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**FOFOA-I-VAO-‘ESE:
THE IDENTITY JOURNEYS OF
NZ-BORN SAMOANS**

MELANI ANAE

PH.D THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Anthropology

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PROLOGUE

FOFOA-I-VAO-‘ESE

Salamasina, queen of Samoa, gave this name to her first child (a love child) a baby girl, because she was conceived in the forest during a pigeon-catching expedition "āfuafua i le vaomāoa". It had been arranged for Salamasina to marry a high chief from Savai‘i, but knowing she was pregnant with her first love’s child, she was hesitant to go through with it. The marriage took place nevertheless, and although Salamasina’s husband knew the child was not his, he raised Fofoa-i-vao-‘ese as if she were his own...

(*O se Tala‘aga o Samoa*. Brother Fred Henry, 1980:120-129. Bilingual, Bicultural Education Project of American Samoa, Pagopago. This publication contains Samoan version only. The translation above (provided by the Rev. L. & L. Tanielu) is a considerably shortened version of the *tala*.

From this Samoan *tala*--a love-story, I have chosen the name Fofoa-i-vao-‘ese for the thesis. Its literal meaning is *fofoa*-conceived, *i*-in, *vao*-forest/bush, ‘*ese*-foreign or alien--‘conceived-in-the-foreign-forest’. *Vao* as forest or bush is the source of food and nourishment that is outside of the village. It is in the forest that plantations are cultivated, coconuts and bananas are harvested, and birds are caught to provide sustenance for the people of the village. In this sense *vao* can be extended to refer to the metropolises of Australia, United States of America, and in the context of this thesis, New Zealand--places outside of Samoa where contemporary Samoans are born, live and work, to provide sustenance for their ‘*aiga* in Samoa through their remittances, letters and visits. By accepting Fofoa-i-vao-‘ese as his own child, this *tala* also depicts the significant link that Samoans who are born outside of Samoa still have with their ‘*āiga* in Samoa and their homeland.



THE KEY OF LIFE

EMMET HANE JAN 97.

ABSTRACT

This thesis constitutes a site for New Zealand-born Samoans to explore issues of ethnic identity. The emphasis is on the process of the Samoanising of christianity, and hegemonic identity discourses of not only the dominant society but of island-born Samoans and elders, and how this contributes to New Zealand-born Samoan self perceptions. A socio-historical overview provides an understanding of the process in which New Zealand-born Samoans have been positioned. The stories and narratives of a group of New Zealand-born Samoans concerning their life experiences provide valuable insights into their 'identity journeys'--the construction of ethnic identity through experimenting with subject positions over time, as a result of challenges to their perceived self-identities. For some, this journey ends with a secured identity--a self-satisfying ethnic identity as a New Zealand-born Samoan--others remain in a perpetual state of conscious or subconscious identity confusion.

More specifically the thesis seeks to provide an understanding and an interpretation of the way *fa'aSamoa*, church, and life in New Zealand impacts on life choices and on the construction of the self, and secured identities. The identity journey is analysed as a ritual and a series of rites of passage in order to expose the structure of identity confusion, and to examine the dichotomy of chaos and conflict within an apparently ordered society, experienced by New Zealand-born Samoans during their identity journeys.

The thesis is therefore underpinned by Samoan conceptual frameworks involved in this identity journey, and aims to consciousness-raise and emancipate by exposing, understanding and reclaiming the links between *fa'aSamoa*, church, and a New Zealand-born Samoan identity.

The thesis represents an '*ie toga*', because like a fine mat being woven, the strands of Samoan history, *fa'aSamoa* and Samoan contemporary lifeways, and their interaction with 'others' interconnect to inform Samoan identity. It is thus presented with respect, gratitude, deference, recognition and obligation, a tangible symbol of an alliance and an exchange with all Samoans and others. As the wellspring of my Samoan identity, in its creativity in design and fineness of weave, I hope that this '*ie toga*' will be received as a source of identity, history and wealth.

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GLOSSARY

The following Samoan words, expressions and phrases are based on Pratt's *Grammar and Dictionary of the Samoan Language* (1893), Milner's *Samoan Dictionary* (1966), Glossaries in Meleisea's publications (1987), and my own knowledge of colloquial Samoan in the New Zealand and Newton Church context. Some of the Samoan words/phrases have been recorded 'as spoken' and this accounts for their sometimes 'unorthodox' appearance. Thus I have included both colloquial and orthodox versions of the words containing the frequent interchange of 't'/'k', 'n'/'g' (orthodox/colloquial respectively) where applicable.

