of some aspects of the *fa'afafine's* collective activities that have continued into the 1990s. Some results from the previous chapters are summarized and conclusions drawn. Areas for future research will be suggested. The last chapter also explores the manner in which the *fa'afafine* experience informs theory found in the social movement literature, social psychology, and interpretive structuralism that might be incorporated into the social movement schema.

Chapter 11: Concluding Chapter

> I think the young ones now and the ones that come up, I think they are very lucky. We are the ones that were fighting for this kind of life. Now the people are getting to understand more and more about the *fa'afafine*. In our time it was very hard. We fought for it and I think that these ones coming up now, they just walk and put their heads up. You know, people keep on saying things, but it is not as hard as when we were young in our day.
>
> - a *fa'afafine* who came of age in the 1960s

Epilogue: The *fa'afafine* Today

This thesis has traced aspects of the development of the *fa'afafine's* identity-based movement from the early 1960s to the mid 1980s. The forces and events that led to their transformation remain part of an ongoing and still fluid process. The collective behaviors of the early Hollywood network, their role in sport in the 1970s, and actions centered around the drag queen pageants in the 1980s, produced a number of organizational structures in which forms of collective activity continue to be reproduced and in which projects cast into the general community are organized. As before, the present *fa'afafine* activities are not agitating nor confrontational, notions which are an anathema to most *fa'afafine*. Rather, they are projections of identity and constructions of solidarity which continue to promote the inclusiveness of the *fa'afafine* in the public sphere in Apia. Some social elements and leadership from the *fa'afafine* group at Hollywood are still to be found in Samoa. The following observations briefly cover the period of the mid-1980s until 1999.

In Apia, the Seven Stars club, which emerged in the early 1980s as a derivation of the original Seven Stars team of the My Girls league continues to be involved in

fa'afafine netball activities, volleyball, and the annual Miss Samoa Drag Queen Pageants. The Seven Stars Club took complete responsibility for the production of the drag queen pageants around 1990 as the original organizers lost interest, moved away, or died. Other groups have also emerged that have produced pageants. One was short-lived and the other has just begun.

Of the leaders of the first drag queen pageant, Ponty Mata'afa, along with another person, was struck by an automobile in 1991 while walking with friends in Apia. He later died from his injuries. Another organizer has passed away. One female associate moved overseas, as did three other original organizers. Nonetheless, sufficient leadership and organizational apparatus remained for continuing activities. Recently a new leadership has emerged as even more sophisticated and educated *fa'afafine* have returned to Samoa or as others have matured.

The *fa'afafine* netballers reproduce other initiatives started by the *fa'afafine* in the My Girls group in the early 1970s. Their members support and participate in a local netball league organized by the netball Mother Union. Recently males have also been incorporated into netball activities in Samoa and compete in mixed and all-male teams also comprising females and *fa'afafine*. *Fa'afafine* are front and center in the organization of these activities. One of the former Hollywood group is part of this organization and has told me of his continued interest in the use of sport in the creation of solidarities and the integration of *fa'afafine* into the community. He has also noticed an improvement in the accommodation and understanding of the *fa'afafine* compared to the early years.

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Fa'afafine still help to raise funds for sporting activities. Some coach female netball teams, referee competitions, and help organize tournaments. Other athletic *fa'afafine* join in these activities either as players or referees.

As Mageo (1992, 1997) observed, a number of *fa'afafine* are involved in entertainment. Some are also involved in the arts. We have seen that *fa'afafine* were called upon to provide entertainment even back in the 1950s when Anita was young. This entertainment motif has now been reproduced for at least two generations. Some *fa'afafine* perform publicly overseas.

A local service club engaged one *fa'afafine* group to be part of a fundraiser in 1996, as did the local rugby union in the same year. In 1997 a foreign embassy engaged a group of *fa'afafine* to entertain at an embassy party. I recall a brief exchange at the Apia Park tennis club one Friday evening in 1997 on the topic of fundraising to refurbish the courts. The discussion centered on whether *fa'afafine* might be engaged as fundraisers.

On the island of Savai'i, the Salafai Stars, a new, rural *fa'afafine* group, have raised funds for the local soccer organization. They began their activities in 1996. Their organizers are schoolteachers, augmented by village *fa'afafine*. Part of their resource mobilization takes place through the sale of agricultural staples. They play netball and have organized drag queen pageants at local resorts on this more conservative island.

The fragmentation of the *fa'afafine* into different groups has been ongoing since the successes of 1983. In some ways this should be expected, given the range of characteristics differentiating the *fa'afafine* through ideational, structural, and material factors. The *fa'afafine* are differentiated by social group, age, personal interests, family background, and education.

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There is another reason for the differences in the *fa'afafine* community in Apia. Many Samoans have now grown into Apia as a national center. It contains modern, internationally connected infrastructure. A great deal of the Samoan population now dwells or works in its environs. There are simply more opportunities and venues for expression where all Samoans, including *fa'afafine*, can participate comfortably.

Some older *fa'afafine* feel that the young won't listen and are not respectful. It is possible that traditional Samoan forms of gerontocracy may no longer apply as much as they used to in the *fa'afafine* hierarchies, nor is the situation as focussed as it was in the early days at Hollywood. Respect for elders or elite structure may have been diluted by values conditioned by the materialism and commercialism that are evident in Samoa. In addition, however, there is now a new, more rationalized leadership that may also be of the type that requires less direct obedience, as compared to the use of consensual or democratic processes. It is also quite likely that there is, overall, a better-educated and more widely experienced membership.

The *fa'afafine* have achieved a level of comfort, sophistication, and accommodation, both individually and in their various urban groupings, that may not have been there in the 1960s and 1970s. There is the suggestion that they have also achieved a more positive public identity that may require less management. There are still *fa'afafine* who come in from the villages with nothing to do.

While the range of material and cultural capital available in Samoa may vary between individuals or groups, and the *fa'afafine* seem to be included in this tendency, the less educated are still well organized. There may also be some differences in opinion

between the *fa'afafine* groups on the question of what the still fluid gender identity of the *fa'afafine* really is, or should be.

In the mid-1990s, an individual who had been on the first *malaga* to Savai'i with Valelia, attempted to establish an umbrella organization for the *fa'afafine* in order to create solidarity in "the community." This person named the new organization My Girls, evoking a sense of continuity with the past. Very few of the participants would have been old enough to recall the old My Girls league and the original active *fa'afafine* situated at or networked to Hollywood. Contending factions in the new My Girls soon destabilized it, and it fell apart after a short time.

