Tofiga: Place and Belonging in Samoan Architecture

Albert L. Refiti
Auckland University of Technology

A.-Chr. (Tina) Engels-Schwarzpaul
Auckland University of Technology

Abstract: The Samoan world opens with the notion of *nu'u tofi*, in which every person is assigned a place or position that resonates with culture, polity, citizenship and governance. *Tofi* (or *tofiga*) places Samoans according to their ancestral connections within the order of the Samoan world, as 'the reference point of political action and motivation' (Tui Atua) – for instance, *matai* (chiefs) sitting in front of the *pou* (posts) of the *fale* (house). Connecting people and land, tofi creates belonging through *fa'asinomaga* (placement) and *tulagavae* (demarcation of places) at the centre of the *nu'u* (political unit). This positionality, codified in the fale pou (house posts) and the bodies on the *malae* (an open space in the centre of a settlement), is carried anywhere, irrespective of location. If 'Samoanness', at home and abroad, has connections with artifactuality and spatiality, it would be in the house, both real and imaginary. This article explores the role of tofiga, as materialized in Auckland Pacific communities' fale since the 1980s.
[fa'a Sāmoa, fale Sāmoa, Samoan architecture, locality and place, mobility and belonging]

Introduction: 'Ava Ceremony at Fale Pasifika with Tui Atua

In preparation for an *'Ava a le Tupu* ('*ava* for a paramount leader) to open the New Horizons in the Samoan History Symposium in November 2016, an *alofi sā* (sacred circle) was set out in front of the Fale Pasifika malae (ceremonial court) at the University of Auckland (Refiti 2017).[1] Tui Atua, one of the highest ranked Samoan *Tama-a-'aiga* (maximal lineage titleholder) and Samoan Head of State at the time, sat with his back to the fale on a soft couch that was covered with *'ie toga* (fine mats) decorated with red feathers on top of a large tapa cloth. Seated to his right were the titled hosts, including Maualaivao Albert Wendt, Muli'aga Vavao Fetaui and Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa. On the left, in the front row, was a group of Samoan titled guests, including Leasiolagi Mālama Meleiseā and one of the authors, Leali'ifano Albert Refiti. At the roadside along the malae sat the *'aumaga* (group preparing the 'ava), including the *taupou* (ceremonial hostess). The ceremony began when the Tui Atua arrived and took up his throne on the steps of the Fale Pasifika, an act that allowed him to 'claim' the

1 The 'ava ceremony we describe here is not the conventional one held in a village setting but an 'Ava o Tupu. A good description of a conventional 'ava ceremony is provided in Muaiava (2022:138ff.).

 doi: 10.60827/zfe/jsca.v150i1.3764

Fig. 1 Couch in front of Fale Pasifika to seat Tui Atua during the ʻava ceremony at Fale Pasifika, University of Auckland, November 2016

Fig. 2 Pouring of ʻava for Tui Atua, Fale Pasifika, November 2016

position of the ultimate host according to Samoan custom, and through which the house turned into an image of a halo behind and above his throne.

Tradition dictates that the ceremony was then handed over to the ʻaumaga, who prepared the ʻava in the *tānoa* (wooden ʻava bowl), which the taupou stirred and strained in ceremonial fashion. The taupou's symbolic position in the ceremony is determined by *feagaiga* (a sacred brother-sister covenant), which makes her the *tapuaʻi* (consecrated) appellant to Tui Atua's *mana* and *paʻia* (supreme power). Accordingly, she sat behind the tānoa with the blessed ʻava liquid, directly opposite Tui Atua and, in their *vā* (relationship), the mana of high-ranked persons and their shining paʻia provided *paolo* (shelter) to those they faced in the *alofi sā*.

When the *tufa ʻava* (ʻava distributor) seated near her called out for the Tui Atua's cup to be brought forward, a young man of the ʻaumaga walked across the malae and sat down directly in front and below Tui Atua, holding a cup above and in front of his eyes, with head bowed. Another young man stood up, scooped ʻava from the tānoa, walked forward to Tui Atua's cup-holder (Fig. 2) and poured ʻava into Tui Atua's cup. This action was repeated ten times, after which the cup-holder stood up, walked backwards the full length of the malae facing Tui Atua, stopped, and then walked towards him to present the full cup. Before drinking, Tui Atua poured a little liquid on the ground, paused, and said, *ʻava lenei o le Atua, ia viʻia le tatou aso'* ('this ʻava is to God, let this be a blessed day'). (The word 'aso', which denotes the day and the occasion, also means 'sacrifice' in this context).[2] Then the ʻava was distributed to the matai (chiefs) sitting around the malae according to their rank (see diagram, Fig. 3).

Each matai took turns in the ritual libation of ʻava on the ground. Then, while the matai called out *'Ia Manuia le Atua'* (good fortune to Atua, God), the ʻava participants replied *'Soifua'* (to life).

This was the third ʻava ceremony that I, Albert Refiti, have attended at the Fale Pasifika with the Tui Atua as the highest ranked chief present, and they all followed the same protocol. It seems remarkable that, in 2016, and in a metropolitan setting like Auckland, a ceremony based on a diagram of relationships that is hundreds of years old should be performed.[3] However, the ʻava ceremony on the malae conjures up past, present and future *vā* (relationships) and enables Samoans to dwell in a home away from home – in this case, a malae located next to the Waipapa Taumata Rau Marae at the University of Auckland.

Like the malae, sacred houses allow Samoans to orient themselves as Samoans in the world. Their surrounding posts embody ancestors and arrange bodies to face a central openness, a space that seizes and holds one's attention. One cannot get any closer to the centre of being, the place where the ancestors are, than when one is sitting in the

2 See Pratt (1893).

3 This diagram is found in the circular layout of the *fale tele* (big houses) and their arrangement around the *malae* (village meeting ground). The first European accounts of the 'circular' form of Samoan villages and houses were written during the Lapérouse expedition in 1787 (Tcherkézoff 2008a; 2008b: 46 fn 22).

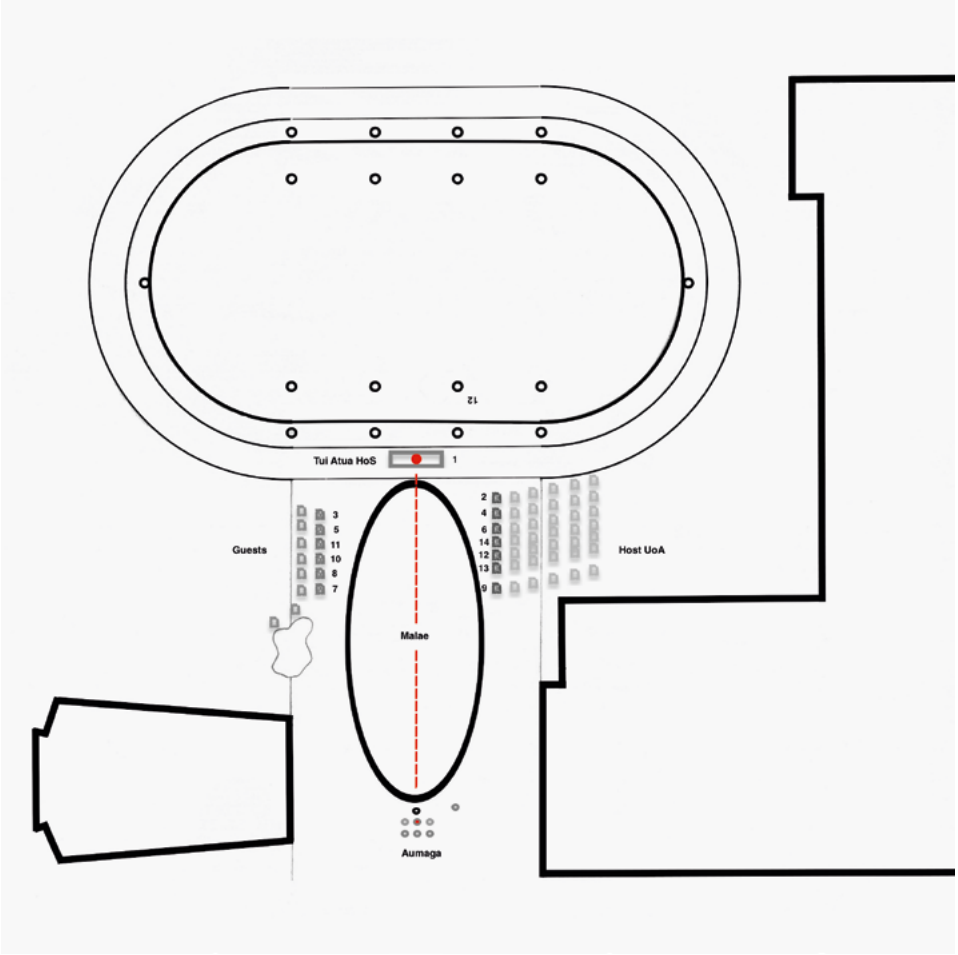

Fig. 3 Diagram of 'ava ceremony at Fale Pasifika, November 2016

faletele in a group. One's *tua* (back) must rest against a post, the ancestor, so that it is concealed or, to put it another way, 'one's back is taken'. With one's back taken, one is now opened up and made into a face – made to face other faces in the circle. That face is one's *tofi*, a placeholder, and one becomes an exact location on a ring that resonates and grinds with other rings.

In this article, we explore what constitutes changing yet consistent forms of Samoan-ness, as the experience of collective identity and sense of self. This occurs partly in performance linked to houses – both in the homelands and overseas. Houses, in our context, are inextricably woven into the fabric of the cosmos and materialise human relationships with each other and with the world. These relationships were set up in an original tofiga, which placed Samoans within the order of the Samoan world according

to their ancestral connections; tofiga is therefore 'the reference point of political action and motivation' (Tui Atua) and a crucial concept in the Samoan understanding of cosmological and social genesis. It ultimately also materializes in the position of the matai in front of the pou of the faletele, when they meet in council or host guests. A fale is thus intimately interwoven with notions of *fanua* (land as something much more than what the modern European term might suggest), locality (as a specific site or position in space or time), or place (in the sense of that spatially bounded web of multi-dimensional relationality that is at the core of anthropological interest). Every cut of these co-constitutive strands, in the interest of the lineal order required by an academic piece of writing, comes with a loss. Accordingly, we trace the connections as much as possible – by weaving in and out of particular nodes – which may at times become confusing, though we have done our best to structure and signpost directions.

This paper is based on and grounded in our individual and collaborative work on Pacific buildings and concepts of space dating back approximately twenty years (e.g., Engels-Schwarzpaul 2006; Engels-Schwarzpaul and Refiti 2018; Refiti 2002). The most coherent long-term project specifically about Samoan architecture came together in Albert's PhD thesis of 2015: *Mavae and Tofiga: Spatial Exposition of the Samoan Cosmogony and Architecture*, for which Tina served as the supervisor. The data were gathered between 2001 and 2023 in various projects funded by our University and by external agencies, through *talanoa* (discussions), interviews, site visits and archival research, as well as through immersion and informal participant observation in Sāmoa, Aotearoa New Zealand and Germany. For Albert, who spent his first thirteen years in Sāmoa, this occurred from the position of an insider and native speaker. For Tina, the observations are based on visits to Sāmoa and many years of regular collaboration and friendships with Samoans in Aotearoa.

In the following section, we will discuss tofiga, as the initiating moment of locality and place that becomes visible in the layout and placement of fale. The subsequent section more specifically explores the role of imaginary and real-life aspects of the fale – both as an organizing principle and as an artefact – in the founding and maintenance of communities and in the way in which it exemplifies aspects of living together in relationships that include, but far exceed, architectural concerns. Finally, we will conclude by discussing the role fale Sāmoa fulfil in a world that includes the Samoan homelands, the Aotearoa diaspora and the globalized world beyond.

Tofiga and the Question of Mobilized Locality and Place

Orientation in the world does not primarily happen through words. The associations with culture, society, polity, citizenship and governance that resonate with tofi are performed rather than discussed. Bodies, spatial configurations and materiality, as much as the meaning of the post one is assigned to, interplay to (re)enact Samoan modes of being-in-place.

At this point, it is important to remember that, in most research contexts, many or even most established concepts in the Anglophone literatures predominant in the Pacific derive from settler languages. Space, place and land are English terms that only partially render, for instance, *whenua/fanua, wāhi* or *takiwā* (the same applies to the space/time binary).[4] A probably widely accepted distinction in anthropology, geography and other disciplines is that space is 'location, physical space and physical geography', while place gives space 'meaning, "personality" and a connection to a cultural or personal identity'. Thus, it is 'the culturally ascribed meaning given to a space. It is the "vibe" that you get from a certain space, and it exists for a reason.'[5] Language models reality – and there is always a danger of 'sliding from the model of reality to the reality of the model', as Pierre Bourdieu has shown (1990:39). Here, we use the term 'space' (following prevailing Anglophone conventions) to designate the boundless, three-dimensionally extended realm in which things and events take place and occupy relative positions and directions. We use 'place' to refer to the meanings and practices people collectively assign to a particular space.

A fale and a malae occupy space, and in turn they create a space for something to take place, something particular to its locality (in, say, Sāmoa or Aotearoa). Place is made up of a web of locality, people, fanua, spirituality, culture, history, … it is a realm in which distinct narratives co-exist as products of social relations. It is a specific articulation of such relationships, 'including local relations "within" the place and those many connections which stretch way beyond it' into layered history (Massey 1999:41).[6] Places are open, porous realms whose specificity depends on the mix of influences co-existing in them, co-created by the encounters of human and non-human histories, relationships and practices (Tuck and McKenzie 2014:43). Places are never fully established but 'operate through constant and reiterative practice' (Cresswell 2004:38, quoted in Tuck and McKenzie 2014:43). But from Indigenous perspectives, space (which is commonly regarded as abstract in Anglophone discourses) is also utterly relational.

---

4 Conventional definitions in English are: *Place*: 'a specific area or region' https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/place; *space*: 'a boundless, three-dimensional extent in which objects and events occur and have relative position and direction.' https://www.britannica.com/science/space-physics-and-metaphysics.

5 https://theculturalcourier.home.blog/2019/02/22/everyday-anthropology-space-vs-place/

6 This layering of distinct narratives is evident, for example, in different understandings of time that are operative in Samoan contexts. One of our reviewers observed that our paper 'makes an interesting argument which at times points specifically to modern contexts but in others to a re-imagined Samoa that is timeless and ahistorical.' They would have liked to see more 'historical contexts'. This observation (of a combination of specifically modern contexts with others that seem 'ahistorical'), while at first straightforward, applies only within a European-derived concept of history based on the notion of a universal 'arrow of time'. The hegemony of this temporal framework is contested in Moana Oceania (Salmond 2012: 126). What may seem 'timeless' and 'ahistorical' from one perspective can be conceived of as recursive and genealogical from another. – In Sāmoa, *taeao* (mornings, dawns) are a structuring device of ancestral history (Duranti 1983:6f): 'Samoa's timing indicator, the taeao […] brings the past into the present, brings the future to the now, and makes us living histories' (Steffany 2011:170).

Notions of space, place and subjectivities are first produced in the Samoan cosmogeny, Solo o le Vā. They arise during the formation of the world through an alternating process of *mavae* (growth, expansion) and *tofiga* (aggregation and combination, ordering) (Refiti 2015:76). In the emerging order, tofiga both aggregate and divide to create a world and, together with periods of *mavaega* (regeneration), refold, redistribute, and recombine what exists (Refiti 2015:90). Mavae and tofiga – both polysemic terms – structure lines that unfold along pathways through time and space. As an agglomeration of lines, a person first connects to a family, then to a place, which then extends to encompass the world and the cosmos. Implicit in this structuring is people's potential to mavae and thus extend their sphere of influence through connections everywhere. They can accumulate and fortify relationships by tofiga (identifying themselves) with particular places, applying spatial concepts such as residence and dwelling (Refiti 2015:122). Tofiga also means the irreversible appointment of duties and roles.