These specific instances aside, it is possible that, as Samoa is presently constituted and *fa'afafine* activities configured, complete solidarity of the kind found at Hollywood may no longer be necessary for the *fa'afafine*, unless some issue arises requiring certain forms of response. This could conceivably lead to some sort of self-regulating umbrella organization.

One of the organizations made up of well-educated and somewhat cosmopolitan *fa'afafine* has attempted to build bridges between some groups and individuals through various activities and gestures of support. It has also tried to include the talents and energy of recently returned, well-educated *fa'afafine* in the organization of activities in the public sphere.

The different *fa'afafine* groups also support one another in public activities. There is still the sense that the very fact of being *fa'afafine* or *mala* evokes mutual recognition and a general sense of belonging. Some of the current leaders appear to have the "forward vision" that Anita had, although they never knew her.

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In spite of some tensions, accommodation of the *fa'afafine's* collective identity

has been almost universal since 1983, except for occasional rumblings from ideologically

conservative denominations. One hears no negativity towards the *fa'afafine* from

members of the Samoan government who, to my knowledge, have never been involved in

their repression. On the contrary, I have met members of parliament who valorize

fa'afafine and have expressed a positive interest in both their emergence and their

contributions to society. Some have been judges at their drag queen pageants.

Some *fa'afafine* who are old enough to make comparisons feel that they are better

understood now and that things are easier for them than they were previously. One

mentioned that the *fa'afafine* have "come a long way." Thus, the various "explanations"

of themselves that they have projected gently and collectively over the years seem to

have fallen on receptive ears. This easiness may correlate with increased overseas

contacts, more education in the society in general, and the *fa'afafine's* own place within

that milieu of achievement.

AIDS has been an issue for the *fa'afafine* as regards their public identity. One of

the older *fa'afafine* who had been networked to the Hollywood group since the 1960s has

devoted herself to AIDS awareness as part of an international initiative on AIDS in the

Pacific. The *fa'afafine* utilize careful impression management in order to distance

themselves from the public's impression of them as possible carriers.[35] Their drag queen

pageants can become venues for the negotiation of the politics of AIDS.

The 1996 drag queen pageant was dedicated to AIDS prevention. One contestant,

dressed in a starched, white nurses uniform and cap, used her talent routine to deliver a

monologue to the audience about how AIDS could be prevented. Her presentation was

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well received and appeared to convey the impression that the *fa'afafine* were "on top" of the problem and were taking the initiative regarding responsible sexual conduct. Another contestant, when asked during the question portion of the pageant, what general advice she would give to the youth of Samoa, answered sweetly and spontaneously, but very satirically with the words, "Be good! And stay away from the *fa'afafine*!" It was a very endearing response, and the audience was moved to laughter and applause.

With a general acceptance of their various cultural projects has come an increased confidence amongst many *fa'afafine*. I have been told that there is a sense amongst the few, young, daytime cross-dressers in town that what they do is their right. On the other hand, some well-educated *fa'afafine* question the necessity of cross-dressing in maintaining public identity when other forms of esteem and identity production are now possible.

One individual who had been involved in their productions in the 1980s suggested that the drag queen contest may have served its purpose and may no longer be necessary in establishing public identities. Yet, these pageants are still welcome and well-attended events in Samoa. Some individuals have a disdain for cross-dressing for personal or professional reasons. In some venues cross-dressing professionals would not be appreciated. Some are quite comfortable with and enjoy cross-dressing and indeed claim that it defines their identities. Some employers in Apia still support the cross-dressing of their *fa'afafine* employees.

Accommodation has influenced more than self-confidence and cross-dressing. The drag queen form has become commoditized. For example, a weekly professional show is staged at a local club in Apia. The organizer and choreographer, a very talented

fa'afafine, has made female impersonation and entertainment her livelihood. This activity began modestly in 1989 when a local nightclub hired her as a singer. Now she provides employment to about a dozen people—women, *fa'afafine* and males, who either perform in the show or are in "the trades," providing such things as music, lighting and bartending. The show is very professional. This entrepreneur is also involved in identity politics in the sense that she attempts to represent the *fa'afafine* as people worthy of respect. She is known in Auckland's gay and Samoan communities, has appeared in television programs overseas, and has represented Samoa as a contestant in an international drag queen pageant in Hawaii. She was supported by well-educated *fa'afafine* in Apia who participate in the arts. She and some members of her troupe occasionally travel overseas to perform in Samoan communities.

Accommodation and education have encouraged other artistic expressions. There have been attempts amongst a group of artistic *fa'afafine* to use Western forms of the serious arts in order to engage the public. A *fa'afafine* performing arts network wrote and staged an original production in English for the community in Apia in 1997. The play utilizes a Samoan legend to dramatize hegemonic and psychological issues for women. For example, the main female character in one play says to her mother, words to the effect, "Mother, I am so insecure," in relation to a dilemma or individual choice with which the character must deal. I have been told that original plays about lives of Samoans, individually constructed and managed, internally conflicted, critically analyzed, and publicly performed, as happens in serious plays from the West, are not often seen in Samoa. These notions, however, have not developed in isolation. They had

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earlier become part of the writing tradition of Samoan novelists and poets (see Dunlop, 1993). This *fa'afafine* arts group have made them part of public performance.

The *fa'afafine* arts group also associated themselves with women in the arts and females who enter the Miss Samoa "real girls" pageants. Members help with costumes, makeup, and presentation. The members of this group have good jobs, are well educated, and bright. Some come from elite families. One told me that this kind of involvement with women serves as surrogate feminine behavior for them.

Fa'afafine who have recently returned from studies or work overseas are in various professions connected with academia, tourism, and the Samoan bureaucracies. *Fa'afafine* schoolteachers have risen in the educational hierarchy. Some are part of management. Some of these well-educated individuals are being incorporated into *fa'afafine* activities by the new, well-educated group that has established itself in Apia in the last few years.

In spite of the changes to the *fa'afafine* community in Samoa and its further integration into Samoan public life, teasing and belittling still occur. I have heard the term "poufter" and "poufie" applied to them in the town area. "Faggot" is another term that I have recently heard. Some of the well-educated *fa'afafine* feel that they still have to take care in the presentation of self and their public identities and the lengths to which they go in projecting these into the community. A few still worry about the cost to the reputations of their families of their *fa'afafine*-ness.

Some active *fa'afafine* have tended to remain aware of the potential delicacy of their position in Samoa. They realize that their current salience and acceptance in the urban areas could elicit reaction from some aspects of the community. Yet, in spite of

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some negative reactions, the *fa'afafine* continue to expand their activities with the direct and tacit support of others.

Some of these activities have involved some interesting performances in Apia over the last four years. One event was a float assembled by a few professional *fa'afafine* performers for the 1997 Independence Day parade at the behest of the parade's organizers. It included rather "provocative" feminine costumes. One organizer told me that some of the influence on her had come from participation in the gay "Hero's Parade" in Auckland.

Another event was staged at the Apia Park rugby pitch in 1996. The local Rugby Union invited a group of *fa'afafine* to entertain during a celebration to honor a well-known rugby player. According to a number of observers the *fa'afafine's* contribution partly satirized the masculinity of the rugby players being feted at the event. On the other hand, it showed other Samoan entities' confidence in the *fa'afafine's* ability to entertain the public in a large sporting venue outside of the context of the drag queen contests. I also suspect that *fa'afafine* entertainers may provide a kind of insurance to organizers that a particular event will be entertaining.

The presentation at Apia Park temporarily brought together various *fa'afafine* groups. It was, in part, a projection of satire towards a sport that has become an institution and towards men whom many Samoans worship as heroes. I have heard their skit described in detail by a number of people and have pointedly asked questions of both spectators and participants as to what transpired.

The following is a rather balanced account from a Samoan academic who was in attendance:

> Now, what they were trying to do? I'm not quite sure what was the *fa'afafine* point of view. ... They kept calling out [to] the guys (players), "And here is your girl friend" sort of thing, ... which I thought was a putdown on the males,...but certainly on that occasion it was very good entertainment. — Tau

The *fa'afafine* performers also staged a brief rugby game, going at it with a great deal of enthusiasm, including rough tackling and some hair-pulling. They also utilized slapstick and pastiche in this presentation. The organizer is a very clever *fa'afafine* who has a history in the entertainment field in Samoa and overseas. My sense is that these kinds of presentations will continue.

The *fa'afafine* movement is still very fluid and continues to change as Samoa in general changes. What is seen in one year may not be there in another. Much of this change is based on who is on island, where interests are focused, and the creative imaginations of the organizers. For example, a new *fa'afafine* group has arisen that presents pageants that compliment those that the Seven Stars present. Each is well attended, and participants from each group become involved in the others' works.

One *fa'afafine* who has witnessed and understood their emergence since the mid-1970s continues to suggest that the "state of mind" that commenced at Hollywood continues to spread throughout Samoa in various forms. For example, *fa'afafine* cross-dressing as Western women has been noticed in one remote village.

A large number of *fa'afafine* are now part of the urban *fa'afafine* network. Two leaders have estimated that the number is close to two hundred individuals. Due to the size of this community and its various sensibilities, organization and focus could not be achieved through a drag queen contest alone. More mainstream activities seem to be the answer.

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For example, I have a sense from some of the newer organizers of one *fa'afafine* group that more interactions with the general public are now being considered. That is to say, they would now like to become involved in various projects that involve the population as a whole. As one organizer indicated, if a dance contest is being held in Apia, this *fa'afafine* organization would like to enter a *fa'afafine* group which would be judged on its own merits, in comparison to others, and not "just" in terms of the drag queen activity that characterizes some of their other presentations. If a choral festival is being held, the *fa'afafine* would like to enter a group that would participate alongside male, female, or mixed groups. Large-scale sporting activities involving both local and international participation are also being considered. One *fa'afafine* leader felt that these activities would be a further step, part of the climb up another "rung of the ladder" in terms of the creation of solidarities, recognition, and inclusion. Perhaps, he suggested, as did another respondent, that someday a *fa'afafine* would become Prime Minister. We see in these projections and hopes, a desire for further inclusion as a presence in the public sphere.

Summary of Results

We have seen something of the *fa'afafine* emergence since the mid-1980s in this epilogue. The *fa'afafine's* growing presence in the urban area of Samoa continues, found in dynamic, well-organized institutions. However, the potential for institutional and ideational change found in Samoa in general is also present in this movement. As a result this study invites future comparisons as the *fa'afafine* emergence continues to unfold.

The potential for continued and perhaps rapid transformation notwithstanding, this study has produced a number of concrete findings. One is that transformations in emerging societies can have a complex history of their own. Substantively, it has shown that the *fa'afafine* emerged in the urban area of Samoa at the end of the colonial experience as a fledgling, fluid, esteem-based identity movement in the interactionist, collective behavior tradition. It played out in already established networks, nurtured in part by the structural opportunities that the transformation to independence from New Zealand provided. It was based on a collective identity that was bounded by perceived effeminacy of manner, an erotic preference for men, early referents in Samoan family and work-related practices, the reputation of some *fa'afafine* as entertainers, new opportunities for expression based on importations from the West, and significant leadership. Its collective activities became attached to a lifestyle that was somewhat modern, and sometimes openly hedonistic and personal, while having a decidedly traditional relationship to Samoan society.

Of the scarce resources that were contested, esteem and respect, symbolic relevance, material opportunity, acceptance of a fundamental feminine identity, and emotional and material security were of special importance. Some *fa'afafine* desired society's acceptance of certain Western display forms which the former considered to be markers of a range of their sensibilities. They also endeavored to find recognition of their worth as contributors to the larger Samoan community as a collective entity.

The *fa'afafine's* actions conform to many of the elements within social movement theory. Their activities began as collective behavior, in the sense meant by Gusfield (1994), by a network of Catholic schoolhood friends and kin in the town area. Some

fa'afafine have noted grievances and issues. Their collective activities were associated with emergent norms. Their sewing shop eventually became their site and haven and then a clubhouse and finally the center for the organization of a larger *fa'afafine* network in Samoa.

They were able at various times to constitute and participate in activities as an organization. Amongst the Hollywood group's underlying motivations, in addition to enjoyment, were the creation of solidarity within the *fa'afafine* community, the aggrandizement of the status of some, and the projection of an identity that could be understood and appreciated by others. Indeed, through their presentation of a range of collective markers in the public sphere they demonstrated a key element in social moment activity: identity production.