The proverb, 'E tala tau Toga ae tala tofi Sāmoa' ('Tongan stories [traditions] are those of war, whereas those of Sāmoa are about divisions') suggests that power within the Samoan polity is distributed amongst *ali'i* (paramount chiefs) and *tulāfale* (orators), rather than held by a single ruler, as is the case with the Tu'i Tonga. The *tofi* (division) calling people into place and to their roles were, according to Mālama Meleiseā (1994: 29), usually initiated in the appointments of dying paramount chiefs to reward their families, villages or even districts for services rendered. In a more general sense, tofi or tofiga is the proper placing of a Samoan person, who always has a position through the connection with an ancestor whose land, as *tofi* (heritage/legacy), 'defines the reference point of political action and motivation' (Tui Atua 2009:33).[7] Tofi thus designates bodies and places within the order of the Samoan world, demarcating places as *tulagavae* (footholds) through *fa'asinomaga* (placement and appointing people to land, identity or personhood) at the centre of the *nu'u* (political unit, settlement) and, by connecting people and land, creating a sense of belonging to place. The tofi that places a person in the world and in a circle is carried everywhere once a descendent, or a person otherwise connected to the nu'u, has taken up that positionality, irrespective of where they might go. It becomes part of their *fa'asinomaga,* a word that significantly derives from 'trace' or 'trait': *sino* means to point (with your finger); *fa'asino* denotes a directive towards an allocation. In that pointing, things are given their names, which carry their original positionality. Hence, the most powerful positions are titles born of a place and conferring a continuum on descendants.

The tulagavae arising from the connection between people and land, for example, is materialized in the *paepae* (platform) of a fale, which 'places the person within the proper context of an *'aiga* (extended family) and *fanau* (descendants). As a result, he or

7 Tui Atua suggests that life begins with tofi as the 'designation' that emerges from the body (*o le mea e to mai tino*) (Refiti 2015:95). The new born human's umbilicus is divided and taken to be buried in the mother's land, which gives rise to the meaning of *tulagavae* as 'the place where ones umbilicus belongs' (Tui Atua 2012).

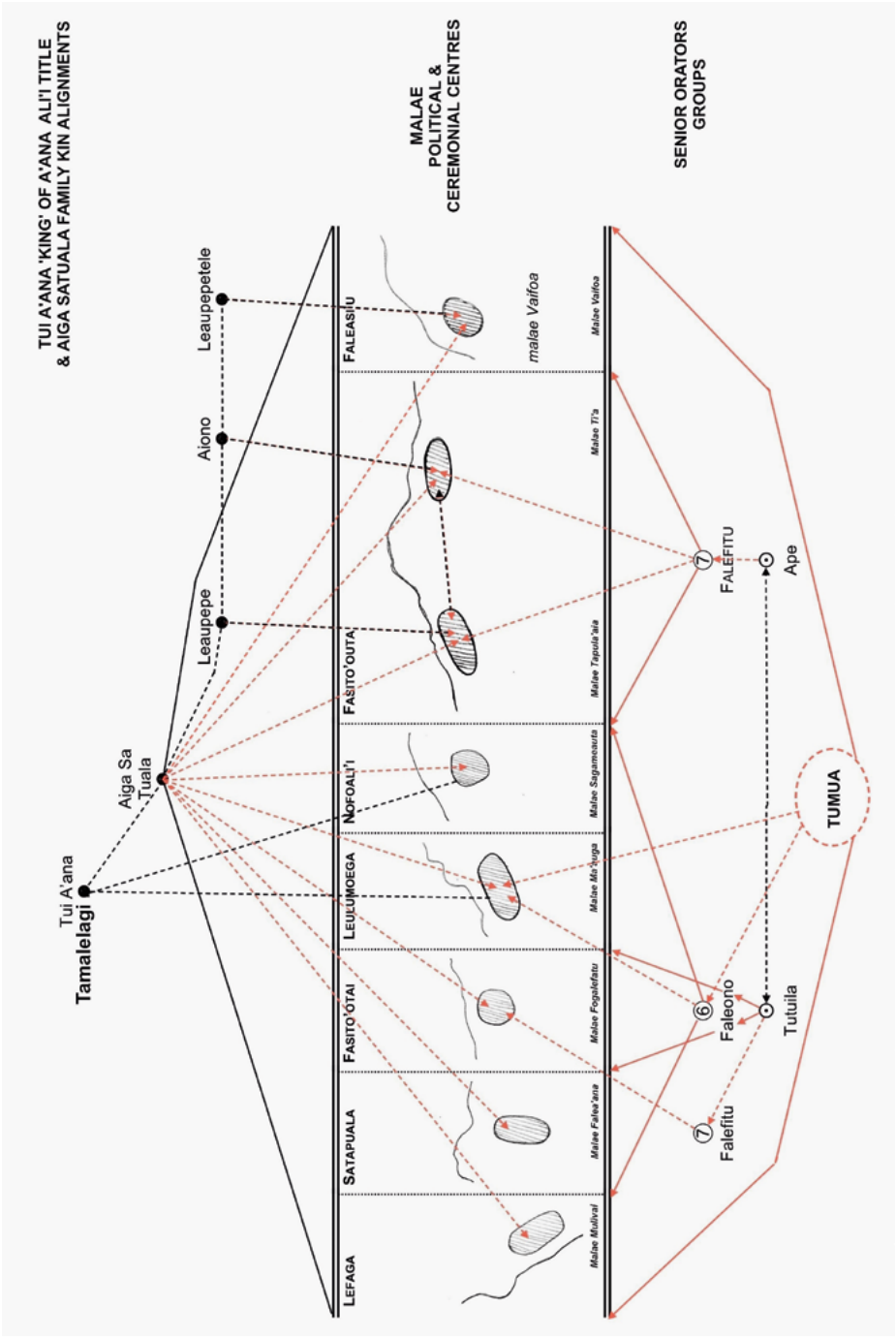

Fig. 4 District lines of Satuala aiga, A'ana district (from Refiti, 2015: 135)

she becomes another loop in a web of being that constitutes an ecology of connected beings' (Refiti 2015:96).[8] Tofi then places matai in front of a particular pou in the fale, assigning him or her a position within the circle of matai. From that specific place on the paepae, *alaga* (lines of connections, pathways) connect each loop with the ʻaiga, the nuʻu, the *itūmalo* (district) and the *malō* (nation, government) beyond, as well as with overseas communities further beyond. The resulting positionality, codified materially in the pou of the fale and the bodies on the malae, is carried anywhere, irrespective of geographical location. As long as people act within the relational network they carry with them, they (and their position) remain connected to a particular configuration, even after drastic changes of place.

The diagram in Figure 4 (adapted from Keesing and Keesing, 1956) shows the alignments of titles and kin groups with important malae and ceremonial centres in the district of Aʻana on three planes of socio-political dimensions: local communities or nuʻu, traditional district structures or itūmālo, and national Samoan structures or mālo. The titles Leaupepe and Aiono in Fasitoʻouta, for example, show how lines and pathways find routes beyond their local unit, via the paramount lines of descent instituted in major aliʻi titles. Their connection to the itūmalo of Aʻana comes about through the Aiga Sātuala, whose members trace their ancestry to Tui Aʻana Tamalelagi, the fourteenth-century king of Aʻana. The Aiga Sātuala line is positioned on the top plane of the hierarchical Samoan system of aliʻi of divine descent from Tagaloa-a-lagi. The second plane shows locations of malae and *fono* matai for each nuʻu relating to the Aiga Sātuala line. The third plane shows the tulāfale groups responsible for the main circulation of influence within the system, in which they also broker the movement of alliances and valuable goods. The diagram illustrates how extensive these lines of connections and relationship within the Samoan system of belonging are.