Their collective and public identities were bounded by the public's awareness of their cultural productions, involvement in sport, service to the community, secret communications, socialization of the young *fa'afafine*, and their stressing of the value of personal life chances and new lifestyles. These were emergent norms in their case, designed both to mark identities and raise status. These activities were often bounded by Samoan custom, forms of stratification, and organization.

Their individual identities were determined in part by their centrality to the Samoan family system, family background, their life courses, life chances, upbringing, interest in men, heartbreaks, sport, education and paid labor. It was their public identity that was most problematic for them as a group.

The *fa'afafine* of the Hollywood period were also able to mobilize resources of various kinds. The tailors, some *afakasi*, and the schoolteachers had money and social

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capital that they could utilize. There is every indication, at least in the town area, that this enhanced their collective status. The leadership's links to mercantilism, elites, manufacturing, taste, and entertainment were an important early resource for them. It allowed some of them to enter many of the public spaces in Apia and to further network into the community. It might be suggested that it was the ability to engage in a kind of cosmopolitanism with some members of the Apia community that helped to positively define part of their public identity, in particular where the older *fa'afafine* tailors at Hollywood were concerned.

Economic status allowed the *fa'afafine* increased access to social resources. Many were able to move about the town and take advantage of its spaces. Amongst other activities, one night they could be found at a bar, another at the movies, another at a meeting, and another at netball. Anita would be at a government function and some would be at the Mulinu'u peninsula or the beach at Vaiala for activities that were of interest to them. The leadership empowered the rank and file by passing on skills, values, behaviors and norms to other *fa'afafine* whom they encountered. They were Samoa's most obvious night crawlers, romantics and "bohemians," if you will. Many were also attached to women friends, a few of whom became part of their group. The money they raised was used to foster the young *fa'afafine*, donate to charities, finance their trips to villages to play netball, or overseas to meet with other *fa'afafine* and groups of effeminate men from other parts of Polynesia, or entertain and fete visiting groups.

Their attachment to traditional, sporting, and business elites enabled them to mobilize valuable symbolic and material resources. Their own resource mobilization eventually took place on a grander scale. The drag queen pageants brought in thousands

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of dollars through ticket sales. A confluence of talent and contacts helped to stabilize the *fa'afafine* movement after Hollywood ceased to exist.

Hollywood and its stratification system became a mobilizing structure. New associates were recruited there as they came in from the villages or from overseas. Some clients and friends became conscience constituents. Netball also became part of the apparatus of mobilization and eventually projected them into aspects of the emerging public sphere in Apia. In retrospect, the Hollywood group, became a long standing activist culture, even when Hollywood ceased to exist as a venue, that expanded further into the civil and traditional sphere as time went by, new ideas penetrated the society, audiences were won over, and other *fa'afafine*, organizers, and conscience constituents entered the picture.

The *tautua* form was a "natural" cultural form with which they could fulfill obligations to a society to which they felt attached. It turned out to be a vehicle for the acceptance of their collective presence in Samoa. It was one of a repertoire of cultural display forms that they were equipped to use and became associated with their gentle politics of recognition. All of these forms helped them to manage impressions and the identity imputations of others. That they could demonstrate their usefulness to the community was a particularly important tool in their desire to be esteemed and accepted.

The perceived effectiveness of the movement's dominant core was crucial to their success. Anita, in particular, was impressive as a serious and successful individual who could recruit resources and allies and manage some of the obstreperous *fa'afafine*. Their eventual association with the female netballers and the addition to their activities of women they had grown up with or were their kin were both important. One of these

women eventually became part of the business sector of Samoa. She helped with the *fa'afafine's* efforts in the later and middle period of their evolution.

Imported ideational packages may have provided an additional master frame for their activity in the hands of *fa'afafine* returned from overseas. Certainly "master frames" with respect to rights that were discussed and played out during the PSA strike and in other contexts in the late 1970s and early 1980s produced part of a repertoire of options for the *fa'afafine* within the legal system. That is, they felt they could access knowledgeable advisors, some of whom who were known to have been involved in these contestations.

Still, hostile resistance remained out of the question for them, nor has anyone felt that it was an option that was either useful nor worthy of consideration. On the contrary, their imbededness in the Samoan kinship system may have produced a more effective accommodation of their transformational activity. A set of tensions with respect to female impersonation for personal gain brought forth some reaction from the police. As this sort of activity did not apply to all it was viewed as a grievance. Another suddenly imposed grievance was the prospect of the drag queen contest being shut down by the police. This prospect galvanized action that led to the consideration of legal options and the eventual negotiation of their right to hold the contest. It would also result in the eventual registration of the drag queen contest as a legal entity.

The social locus of the movement changed over time as younger, more experienced, and more educated *fa'afafine* returned home. These individuals brought new ideational packages with them. These "packages" included a notion of basic human rights and experience with drag queen motifs from the West. The movement eventually

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changed some of its social characteristics as the original leadership died or moved away. Additionally, the *fa'afafine* became connected to other cultural groups overseas. This expanded its perspective and located it in a wider world of collective activities.

Dramaturgy informed the drag queen pageant of 1983 and continues to contextualize other activities. The drag queen form, produced in part as a Samoan form, further exemplified the endearing qualities of this new identity of the *mala*. It also contextualized the *fa'afafine* as examples of dignified, virginal, culturally conservative Samoan females. The 1983 contest in a sense appropriated one of the Samoan ways of projecting gender and status and placed it in the *fa'afafine's* toolkit.

The drag queen pageant was also an act of cultural appropriation in another sense. It took a Western form and inserted Samoan cultural forms into it. The real girls had done this in the 1970s. In the hands of the *fa'afafine* this projection of identity gave Samoa another new cultural institution. Since 1983 the *fa'afafine* have been involved in the reproduction of this form, which they themselves created. To that extent they are involved in the production of culture, analogous to their propagation of Western lifestyles, fashion styles, and new display forms from the Hollywood days.

The *fa'afafine* from Hollywood identified protagonists, antagonists, and their audience rather successfully. This ability to identify these groupings was undoubtedly enhanced by the smallness of Samoa and the knowledge of its workings that Samoans must incorporate from a very early age.

The leadership attempted to frame their emerging identity in a positive way, answering the negative identity imputations of outsiders with good works, dignified responses, humor and entertainment. Some *fa'afafine* might occasionally employ a punch

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in the mouth, if insulted, a situation which had to be reframed for obstreperous *fa'afafine*. They also attempted to manage impressions of their unabashed erotics with men, sometimes not entirely successfully. It is not surprising, therefore, that some are now associated with AIDS awareness initiatives.

The *fa'afafine* transformation depended on fundamental structural changes that nurtured their efforts since 1962. One example was predicated upon colonial detachment from New Zealand in 1962 and then an economic and social re-attachment as Samoan families moved to New Zealand to work and live. The economy of Samoa became inextricably intertwined with the world system via New Zealand at that time. The *fa'afafine* were also the beneficiaries of a history of changes which began in the 1830s with the arrival of Europeans. The horizons of many were expanded after1962.

The Making and Self-making of the *fa'afafine*

This study has shown that the *fa'afafine* transformation is an historical, political economic emergent, attributable to both structure and agency. They, to an extent, "made themselves" in the manner of E.P. Thompson's (1963) sense of the construction of the English working class.

We also found the *fa'afafine* to reside on a continuum of attributes and biographies, conditioned in part by Samoan tradition, changes in social structure, a range of personae, lifestyles and life chances. The *fa'afafine* have changed as have all Samoans. New experiences, determined in part by more opportunities and the influence of more overseas experiences, have provided many Samoans, including *fa'afafine*, access to

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resources that were formerly scarce. The current study shows that the *fa'afafine* phenomenon has a sociological relevance not present in previous studies.

Future Research and theoretical considerations

The history of the *fa'afafine* movement has a social reality that can be comprehended in relation to other cultural and historical developments in Samoa: an emergent of structures and agencies, fluid collective behaviors, and identity-based social movement activity. The findings of this study may become the basis for future research in a number of fields: social movement activity; a sociology of emotions; cultural studies; interpretive structuralism; and globalization theory.

Movement Behavior and a Sociology of Emotions

Psychological malaise is a condition that is predicted amongst the gender anomalous. It may be present within the *fa'afafine* population as well. I hope that one *fa'afafine* who is contemplating further studies will research this issue.

Studies of psychological malaise will require quantitative methodologies in which sophisticated measures and constructs are developed. A Bradburn Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969), or Likert-type scales may be of value in the measurement of psychological well being. Adaptations of these measures in and of themselves will provide methodological challenges that, if overcome, may advance knowledge of Samoa in general (see Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1984; Hanna et al., 1986, re. measurement issues in Samoa).

It is as regards emotions that a great deal of exploration may be beneficial. A return to some of the notions developed by Mageo regarding the concept of *loto* (Mageo,

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1991) directs us to an aspect of the self in Samoa—the notion of psychological interiors. With respect to Samoan socialization, Mageo argues that Samoans feel that "… unmanageable and unforeseen by-products [of socialization] that continue to interfere with compliance for most members of society" require constraint (Mageo, 1991:405.). She also argues that the withdrawal of demonstrations of parental affection early in the life histories of Samoan children leads to an elaborate process whereby the child learns how to find the esteem it requires in other ways. That is, the mature Samoan is not constructed through the granting of unconditional love in childhood or negotiated affective relations with adults, as in some societies, but through the withholding of recognition of that kind. In order to receive esteem after parental withdrawal, which Mageo calls distancing, the child must learn to show *alofa* or love to others in the material sense and thereby receive the esteem that he/she requires in return. Being worthy of esteem is one of the developmental markers that Samoans require in what Schoeffel has discussed as their "silent struggle for personal recognition" (Schoeffel, 1979:122). Thus, the Samoan developmental schema, like some in the West, can also produce searches for recognition that begin in childhood and continue throughout the life cycle.

In the case of the *fa'afafine*, however, there is the added problem of reaching maturity in the traditional sense, as, although some are now titled and well educated, few marry, or reproduce. Thus, in their case an added psychological dimension regarding recognition is in place. In the early days of their transformation, their femininity, lifestyle, and life chance issues aside, if they were not to reach full maturity, what were they to become? The answer, it seems, was a myriad of forms, including the hyperfeminine. The requirements of an only partly satisfied "I" may have motivated

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many of their other journeys through social structure, including the elevated pursuit of education and status in the modern sphere.

Taylor and Whittier (1995) suggest that theoretical considerations found in the sociology of emotions (Hochschild, 1985; Scheff, 1990; Collins, 1990) might be applicable to the study of motivations for movement activity. Axel Honneth (1995) and Randall Collins (1990) have both explored some aspects of emotions that may be relevant to this question. Honneth, as we have earlier explored, employs an unfinished Hegelian problematic related to struggles for recognition of the whole person (Honneth, 1995:21). Applying the ideas of George Herbert Mead, Honneth finds an answer to the Hegelian problematic of struggles for recognition in the interplay between the subjective aspects of agency and structure, formulated by Mead as the "I" and the "Me." An unrecognized self, that is, a self that the "generalized other" deems to be irregular and which the individual self internalizes, yet resists, can lead the individual to feel misunderstood, unesteemed and unloved. The "I," the moral reactive part of the self, attempts to restore this love and esteem. It can, for example, defy the "generalized other" internalized in the "me." It also produces "I-demands." To Honneth, "I-demands" in the unesteemed or misunderstood individual are the mechanism for struggles for recognition. "I-demands" could also lead to charismatic leadership of the kind predicted by Mead ([1934] 1961) himself, and exhibited by Anita. These may be unstructured at first but presumably could later be organized as ideology or collective activity in the presence of mobilizing structures. Thus, Honneth's work invites the researcher to visit the developmental stages and issues of any society systematically, as would a Piaget (1977) or Erikson (1950), to examine, in

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the case of the *fa'afafine*, (a) where they would fit along continua of maturity and esteem, and, (b) how "I-demands" would come into play and be expressed.

We have discerned the presence of "I-demands" in this study in both the issues and actions of the *fa'afafine*. It would be predicted that these would motivate, amongst other things, identity production, collective behavior, leaving home, leaving school, going overseas, higher education, and public actions.

Another example of the richness of the literature on emotions is the Randall Collins' (1990) paper that discusses micro-stratification rituals. Collins proposes that stratification rituals in which individuals become reluctant participants can ultimately lead to resistance. In Samoa, as in most societies, one finds both macro and micro stratification rituals. The latter are likely to be face-to-face and persistent and include reluctant participants. They are traceable to early socialization, and thus are developmentally based.[36] It is possible to suggest, where collective identities like the *fa'afafine's* are concerned, that a synthesis of both the Honneth and Collins schemas may be possible. It would include the notion of "I-demands" resulting from the individual not being recognized for who they feel they are or not being esteemed, as Honneth would point out; and the notion of stratification rituals, in which one reluctantly participates, leading to certain forms of resistance, which is Collins' contribution. Resistance, of course, does not have to be confrontational but may simply involve a contention for ideas and lifestyle. It could also involve resistance to some discourses persistent about the *fa'afafine* or the construction of mechanisms that promote more inclusion in mainstream activities or attempts to create solidarity within the *fa'afafine* community. Thus, a study

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of the social psychology of the *fa'afafine* emergence may benefit from theoretical contributions such as these.