Whenever Samoans gather in places with which they have no ancestral connections, these connective principles become extended. When, for instance, Albert Wendt took up his post as Professor of English at the University of Auckland in 1987, he approached Māori colleagues like Ranginui Walker and Patu Hohepa.[9] In the lead-up to the instigation of the Fale Pasifika in the early 2000s, he consulted with them about the most appropriate way to house a Pacific centre at the university. The unanimous advice was that Pacific Studies should build their own complex alongside Waipapa Marae (Fig. 5). The campus of the University of Auckland, including Waipapa Marae and the

8 The Samoan notion of belonging begins with one's *tulagavae* (place one belongs to), which is marked by the burial of one's *fanua* (umbilicus) under the stones that form the paepae of the extended family's house.

9 Ranginui Walker (Whakatōhea) was one of the most influential *rangatira* (leaders) and an outspoken advocate for Māori rights and social justice. Having founded the urban Māori organization, Ngā Tamatoa, in the 1970s, he became an academic and was appointed Associate Professor in Māori Studies in 1986. Walker went on to full Professorship in 1993, and later served as Pro-Vice-Chancellor Māori from 1996 to 1997. Patu Hohepa (Ngāpuhi) was a language scholar and Māori Language Commissioner, and the first outspoken advocate of a marae at the University of Auckland.

Fig. 5 Fale Pasifika bordering on Waipapa marae. Photo: Ngahuia Harrison, 2016

future location of the Fale Pasifika, occupies land given to the settler government in 1840 by Apihai Te Kawau, the *rangatira* (leader) of Ngāti Whatua, the people holding *mana whenua* (power from the land) in that area. Māori *tangata whenua* (people of the land) and British settlers had very different understandings of what 'giving' meant at that time. Māori had an established practice of giving land to outsiders, *tuku rangatira* (use rights), which implied the establishment of mutually beneficial relationships based on overlapping and interwoven territorial rights and roles.[10]

The allocation of the land on which the fale was eventually built was thus a very different tofiga from those that were common in Sāmoa, defining novel and unforeseen reference points for political action and motivation.

Misatauveve Melani Anae,[11] Director of Pacific Studies when the Fale was planned and built, stressed the primary importance of 'respect for tangata whenua', followed by the awareness of 'those who went before – we were standing on [the shoulders of

10 Not the alienation of land through sale, as was the case in British societies. However, the British Crown subsequently assumed the right to define the Māori-Pākehā relationship and unilaterally alienated the land given to them for a specific purpose.

11 Misatauveve Dr Melani Anae joined the Polynesian Panthers in 1971 and served initially at the Department of Māori and Pacific Island Affairs as a Housing Officer. She also raised three children before becoming an Associate Professor and Director of Pacific Studies at the University of Auckland

our ancestors]' (Anae and Engels-Schwarzpaul 2017). The prior connections between people and land that had to be considered in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) followed different configurations of alaga than in the homelands, and new relationships had to be established on the layers of the past. For Anae, as for her fellow Polynesian Panthers in the 1970s,[12] the support of and solidarity with tangata whenua was a starting point for politics, which led to her participation in the 1975 *hīkoi* (land march) to Wellington and the 1977-78 Takaparawhā/Bastion Point occupation, for example (Anae 2020).[13] In the Aoteaora New Zealand diaspora, then, tofiga has become a way of grounding new identities in negotiation with tangata whenua (see also Hau'ofa 1994: 156), giving rise to a new configuration of vā in Aotearoa. A complex two-fold nature of relationality emerged, one that continues to be connected to a Samoan vā, the other connecting to a more recent configuration.

The vā fealoaloa'i – the system of social relationships based on mutual respect by which Samoans relate to each other in Sāmoa – includes the extended *fa'alupega* (kinship) connecting all chiefly lines through which every Samoan relates in Sāmoa. On the move, as it were, emerging vā formations must deal with completely new exterior conditions under which to engage relationality with an ancestry that is not of Samoan origins – or, at least, not directly. However, tofiga cannot take place unless Samoans can orient themselves towards a new condition of belonging to place. The actions taken during the Fale Pasifika's early planning stages, such as the advice and permission sought from Māori colleagues and academics connected to the university, already mark the architecture with a Samoan identity internally, analogous to the way in which *tofi* are inherent in the configuration of spaces and the designation of places to those who will sit at the posts of the house.

An important development of the vā arising from the co-mingling of different fa'alupega (honorifics) in the Samoan diaspora is the introduction of new honorifics which then mark meeting places like the Fale Pasifika. The Fale not only has to accommodate gatherings of the Samoan, Fijian or Tongan polities (Ancestral Polynesian Societies)[14] with their different systems of relations: a Fijian *kava* setting, for instance,

(2002-2007). Along with Wendt, and supported by Walker and Hohepa, she was an early and outspoken advocate of a Fale Pasifika.

12 The Polynesian Panthers formed a movement in 1971 to resist racist policies and practices discriminating against Māori and Pacific Island people in Tāmaki Makaurau. These were particularly evident during the Dawn Raids (1973-1979) in which suspected Pacific Islands overstayers were arrested and deported in the early hours. The Panthers organized peaceful protests and education but also legal aid and social resources such as language programmes and community support. Explicitly influenced by the American Black Panther Party, they followed a policy of global Black unity and intercommunalism policies and galvanized widespread support. Their movement contributed significantly to the development of pan-Pacific and Pasifika identities in Aotearoa.

13 On the marches, see Keane (2020).

14 Ancestral Polynesian Societies or APS is a term introduced by Patrick Kirch and Roger Green (2001) as the cultural system pertaining in the societies that Eastern Polynesians call Hawaiki. We have appro-

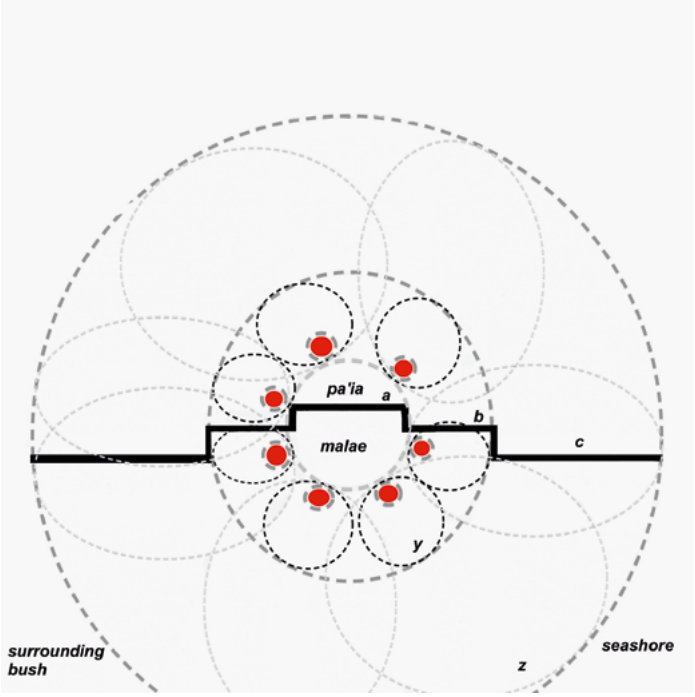

Fig. 6 Diagram of Samoan village showing the spheres of influence (from Refiti, 2015:86)

is made to reflect a configuration of sitting positions that is quite different from a Tongan or a Samoan ʻava setting. Importantly, the Fale must also now acknowledge faʻalupega from other parts of Moana Oceania. In all of this, mavae and tofiga are important in designating personhood and structuring, maintaining and holding together the Samoan polity, from the *fuaʻiala* (hamlet) and nuʻu to the malō (government) in Sāmoa to communities and institutions overseas. Involved in these quite different configurations (at home and abroad) are always spatial and material elements, which are sometimes physical and real and at other times aspirational and imagined. In the coming section, we will discuss how tofiga occur specifically in connection with real and imagined fale.

Fale – Real and Imagined

The emergence of Samoan notions of space, place and subjectivity is marked by the first *fono* (council, a formal meeting in a circle), held by the progenitor Tagaloaalagi

priated the term for our current research project on *Artefacts of Relation: Building in the Pacific* (www.vamoana.org/artefacts-of-relation).

at Malae Toto'a (tranquil meeting place) on the ninth Lagi (heaven). Already here, the final tofiga was made in front of the sacred house Fale'ula, a faletele the first *tufuga* (builders) had built as the blueprint for Samoan meeting houses (Refiti 2015:72). All subsequent houses follow this blueprint, including those built by diasporic communities. In a faletele, the power distributed amongst ali'i and tulāfale cascades outward from their *nofoaga* (sitting together). The divinity at the centre in an empty space (ring a in Figure 6 on p. 36, below) is sacred, devoid of a body, but with an intensive force that Samoans acknowledge, and to which they attend. From this invisible emanation, the ali'i acquires *mamalu* (dignity) in a chain reaction that echoes throughout the village (Refiti 2015:85).

Historically, Samoan villages have a similarly emanating or cascading structure of distributing power: as at the first meeting of the ancestors in Lagi, they cluster around a malae (ring a in Fig. 6), which is bounded by faletele. Family dwellings are located within a secondary ring (b); on a third (c), houses for cooking and ablution huts form a boundary towards the edges of the bush or the seashore.[15]

Physically, a faletele has a short *itū* (middle section), with one to three fully load-bearing *poutu* (central post or posts) connected to the ground and extending up to the *'au'au* (ridgebeam). Samoans still consider the faletele to be the original *fale fono* (meeting house) but, with the advent of more orators at the meetings, the *faleafolau* became the preferred form of *fale fono*, as its middle section is significantly longer and can therefore accommodate more people. Its central poutu do not connect the roof to the ground directly but are cut off above eyelevel, where their load is distributed through *utu poto* (cross beams) that pass the load to the ground close to the edges of the roof. In this way, a better view is preserved across the centre.

Apart from this horizontal movement of physical forces, there is also a vertical movement of spiritual forces in the fale fono that circulates up (towards Lagi, sky), around, then down and up again. The movement is symbolically manifest in the fale's physical construction. Thus, the positions of the ancestors, the outer posts, designate the sitters' positions, facing inwards towards the poutu, which rise(s) up from Papa (the earth) to meet the *'au'au* (ridgebeam, pertaining to Lagi), from which the roof is hung. The roof's curved shape, following the arc of the sky, is maintained by *so'a* (tie beams) propping outwards. This image projects the fale as the covering and enveloping structure of the Samoan world that shelters (*mamalu*) the work of creation and all relations. During fono, the participating matai face each other in a circle, along the edges of the house positioned in relation to the empty space of the malae.

The Maota o Lilomaiava, for example, is a faleafolau still standing in Salelologa in Savai'i. It was built by the prominent tufuga, Tataufaiga Faiga from Saipipi, between 1970 and 1972. The village was named after the orator class Sālelologa (aiga of Lologa),

15 Today, most villages have a linear roadside layout. For an extensive discussion of village layouts, see Bradd Shore (1996).

who govern Salelologa village and district.[16] The Maota o Lilomaiava reflects the eminence of the aiga's *faleupolu* (retinue of orators) in the extra-long middle section of the house and its considerable overall length: it has a line of sixteen internal columns, eight on either side of the central space. The faleupolu's importance is also rendered visible in the concrete columns' fluting and *sumu* (diamond) ornamentation. The fale's *tala* (rounded roof ends over the apse of a fale Sāmoa) are reserved for the two paramount chiefs, Luamanuvae and Muagututi'a, who seem to be pushed away from the centre of the house, signalling their almost silent function in it: their mana is routed through the matai sitting in the front of the middle section of the house, who do most of the talking and decision-making in the village.[17]

The fale re-enacts the connection and separation of Papa and Lagi. Separation (and connection) are materialized in the floating roof (signifying a world slightly removed from the present) and the paepae – forms floating on the malae like a rock drifting on the ocean. Foregrounded is Papa, who first appears in the cosmogony as a stratum growing from Tagaloa's feet, the foundational origin of *tagata* (humans). When the descendants take up their places in front of the *poulalo* (outer, perimeter posts) facing the poutu, they re-enact the first fono in Lagi, supported from below and elevated above the ground by a paepae that positions the cosmos within the domain of Papa. Ultimately, the house conforms and performs to a particular understanding of space and identity: that all of Sāmoa has been settled and allocated its places (Samoa ua 'uma ona tofi).

As Serge Tcherkézoff observes,

> Every Samoan thus belongs to a sacred circle at every level. Outside the circle, he ceases to exist. The individual does not exist if he has no 'family' (the literal translation of 'aiga potopoto) to belong to. The family (his place of origin) does not exist if it is not inscribed at the territorial level in a village circle (nuu, nuu o matai). If this kind of belonging is not in place, the individual cannot sit down in a house because every house materializes a circle of belonging; in this event, he is without a house, which is inconceivable in the Samoan culture; one must be able to sit down, and know what post to lean against when his family meets, the two being synonymous: when a person 'belongs,' he knows at what 'place' in the circle he belongs. The same is true at the village level: the matai of a family could not sit down with other matai; he would not know what post to sit against when the circle of the matai (nuu o matai) met to decide village affairs. (Tcherkézoff, 2009: 259)

16 Sā, the prefix, denotes the sacred orator class, and Lelologa records the ancestor of the village whose deed of saving the King of A'ana from being killed in an ambush is known throughout Sāmoa (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004:94).

17 The faletele next door belongs to the paramount chief Muagututi'a. It has a much shorter middle section and a prominent tala, which makes the roof look like a dome or halo in which mana is bestowed upon those who sit under it.

Even relatively recent building projects in Sāmoa (and certainly many overseas, like the Fale Pasifika in Auckland) persist in the iconic deployment of the ceremonial circle. This circle, where everyone faces each other at the same level, was emphatically enacted in 2021, after the election of a new Government. The present *maota fono* (government administration building) in Mulinuʻu, which is built in a circular form,[18] was locked up by the defeated government, forcing the newly elected parliament to meet in a marquee on the lawn in front of it (see Tcherkézoff, this issue). This highly charged and intensely public event demonstrated that iconicity not only relies on similarity but is inherently performative (Ljungberg 2018: 66).[19] Likewise, the six-story Fale o le Malo in Apia is crowned by a tiny fale on the top floor. At its Papaigalagala campus, the National University of Sāmoa sports the largest faleafolau in the world – originally designed by Fonoti Leilua Likisone in 1997, opened in 1998, demolished in 2011, and in 2012 replaced with a new faleafolau by the same tufuga. The question is, why is this iconic form repeated in Sāmoa and the Samoan diaspora when builders and architects are evidently quite capable of building other shapes?

One explanation could be the connective function of a fale fono: beyond it, *ala* (pathways, or personal traits) flow on to encompass ʻaiga, nuʻu, itūmalō and malō branches and, together, weave a system of belonging that is particular to the Samoan social system. Ala create vā relationships between nuʻu, and with places beyond, by connecting them along multiple pathways; they also connect a person socially and provide that person with identity. When Samoans leave their nuʻu, they take with them their original positionality, established in tofiga and codified in the matai title they carry in relationship to the pou of the faletele and the bodies on their malae. The ala connecting them beyond their village are imagined as a diagram of relations that allows Samoans to connect beyond the homelands, into their diasporic communities overseas. Whenever they then build houses in their new communities, they also bring with them the founding rituals to establish order in a new territory. The form of the fale fono, re-enacting the connection and separation of Papa and Lagi, may not be attainable at first, but the seating arrangements can be re-enacted even without pou.

In the 1970s, for example, Samoans living in South Auckland often created a large open space for fono in their garages, around which the matai took their seats on the best available mats. The 'order of precedence' determining the seating positions was sometimes invoked by 'people jokingly direct[ing] each new arrival to an imaginary post' (MacPherson 1997:166). Cluny McPherson, who is familiar with Samoan village events, remembered that it was 'easy to shut one's eyes and listen to the speeches and conversations and imagine being in the village on the island, forgetting that the maota o le nuʻu is in fact a garage ten meters square in suburban Auckland. When the

18 The current maota fono was opened in 2018, replacing an earlier version with the same shape that had opened in 2010.

19 On iconicity and iconic power in general, see Alexander (2020:397), and in Pacific neo- and postcolonial building and design practice, see Engels-Schwarzpaul (2007, 2017, 2020).