Social Movements and Kinship in Post-Colonial Societies

We have seen in this study that kinship can inform the problematic of social movements. The post-colonial experience has provided new motifs in most societies. It is predicted that each culture, as it has a different kinship system and colonial history, will have a different sociology. For example, similar studies of the *fakalieti* of Tonga or other Polynesian effeminate men could also be undertaken with reference to their particular kinship-based relationships, linked in turn to their biographies and experiences with the world system.

The notion of kinship in post-colonial societies leads to another problematic, which is the extent to which collective behavior and social movement activity depend on contacts outside of the homeland. Given the ties of Samoans to relatives in overseas countries (Ahlburg, 1991; Macpherson, 1994; Shankman, 1993), contacts with kin and generalized kin in the Samoan community overseas continued to benefit the *fa'afafine's* collective identity. For example, the *fa'afafine* in New Zealand were initially organized in their netball activities and sporting exchanges by other Samoans living there. The ties to the homeland were also maintained as family members in Samoa began to call on some *fa'afafine* kin in New Zealand for remittances, as immigration guarantors, or to perform special projects for families. Some *fa'afafine* brought entire families over. However, other ties based on kinship also extended back to Samoa.

A well-remembered example of such ties is the first Samoan drag queen contest held in Auckland in 1987 by *fa'afafine* immigrants who had been part of or networked to the Hollywood group in the 1960s and 1970s. The former were asked to fund-raise for the 25th anniversary celebrations of Samoan independence by a member of the Samoan parliament whose *fa'afafine* brother had been part of the original Hollywood network and who had migrated to Auckland. The Auckland *fa'afafine* raised thousands of dollar from the Samoan community in Auckland for the celebrations back home. Others in the Auckland community helped organize the pageant. Thus, as in this example, networks of friendship and kinship have great potential for modeling aspects of collective behavior and movement activity across borders in developing societies with extensive outmigration. The question becomes one of how the homeland and the new country mutually support networking, collective behavior, and transformation.

While the effeminate men of different island nations may have evolved their new formations at different times, it is commonly held that the Samoan *fa'afafine* initiated some of the transformation of the American Samoan *fa'afafine* through networking between islands. They initiated the Tongan *fakalieti* into certain forms of collective activities overseas through contacts in New Zealand (Tongan organizer in New Zealand, personal communication). There is also some evidence that the Samoan *fa'afafine* have participated in transformations in the effeminate men of the Maori of New Zealand. Thus, what McAdam refers to as the contact of previously segregated groups can be predicted, through the post-colonial experience, to lead to a larger trajectory of cognitive liberation in a wider field of movement participation where effeminate men are concerned.

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Social Movements as Cultural Studies and Interpretive Structuralism

This study indicates that social movement activity in emerging societies can, as a sociological problematic, also fall under the larger umbrella of sociological cultural studies. Although cultural studies developed rather *ad hoc* as a response to formalist neo-Marxian theory (Hall, 1992), cultural studies is not a formal body of theory *per se*, but rather a project that examines the interplay of hegemony/structures and agency. It departs somewhat from formalist explanations for cultural formations and transformation, but at the same time does not exclude them. The body of social movement theory provides typologies that are compatible with cultural studies in its examination of structure, agency, and hegemony and may be useful as an addition to that methodology.

An interpretive structuralism which relates agency to social structure (Morrow, personal communication and in his 1994 book) and is motivated by Giddens' (1979) structuration theory also informs the *fa'afafine's* activity. One of Giddens' well-known axioms is that social structure is both constraining and enabling. Another is that agents aren't "cultural dopes" (Giddens, 1979:71) but have access to intention, calculation, and manipulation. We have already seen the extent to which Samoan social structure is involved in the production and reproduction of the *fa'afafine* role. We have also seen how the *fa'afafine* reproduce Samoan culture while at the same time being involved in its transformation.

Historically, a few *fa'afafine* who were in a somewhat enabled position in the Samoan social structure utilized to their advantage the agency of the Giddensian actor to produce transformations in this structure. Thus, in the production of transformational activity, the structure of Samoan society was not, to use Giddens' words, "...to be

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conceptualized as a barrier to action but as involved in its production" (Giddens 1979:69). That is to say, whether structure is enabling or constraining, cultural production will happen, given certain kinds of agency.

For Giddens, members of a society, no matter where they are located, can be party to the knowledge of how its institutions work. "Institutions do not work behind the backs of the social actors who produce and reproduce them" (Giddens, 1979:71). Actors have the ability to work their way through structures based on knowledge that they possess. In addition, actors may be located in various positions in societal structures, some of which are disadvantaged and some that are less so.

Honneth's (1995) expansion of Mead's conditions for transformation also is relevant to Giddens' schema. To reiterate, in Honneth's schema, struggles for recognition stem from intuitive moral evaluations by the "I" of the agent when it has found no comfortable place in social structure, or little satisfaction with the constraints of the "Me" with respect to identity and esteem. When the "generalized other" fails to provide structures in which the unique aspects of the individual can be located as being on the same "ethical" field as others[37], there is set up a psychological mechanism for transformation as anticipated for the agents in Giddens' schema. These transformations as collective or individual behaviors or activities may involve resistance, avoidance, destructiveness, self-destruction, creativity, innovation, or all of these.

A schema such as Giddens' captures some of the social movement problematic. The *fa'afafine's* initial collective activity came from the ranks of a somewhat stigmatized but well-located subgroup in the urban community. One of their agents, Anita, had the charisma, in the sense meant by G.H. Mead, to in part outflank the consequences of

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community reaction. Other members of this subgroup, by association with their families or friends, were also well connected in the business and traditional communities of Samoa. These agents were not "cultural dopes." They understood the structure well, had the right contacts and affective relationships, and were able to find support for their activities from within some sectors of Samoan elite structure. These included business people, government members, and highborn Samoans. They also understood the modern system, and some were prepared to use the legal system in order to hold their first pageant. At the same time, they were well aware of the lack of recognition that contradicted how they wanted to be perceived in relation to others. They were in a sense a combination of the Giddensian agent and the Honneth/Meadian actor. Thus, there is a compatibility between an interpretive structuralism and social movement activity where the general question of agency is embedded in the psychological dimensions of struggles for recognition, even those that are as gentle as this was.