'ava ceremony [was] incorporated in these meetings the illusion [was] complete' (MacPherson 1997:166-7). MacPherson's description of Samoan immigrants in the 1970s, materializing through the circular arrangement of their bodies in the fono in this typical spatio-relational constellation in their South Auckland garages, demonstrates how these places can be set up to serve as malae in the absence of formal facilities. Outwardly, there was little, if anything, that was reminiscent of the wide-open space of a Samoan malae or of a faletele, but the constellation of seating in their imagined *maota o le nu'u* (village meeting house) placed people according to their ancestral connections to become a 'reference point of political action and motivation' (Tui Atua 2009: 33).

During an initial period, in which churches 'took on the role of villages, and provided a platform for strong Samoan identity' (Anae 2005) in Aotearoa, large meetings took place in community halls or existing church buildings that looked nothing like Samoan. However, soon the communities began to deploy iconic features in purpose-built or adapted existing buildings to bring to presence the circle of belonging instantiated in the faletele in Sāmoa.[20] The first significant building in Auckland to borrow the form of the faleafolau for its architecture was the Maota Sāmoa Banquet Room in Karangahape Road in 1978. It was built by the Samoan government to function much like the government-built faleafolau structures that were commonplace in Apia and beyond, like Sāmoa College, Apia; Vaiola School, Savai'i; and the Samoan Tourism Authority, Apia. The large open volume of the faleafolau structure naturally allows a variety of settings: weddings, twenty-first birthdays, funeral wakes, and other formal rituals were all carried out in this space. The Maota Sāmoa Banquet Room's architect, Ivan Mercep, had slept in a Meleiseā aiga faleafolau in the village of Poutasi and wanted to emulate its internal post and beam structure. This led to the use of cumbersome supporting brackets to connect the main horizontal and vertical joints, which the architect later dispensed with in his design for the Fale Pasifika in 2003. The building, with a single access point, is oriented towards the interior, without any exterior openings. This differs markedly from the faleafolau's openness in all directions, a feature that Mercep later successfully implemented in the Fale Pasifika. The intensely internal and dark space of the hall has the air of a modern-day tiki bar or cabaret club – which is what it became known for in the 1980s and 1990s.

Many years later, Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa called a (hypothetical) Fale Pasifika at the University of Auckland, if it were unconnected to the Centre for Pacific Studies and the affiliated communities, 'essentially a very fancy garage' (in Students and Graduates of The University of Auckland 2013), notwithstanding its iconic appearance.[21] What prevented the Fale Pasifika from becoming a fancy garage were the outwardly

20 For an account of churches, in Sāmoa and the New Zealand diaspora, see Refiti (2002).

21 Toeolesulusulu Damon Salesa was Associate Professor of History at the University of Michigan before he returned to Auckland to co-lead Te Wānanga o Waipapa (School of Māori Studies and Pacific Studies), subsequently to become Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Pacific) at the University of Auckland and Professor and Vice-Chancellor of Auckland University of Technology in 2021.

oriented activities of students and staff in creating a space for relationships, a vā that could serve as an important 'touch-point between the University and Pacific communities', a common ground on which Pacific issues can be brought 'into the heart of the University's affairs' (ibid.). In the meeting of these communities, bodies, people, houses, objects, *measina* (treasured possessions), gifts, knowledge, memories, and much else enter into relation with one another. The relational space arising in these encounters does not rely primarily on physical characteristics, but iconicity with its 'performative fusion of surface and depth' (Bartmanski 2015:17), and with its 'residues of complex intentionalities' (Gell 1996: 37), does help. Icons represent their objects mainly by means of a sensory similarity (Peirce 1998:273), which is often visual. Seen from outside, the fale Samoa's roof form and openness have, indeed, frequently been called iconic. However, icons can also be diagrams that do not 'resemble their objects […] at all in looks' – instead, their likeness consists in 'the relations of their parts' (Bartmanski 2015:13). The central function of Samoan fale tele, namely to shelter and perform relationships, is diagrammatically manifest in their layout: specific pou re-presenting descent lines and enacting connections between them are allocated to particular 'aiga. The combination of visual and diagrammatic iconicity, in a 'felicitous performative arrangement of visually arresting phenomenon and socially potent meanings and their references' (Bartmanski 2015:3), involves material, appearance and performance to anchor meaning and memories, thoughts and feelings. So, while iconic power crucially concerns materiality – wood, stone, thatch and sennit in the case of fale – icons are bundles of material/aesthetic surface and immaterial/spiritual, moral or intellectual depth. Visual appearance and structural organization form an indispensable interface across which meaning, engagement and value converge with 'often visceral collective feelings' (Bartmanski 2015:27).[22]

In faletele and faleafolau, immediately recognizable features (at least to the initiated) are the tala, indicative of the typical fale Sāmoa roof shape. Not surprisingly, the shape appears in many buildings in the diaspora. Thus, in the late 1980s, a tala was added to the otherwise modernist EFKS church building in 56 Sussex Street, Grey Lynn, Auckland. The characteristic roof shape persisted also in the EFKS in Newtown, Wellington, in the Fale Pasifika at the University of Auckland, and in the Fale Sāmoa at the Sāmoa Consulate-General in Māngere, Auckland (opened 2016).[23] Recently, it was foregrounded in the conceptual model for the Fale Malae in downtown Wellington. Adrian Orr, Governor of the Reserve Bank, remarked: 'The Fale Malae will be an iconic focal point for all those with Pacific heritage to gather, learn and celebrate their arts,

22 Hence the important role icons can play, particularly in diasporic situations, in creating constellations in which collective feelings can consolidate and 'become conscious of themselves' (Durkheim 1995:421; see also Engels-Schwarzpaul 2017).

23 An exception is the Lesieli Tonga Auditorium (Favona, Mangere), which is, however, located next to a church with a barrel-shaped roof and a tala-like addition to the front façade.

Fig. 7 Lupe. Faletele built at Unitec, Auckland, by Togia'i Kaeitano Smith. Photo: M. Austin

cultures, histories and futures,' alongside contextual factors, such as 'Pacific peoples' engagement with higher education, commerce, and political institutions.'[24]

Because of a Samoan tufuga's involvement in its production, the Samoan fale construction at Unitec is a special case in Aotearoa. Built in 2003 as part of the Pacific Architecture elective paper developed by Jeremy Treadwell, it was based on the faletele that had been built in Sāmoa by the *tufuga-faufale* (master house-builder) Sao Taito in 1939 and erected at the 1940 Centennial Exhibition in Wellington, New Zealand. In 2001, tufuga-faufale Togiaʻi Kaeitano Smith from Porirua, Wellington, was commissioned to build the house on the grounds of the Unitec School of Architecture. Although the fale was to an extent predetermined by CAD drawings prepared by Treadwell, the tufuga still had room to bring his own stylistic repertoire to bear: this included painted poulalo connections to the ring beam and the *soʻa* (struts) that span the front and back of the itū. Especially notable is the forked poutu that Smith painted with patterns of a Sāmoan *malu* (woman's tattoo), so that the forked branches reaching upwards appeared like the legs of a woman and the trunk reaching into the foundation the body. The painted motifs in green, red, white and black reached back to the style

24 'Proposed Fale near Parliament aims to celebrate Pacific people's contribution to NZ'. tvnz.co.nz/one-news/new-zealand/proposed-fale-near-parliament-aims-celebrate-pacific-people-s-contribution-nz. Jun 14, 2020.

of his father, with whom Smith trained in Safotu, Savai'i, in the late 1960s and 1970s. The fale was lashed with sennit from Fiji and Sāmoa and thatched with dried coconut leaf from Sāmoa, while the river stones for the paepae gave the building the appearance of an 'authentic' Samoan fale. Lupe has all the elements that signify the proper places for matai in the Samoan polity – orators at the front itū and the paramount and high ranked matai in the tala. For the fale's dedication in the summer of 2003, an 'ava ceremony was held, with then New Zealand prime minister, Helen Clark taking up a position, as paramount chief of the visiting matai, at the tala next to the main road. The Samoan Prime Minister, Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi took up a position under the inland tala, which signified his status as the paramount matai and main host. Inside the fale, the tofiga of seating according to Samoan vā was enacted. From the outside, this fale Sāmoa was perhaps best imagined like the TARDIS in the BBC television series, Doctor Who: irrespective of its location in the world/universe, the interior logic of the fale retains the consistent reality of the Samoan cosmos.