Social Movements and Theories of Globalization

Recent critiques of cultural transformation implied by theories of globalization may also inform the case of the *fa'afafine*. One such position critiques notions of the epiphenomenological characterization of culture presupposed in globalization theories as directing attention away from a fundamental process running parallel to globalization (Robertson, 1992). Robertson describes this process as the "decompression" of the world. Substantively, it can be modeled as either the re-emergence or the continued utilization of traditional narratives under which exogenous forms can be subsumed. A major example is capitalism. Robertson utilizes the example of the Japanese decision to utilize the

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"national household" policy, an extension of the historical feudal household, as a *gemeinschaft* form for the organization of Japan's industrial expansion during the Meiji period of the 19th century. The "national household" construction involved using local discourse as an organizational motif in the incorporation of outside forms. Robertson examines both structures and meta-narratives, but his work leaves room for the analysis of agency of the kind that we have reviewed above.

Samoa is also a society that, historically, has appeared to subsume modern forms under its traditional kinship system and shared ideology for the organization of life. In spite of a modern bureaucracy and a mercantile and industrial sector and the many complex forms of reproducing the culture, almost all social relations are characterized, in part, by the sharing of cultural narratives by both the powerful and the untitled. A cursory testing of globalization theories against the Samoan case may lend support to Robertson's notions in the sense that, in the case of the *fa'afafine*, their transformational activity, while undoubtedly utilizing exogenous cultural forms, may be also modeled as the reworking of meta-narratives from within.

While both the urban area and the world system provided new locations and motifs for expression, and while one might be rather eager to jump on the drag queen form as an epiphenomenon of globalization, the Samoan drag queen pageant was constructed to be compatible with other Samoan display forms and was attached to the deeper structures (Geertz, 1973) of the Samoan culture. This lends support, then, to notions from social movement theory of the power of culture as a toolbox for transformation (Swidler, 1986, 1995), and as a provider of cultural repertories which, in spite of globalization, can occur at both micro and macro levels. As such, it is compatible

with a notion suggested by Robertson's work of the conditional character of globalization. Thus, taken together, the research findings provide an opportunity to synthesize aspects of the sociology of emotions, social movement theory, interpretive structuralism, and globalization within a larger framework in which transformations, as they apply to social movements, can also be examined.

Concluding Statement

Finally, we have observed that the various social movement perspectives contain a great deal of overlap in their ideas and typologies. The notion of grievance can be common to all of them. The mobilization of resources, while considered to be rational and utilitarian in the Resource Mobilization perspective, is also a consideration in Political Process and is not ruled out by the more fluid Collective Behavior perspective. One sees in the *fa'afafine* movement a gradual and at times sudden shift from being loosely fluid to being focussed and goal oriented and then back again, as Gusfield (1994) might predict. It sometimes became involved in gentle political processes, often contextualized as impression management. At times it was circumscribed by the notion of civil or legal rights and sometimes only demonstrated collective behavior. At other times it mobilized resources within a number of mobilizing structures. Thus, this study, in a sense, revisits the social movement problematic and provides some unity to what have been claimed to be disparate and irreconcilable aspects of theory through the demonstration of the usefulness of many of its discrete perspectives in this example.

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Afakasi – half caste, part-Samoan or part-European
Aitu – ghost or spirit
Alofa – love, empathy, favor
Ali'i – a matai who is a noble (see matai)
Aualuma – a traditional village women's organization composed of "daughters of the village"
'Aumaga – a traditional village organization composed of untitled men.
Autalavou – church youth groups, youth brigades
Ava – Ceremonial occasion in which food and sometimes kava are consumed. Can be contextualized in the form of a greeting of a visiting official party by a village on its own territory.
Fa'aaloalo - respect
Fa'afafine – a man with effeminate qualities
Fa'alavelave – Traditional Samoan material exchanges at times of emergency or celebration
Fa'asinomaga – social standing in relation to others, identity
Fafine – a woman
Fai ma - adoption
Faifeau – pastor
Fakalieti – Tongan men with effeminate qualities
Fale aitu – Samoan critical comic theatre
Feagaiga – Covenant, contract, sacred relationship between oppositely gendered siblings, pastor and congregation, *tulafale* and *ali'i.*
Feau – thing to be done, business
Fetufaa'i - sharing
Lafo - a gift or contribution by a visiting delegation or group
Lavalava – traditional Samoan wrap around garment
Loto – will, feeling
Mala – curse; a contemporary term for *fa'afafine.* While deriving from the Samoan word, malaia, or curse it has been transformed into an endearing term for some.
Malaga – excursion
Malaia – curse, plague, scourge
Mamalu – dignity
Manaia – son of village high chief who leads the *'aumaga,* and replaces *taupou* in certain ceremonies
Mapuifagalele – a home for the aged in Apia
Matai – Samoan chief, often head of family
Misa - Quarrel
Musu – Sullen, quiet, not speaking to anyone
Palagi – A term for a person of European descent
Puletasi –Traditional two piece female garb deriving from early missionary days.
Papalagi – an early spelling for the term, palagi, a person of European descent.
Pitonu'u – subvillage

Pocket lavalava – a lavalava with pockets
Poula – literally, night teasing, described by the missionaries as erotic night dancing including interaction between visiting village parties.
Pulenu'u – village mayor
Savai'i – largest island in Samoa
Siva – traditional Samoan dance
Suli – Heir, inheritor
Tafao – visit
Tufanua - a commoner, a person without chiefly values, uncouth, boorish
Tama'aiga – Heads of the maximal descent groups
Tama'ali'i - a person with correct social values, a gentleman
Tama'ita'i –Lady who is usually the wife of a chief.
Taule'ale'a – untitled man
Taulele'a – untitled men
Taupou – traditional female virgin/greeter in a village.
Tausia - fostering
Tautua – service, servant
Tausala – a dignified lady
Teu le va – Minding one's relationships, keeping relationships in order.
To'ona'i – Traditional Sunday after church meal
Tufanua – a commoner
Tulafale – a *matai* who is an orator (see matai)
Tumua and Pule – the two powerful orator groups of Upolu and Savai'i
Usita'i - obedience
Usu – to woo
Usuga – seduction

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[1] Pratt's parentheses

[2] See Ekman and Friesen, (1984) re. display rules. Ekman and Friesen have developed the notion of "display rules" in relation to the social control of the expression of emotions in the human face. I employ an expanded version of this valuable idea to include all forms of human expression, socially constrained, that derive from inner, affective and ideational states.

[3] Both Samoas are sometimes referred to collectively as Samoa when the Samoan culture and Samoan pre-history are discussed. This dissertation will follow that precedent. Unless otherwise noted, all other references to Samoa, or Western Samoa as it was once called, refer to the activities centered in the now independent western portion where most of the political machinations of the 19th and 20th centuries took place. Samoa is the largest and most politically significant of the two Samoas. American Samoa, by far the smallest portion of the archipelago by a ratio of 1:15, has its own history. The reader is encouraged to access that history to further their knowledge of this American dependency

[4] An edible plant related to taro

[5] The following is a short, schematic description of the *matai* system. For a detailed account, see Shore, 1982:ch. 4.

[6] See also O'Meara (1990) for an expanded treatment of the political economy of change in Samoa.

[7] Some females have become *matai*. In practice the overwhelming number of *matai* are males, and I have heard it on occasion referred to in common parlance as a man's position (see also Shore, 1976).

[8] *Tufanua* can also mean uncouth or boorish. *Tama'ali'i* can mean a gentleman (Milner, 1993).

[9] There are other, wider aspects of the *feagaiga*, analogous to the relationship between brothers and sisters that pertain to the entire descent group, (Shore, 1982:215-216; Samoan scholar, personal communication). The term also applies to the religious sphere.

[10] In fact the traffic jams on the coast road from these areas and beyond are horrendous. In the past few years, Apia has changed to a system of synchronized traffic lights from their old system of having elegantly dressed policemen direct traffic at rush hour.

[11] A *lavalava* with pockets.

[12] Indeed, almost thirty years earlier it had been suggested by one of the local consuls that Samoa should follow the form of government that had been imposed on Hawaii. A later

concoction was to have Samoa become part of a federation with Hawaii (Gilson, 1970:191-197).

[13] My note: traditional orator groups with wide reaching powers.

[14] One of the two Heads of State died shortly after independence. His position was not filled, and since then there has been de facto only one individual filling the position of Head of State.

[15] Guam or Kuwait, which are euphemisms for the "out back," or periphery appear to derive from the Samoan word "tua," meaning "the back," which in plain speech is pronounced, "kua." Kua then easily segues into Kuwait, or Guam.

[16] Another individual whom I knew very well grew up as a boy. In the 1960s he had a relationship with a *fa'afafine* who worked in town. He eventually adopted the feminine side, and attempted to live his life, as a woman.

[17] The significance of the term, *mala* will be explored later in this chapter.

[18] The term, *"sole"* is the equivalent when addressing a boy.

[19] Some *fa'afafine* who have *matai* titles, also have university certificates or degrees and are well placed in occupational positions; or have become organizers of their families in Samoa and overseas. Their *tautua* has been of a more modern variety, having been routed away from the traditional village institutions. A few *fa'afafine matai* are not well-educated, in the Western sense but are seen to be competent and well-organized. Schoeffel (1995:105-106) has noted an increase in female titleholders but has suggested that these titles may not necessarily be related to specific land tenure considerations, but rather are granted "to honor persons of achievement." This notion should also be explored with respect to *fa'afafine* titleholders.

[20] For example, *usuga*, the practice of seduction from the word *usu*, to woo, is said to still be current in Samoa.

[21] Early in 1999 the term *"mala"* appeared in an advertisement for a mixed netball competition. The ad stated that teams could be only composed of a certain number of *"malas,"* girls and boys. This instance suggests a level of comfort with and respect for this now widespread term. On the other hand in September, 1999 a netball playing *fa'afafine* appeared to be insulted that the word *mala* appeared in a report by a sporting agency in a local newspaper as a description of his team. In his letter to the editor he pointed out that their team had a name, and that the reporting body should have been courteous enough to use it, and not only that, but the team's members were not "cursed," implying that the *mala* designation was not appropriate in this instance. The reporting agency issued an apology. The saga continues...

[22] Mageo (1997) has reported others.

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[23] I recall in 1986 one of their closest female confederates in Apia, saying to a group of *fa'afafine* for whom she was waiting with her pickup truck, words to the effect, "c'mon "boys," hop in! hop in!" This produced groans at the thought that their friend would refer to them as boys in front of an esteemed stranger. In truth she was undoubtedly commiserating with the inevitability of their anomalous social position and possibly utilizing a form of social control.

[24] I have seen one such performance, involving a *fa'afafine* singing in a large female village ensemble. Penelope Schoeffel (1979 and personal communication) reports having witnessed such performances live in the mid-1970s in one village.

[25] Mageo (1992) mentions a Hollywood situated in American Samoa in the 1980s. That Hollywood was actually a tailor shop founded by the original members of the Hollywood group in Apia who migrated to American Samoa in the late 1970s.

[26] The tea lady is a well known institution in urban Samoa, probably dating from colonial times. Many, if not most government offices have one, as do some post-secondary institutions. They are responsible for making tea, snacks, lunches, cleaning dishes and generally cleaning up the kitchen of any official building.

[27] Women's rugby has recently become established in Samoa.

[28] In May of 1978, I observed *fa'afafine* playing field hockey there.

[29] The use of the term competition appears to be synonymous with the North American use of the term, league.

[30] A ceremonial drink made from *kava* root. It is held to promote good judgement

[31] The name on his tombstone reads Mulinu'u "Ponty" Mata'afa.

[32] Part of Sila's analysis points to one of the changes in Samoa: the correlation of Western education and values with individualism, privacy and the nucleation of the family. The notion of individually charted life courses is also held by some people.

[33] *Tautua* is also the name of the student magazine at Samoa College, Samoa's most prestigious public high school. This is a further example of the widespread notion of *tautua* to the community ingrained in young people.

[34] See also Mageo, (1997) for an interesting interpretation of this form.

[35] None of the eight AIDS cases as of 1999 has been attributed to the *fa'afafine* living in Samoa (Le Mamea Faletoefe Dr. Ata Matatumua, Department of Health, personal communication)