Fale Sāmoa, at Home and Abroad

Another way of comparing internal and external perspectives leads to the proposition that vā has, in the diaspora, an inside that references the politics of placemaking for Samoans in Sāmoa, and an outside based on a politics of difference in the creation of new sites to belong to for Samoans on the move. On the inside, fale in the diaspora materialize tofiga in their coherent and relatively unchanging form. The persistence of this shape, based on the original Fale'ula that housed the first fono in Lagi, is partially due to its performative iconicity. Even in large contemporary buildings, the house form (as a gigantic materialization of the ceremonial circle) evokes a place within the circle and thereby manifests belonging; its material organization is 'invested with imagination and enlivened by performativity' (Alexander 2020:381). The roof, which provides *mamalu* (spiritual cover), combines with the poulalo that mark the original places of belonging for most Samoans connected with a *gafa* (lineage). Fale, like Māori *whare* (houses) travelling the world, with their 'ability to stand in both worlds' of *noa* (unrestricted/common) and *tapu* (restricted/sacred) (Wineera 2000:25), provide connections between people and place.

From the outside, fale Sāmoa become coded as 'Samoan-ness'. This can simply mean that they 'look Samoan', but in 'looking Samoan' they also provide some resistance to the dominant architecture in their location – which, as the architecture of the ruling has always done, contributes 'to maintaining, legitimating, consolidating and stabilising a given social order' (Tarazona-Vento 2022:84). In this sense, 'Samoan-ness' can contribute to social change: political activity can transform bodies and places into something different from what the prevailing order intended, and iconic sites can become important sites of protest when they symbolize alternative uses and changing

types of images, thus associating the sites with different narratives (Tarazona-Vento 2022:95).

However, a house only becomes fully aligned with its status as a fale, and thereby more powerfully represents 'Samoan-ness' to Samoans themselves, when the interior activation of the house through ritual and ceremony goes along with the engagement of its outside, the world beyond, while acknowledging its place and the relationships that pertain within it. In Sāmoa, tofiga extends outwards to encompass the malae space, and from there the nu'u, itūmalo and malo. In the diaspora, tofiga will, first of all, engage the people of the land (*mana whenua* in Aotearoa) and the wider, usually metropolitan environment. In the often precarious conditions of the diaspora, alliances and well-functioning relational networks are vital. Samoan and Tongan interpellations like *'ia teu le vā'* (tend to the vā) or *'tauhi vā'* (nurture the vā) imply discord or danger in the homelands – disturbed or disrupted relations in need of tending and healing, or even a state that is inherently culturally dangerous. But how does one tauhi or teu le vā in radically different environments in which vā relationships are difficult to enact? Most European building types, for instance, are organized according to principles that do not lend themselves to meetings in which people can 'sit according to their status and rank at different posts' (Van der Ryn 2012:139). That is one reason why buildings like the Fale Pasifika at the University of Auckland play such an important role in community development: forces operating in vā relationships find material expression in their design and construction. The Fale Pasifika is physically anchored in land (first given by Māori, then appropriated by the colonial administration, and later symbolically given again thanks to the support of Māori academics), and therefore unable to move like the fale tele of old in Sāmoa, when they were given, for instance, as dowry.[25] Nevertheless, like mats, it retains the quality of gifts to instigate and nurture relationships.

Another important element in the being and function of the houses discussed in this article is that all have been named. This allows them to exist, in their own right, as gathering places for people associated with their name – in Sāmoa, this name would refer to an ancestor. Even without that connection, the Fale Pasifika is still referred to by Pacific people who connect to the University of Auckland as 'their house', especially by staff. Similarly, Lupe, the fale Sāmoa at Unitec, which was recently shifted to a new location, still has strong connections to its institutional community. Fale are, in that sense, much like the *'ie o le malō* (main fine mats of prominent families) that carry with them the name and the mana of each family. The case in point here is Le ageagea o Tumua, a fine mat of the Tui Atua aiga. It was gifted to the New Zealand Government by Tui Atua in 2002 to commemorate the apology extended by the then Prime Minister, Helen Clark to the Samoan people, on behalf of Aotearoa New Zealand, for events that took place during New Zealand's administration of Sāmoa (1914-1962). Le

25 See Tcherkézoff (2008a:299 note 84).

ageagea o Tumua, now housed at Te Papa, provides the potential to *ao* (gather into its being) all the hurt and trauma caused by the New Zealand colonial administration in Sāmoa during that time, and thus to allow for new vā to emerge.

The Fale Pasifika, like other fale in Aotearoa, operates similarly: it gathers people and provides mamalu, thus allowing the distant past from other lands to find tofiga and place in the diaspora.

Glossary

S=Samoan, M=Māori (note: singular and plural are not formally distinguished in Māori or Samoan)

ʻaiga	S	extended family
ʻau'au	S	ridgebeam
ʻaumaga	S	ritual ʻava chewers/producers
ʻAva a le Tupu	S	kava ceremony for a paramount leader
ʻie o le malō	S	main fine mats of prominent families
ʻie toga	S	fine mats
alaga	S	lines of connections, pathways, personal traits
aliʻi	S	paramount chief
alofi sā	S	sacred circle
ao	S	gather into its being
faʻalupega	S	kinship, system of honorifics
faʻasinomaga	S	placement, a person's identity
faleʻula	S	red/first house
faleafolau	S	longhouse
faletele	S	great house
fanau	S	family, descendants
fanua	S	placenta, land (but something much more than the modern European term evokes)
feagaiga	S	sacred brother-sister covenant
fono	S	council, a formal meeting in a circle
fuaʻiala	S	hamlet
gafa	S	genealogy, lineage
ia teu le vā	S	tend to the vā!

itū	S	middle section
itūmalo	S	district
lagi	S	heaven
lauga		oratory
malae	S	originally, open space central to a > nuʻu; today, the free space in an institution in Aotearoa that is governed by Pacific values and protocols, similar to an institutional Māori > marae
malō	S	nation, government
malu	S	woman's tattoo
mamalu	S	dignity, shelter, to shelter, spiritual cover
mana	M/S	power, prestige, authority, control
mana whenua	M	power from the land
maota o le nuʻu	S	village meeting house
matai	S	chief
mavae	S	growth, expansion; grow, expand
mavaega	S	regeneration
measina		treasured possession
noa	M/S	unrestricted/common
nofoaga	S	sitting together, place, residence
nuʻu	S	village, settlement
nuʻu tofi	S	assignment of place
paʻia	S	supreme power
paepae	M/S	house platform
paolo	S	shelter
poulalo	S	outer, perimeter post
poutu	S	central post
rangatira	M	leader
soʻa	S	tie beam, strut
taeao		morning, dawn, tomorrow, historic event
tagata	S	human
takiwā	M	district, area, territory, time, period, season
tala	S	rounded roof ends over the apse of a fale
tama-a-ʻaiga	S	maximal lineage titleholder
tangata whenua	M	people of the land
tānoa	S	wooden ʻava bowl
tapu	M/S	restricted, sacred

tapuaʻi	S	consecrated, prayer
tauhi vā	T/S	to nurture the vā
taupou	S	village maiden, ceremonial hostess
tofi	S	to assign, appoint; heritage, birthright
tofiga	S	appointment, designation, (re-) allocation or division of position, land, space; aggregation and combination, ordering
tua	S	back
tufuga	S	expert builder
tuku rangatira	M	use right
tulāfale	S	orator
tulagavae	S	demarcation of place
utu poto	S	crossbeam
vā	S	relationship, relational space
vā fealoaloaʻi	S	Samoan system of social relationships based on mutual respect
wāhi	M	place, location
whare	M	house
whenua	M	land, see also > fanua

References

Alexander, Jeffrey C. 2020: The Performativity of Objects. *Sociologisk forskning* 57(3–4):381–409.

Anae, Melani Misatauveve 2005: Samoans: Life in New Zealand. https://teara.govt.nz/en/samoans/page-2, accessed 11 May 2025.

Anae, Melani Misatauveve 2020: *The Platform : The Radical Legacy of the Polynesian Panthers*.Wellington: BWB texts (online). https://www.bwb.co.nz/books/platform, accessed 11 May 2025.

Bartmański, Dominik 2015: Modes of Seeing, or, Iconicity as Explanatory Notion: Cultural Research and Criticism After the Iconic Turn in Social Sciences. *Sociologica* 9(1):1–34.

Bourdieu, Pierre 1990: *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP.

Duranti, Alessandro 1983: Samoan Speechmaking Across Social Events: One Genre in and out of a Fono. *Language in Society* 12(1):1–22.

Durkheim, Émile (transl. Fields, Karen E.) 1995: *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press.

Engels-Schwarzpaul, A.-Chr. 2007: 'A warm grey fabric lined on the inside with the most lustrous and colourful of silks': Dreams of Airships and Tropical Islands. *The Journal of Architecture* 12(5):525–542.

Engels-Schwarzpaul, A.-Chr. 2017: Binding and Arresting: Surface and Pattern in a Contemporary Traditional Pacific Building. *Interstices: Journal of Architecture and Related Arts* 18:51–63.

Engels-Schwarzpaul, A.-Chr., and Albert L. Refiti 2018: Fale Samoa's Extended Boundaries: Performing Place and Identity. In: E. Grant, K. Greenop, and A. L. Refiti eds., *Handbook of Contemporary Indigenous Architecture.* Pp. 677–696. Singapore: Springer.

Engels-Schwarzpaul, A.-Chr. 2020: Iconicity and Appropriation: images as Living Things. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 53(7):683–695.

Gell, Alfred 1996: Vogel's Net: Traps as Artworks and Artworks as tTaps. *Journal of Material Culture* 1(1):15–38.

Hauʻofa, Epeli 1994: Our Sea of Islands. *Contemporary Pacific* 6(1):147.

Hunfeld, Katharina 2022: The Coloniality of Time in the Global Justice Debate: De-Centring Western Linear Temporality. *Journal of Global Ethic, 18*(1):100–117.

Keane, Basil 2020: Ngā rōpū tautohetohe – Māori Protest Movements - Land protests. Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand. http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/nga-ropu-tautohetohe-maori-protest-movements/page-3, accessed 11 May 2025.

Keesing, Felix M., Marie M. Keesing, 1956: *Elite Communication in Samoa: A Study of Leadership.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Kirch, Patrick V., and Roger C. Green 2001: *Hawaiki, Ancestral Polynesia: An Essay in Historical Anthropology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lilomaiava-Doktor, Sa'iliemanu 2004: *Fa'a-Samoa and Population Movement from the Inside Out: The Case of Salelologa*. (Doctor of Philosophy). University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, HI.

Ljungberg, Christina 2018: Iconicity in Cognition and Communication. *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung. Supplement* 31:66–77.

MacPherson, Cluny 1997: A Samoan Solution to the Limitations of Urban Housing in New Zealand. In: J. Rensel, and M. Rodman eds., *Home in the Islands: Housing and Social Change in the Pacific*. Pp. 151-174. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai`i Press.

Massey, Doreen 1999: Philosophy and Politics of Spatiality: Some Considerations. The Hettner-Lecture in Human Geography. *Geographische Zeitschrift*: 1–12.

Meleiseā, Malama, and Penelope S. Meleiseā 1994: *Lagaga: A Short History of Western Samoa*. Suva, Fiji: University of the South Pacific.

Muaiava, Sadat 2022: *Lāuga: Understanding Samoan Oratory*. Wellington: Te Papa Press.

Pratt, George 1893: *A Grammar and Dictionary of the Samoan Language with English and Samoan Vocabulary*. London: London Missionary Society.

Refiti, Albert L. 2002: About, Around and Over It: X Culture and Aspects of Pacific Architecture. *LOG Illustrated.* http://physicsroom.org.nz/archive/log/archive/15/albertrefiti/, accessed 11 May 2025.

Refiti, Albert L. 2015: *Mavae and Tofiga: Spatial Exposition of the Samoan Cosmogony and Architecture.* (PhD). Auckland University of Technology, Auckland. https://aut.researchgateway.ac.nz/handle/10292/9248, accessed 11 May 2025.

Refiti, Albert L. 2017: Libation and Sacrifice in the Samoan ʻava ceremony. Paper presented at the *KAVA: A workshop for kava researchers and enthusiasts:* Anthropology and Pacific Studies Seminar Series, Hamilton. https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/items/c2d854bb-91c1-405b-80e5-4b654f11b6dc, accessed 11 May 2025.

Salmond, Anne 2012: Ontological Quarrels: Indigeneity, Exclusion and Citizenship in a Relational World. *Anthropological theor, 12*(2):115–141.

Shore, Bradd 1996: *Culture in Mind: Cognition, Culture, and the Problem of Meaning*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Steffany, Duchess Sa'ili 2011: *Time is the Space i-we Keep: Samoana Time Consciousness through the Samoan Language.* (MA). University of Hawai'i Manoa, Honolulu. https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/items/c883cf55-83b2-4130-b3e4-cd402c0f73d8, accessed 11 May 2025.

Students and graduates of The University of Auckland 2013: History of the Fale Pasifika. https://youtu.be/5Zh-ExTXoLI, accessed 11 May 2025.

Tarazona-Vento, Amparo 2022: Iconic Architecture: Seduction and Subversion. In: S. Burgum and K. Higgins eds., *How the Other Half Lives: Interconnecting Socio-Spatial Inequalities.* Pp. 84–99. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Tcherkézoff, Serge 2008a: Culture, Nation, Society. In: S. Tcherkézoff, and F. Douaire-Marsaudon eds., *The Changing South Pacific. Identities and Transformations*. Pp. 245–301. Canberra: ANU Press.

Tcherkézoff, Serge 2008b: *First Contacts in Polynesia-the Samoan Case (1722-1848): Western Misunderstandings about Sexuality and Divinity*. Canberra: Anu E Press.

Tcherkézoff, Serge 2009: Hierarchy is not Inequality: In Polynesia, for instance. In: K. M. Rio, and O. H. Smedal eds., *Hierarchy : persistence and transformation in social formations*. Pp. 299–330. New York: Berghahn Books.

Tuck, Eve and Marcia McKenzie 2014: *Place in Research: Theory, Methodology, and Methods*. London, UK: Routledge.

Tui Atua, Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi 2012: *Samoa o le Atunuu Tofi, e lese Atunuu Taliola*. Paper presented at the NUS Measina Conference, Apia, Samoa. http: //www.head-of-state-samoa.ws/speeches pdf / HOS NUS Measina FINAL 16 Sept 2012.pdf, 14 June 2015.

Tui Atua, Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi 2009: Tamafaigā: Shaman, King or Maniac? The Emergence of Manono. In: T. i. Suaalii-Sauni, I. u. Tuagalu, T. N. Kirifi-Alai, and N. Fuamatu eds., *Su'esu'e Manogi - In Search of Fragrance: Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi and the Samoan Indigenous reference.* Pp. 33–51. Apia: The Centre for Samoan Studies.

Van der Ryn, Fepulea'i Micah 2012: *'The difference walls make': Cultural Dynamics and Implications of Change in Sāmoan Architectural Traditions and Socio-Spatial Practices (1940–2006).* University of Auckland: Auckland.

Wineera, Vernice 2000: *Selves and Others: A Study of Reflexivity and the Representation of Culture in Touristic Display at the Polynesian Cultural Center, Laie, Hawaii.* (Doctor of Philosophy PhD thesis). University of Hawai'i, Honolulu, HI.