<i>afakasi</i>	half-caste Samoan (usually half-white)
<i>'aiavā</i>	pooling together items of food and valuables for formal presentation to guests - this usually takes place at night
<i>'āiga</i>	family, extended family, descent group or kinship in all its dimensions; transnational corporation of kin
<i>aiku</i>	<i>aitu</i> , a spirit/ghost
<i>aise'e</i>	to beg food at a feast
<i>ali'i</i>	one of the two orders of <i>matai</i> , a 'high chief' as opposed to an 'orator chief, also polite word for men - 'gentleman/men'
<i>alofa</i>	love
<i>a'u</i>	I, me
<i>aualuma</i>	society of unmarried/widowed/separated girls and women belonging to a village by birth, attendants to the <i>taupou</i>
<i>aufa'alupega</i>	church <i>fa'alupega</i>
<i>'aufaipese</i>	choir
<i>'aulotu</i>	parish
<i>'aumāga</i>	society of untitled men, an institution in every <i>nu'u</i>
<i>'autalavou</i>	young generation; young people (usually referred to in context of church)
<i>'autaumafai</i>	christian endeavour group
<i>'autoea'ina</i>	advisory council (in context of church)
<i>'ava</i>	a ceremonial drink made from root of piper methisticum, called <i>kava</i> outside of Samoa
<i>efakasa</i>	Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EFKS), the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa
<i>fa'aāiga</i>	to incorporate non-relatives into <i>'āiga</i>
<i>fa'aaloalo</i>	courtesy, respect, honours, regard highly and treat with respect
<i>fa'aulufalega</i>	church openings
<i>fa'akali</i>	<i>fa'atali</i> , to wait for
<i>fa'alavelave</i>	a ceremonial occasion (weddings, funerals, etc.) requiring the exchange of gifts, anything which interferes with 'normal' life and calls for special activity
<i>fa'alupega</i>	a formal expression of recognition associated with a <i>matai</i> title. Each village and district has a set of <i>fa'alupega</i> which acts as a constitution by expressing the rank and by alluding to the historical/genealogical origins of the senior titles
<i>fa'amaulalo</i>	(<i>fa'amaulalalo</i>) to be humble, to humble oneself, be low, be subservient to, to act below one's station
<i>fa'amaualuga</i>	proud, to be high, conceited, to act above one's station
<i>fa'apālagi</i>	European ways, like a European, according to the ideas/customs of Europeans
<i>fa'aSamoa</i>	in the manner of Samoans, the Samoan way; according to Samoan customs and traditions

<i>fa'asinomaga</i>	direction, the right path
<i>fa'akali</i>	<i>fa'atali</i> , to wait
<i>fa'atau</i>	to contend for the privilege of being spokesman, being the first speaker in an assembly
<i>fa'atuatua</i>	to hope for something promised
<i>fagua fanua,</i>	land
<i>fāi'ai</i>	dish consisting of coconut cream baked in banana-leaf packages either plain or with ingredients eg. octopus, yam
<i>faife'au</i>	pastor, minister
<i>fale</i>	house, traditional house
<i>feagaiga</i>	covenant between a brother/sister and their descendants, currently used to refer to covenant between minister/congregation; a contract
<i>fe'au</i>	thing to be done, business, errand, work, household chores
<i>fiafia</i>	joyful, to be joyful, to rejoice, to be delighted
<i>fiapālagi</i>	ape the ways and manners of Europeans
<i>fiapoko</i>	<i>fa'afiapoto</i> , (be) conceited, presumptuous
<i>fiasili</i>	be high, the best or topmost
<i>fofō</i>	to doctor, a doctoring of a disease (includes a variety of techniques including massage, administering of indigenous medicines etc.)
<i>fono</i>	governing council, a council of chiefs, a meeting
<i>gafa</i>	genealogy
<i>'ie koga</i>	also <i>'ie toga</i> , fine mat (the most valuable and significant object in Samoan custom), finely weaved cloth of bleached pandanus fibres bordered with coloured featers--usually red. Varieties of <i>'ie toga</i> are graded and named according to size/quality/appearance/purpose
<i>ita</i>	angry, be angry
<i>kalo</i>	also <i>talo</i> , taro,; a cultivated plant (<i>colocasia</i> sp.), the corm of which is one of the most important sources of food
<i>kava</i>	see <i>'ava</i>
<i>komiki</i>	<i>komiti</i> , committee
<i>lafo</i>	contribute money, valuables given from visitors to host, presentation of fine mats/money to an orator
<i>lāfoga</i>	tax; subscription, contribution, specified church donations for specific occasions
<i>lalaga</i>	plait, weave, fine mat(s), category of fine mat (as one with wider strands than is considered desirable for 'finest' fine mat)
<i>lau afioga</i>	term of respectful address preceding the title of many <i>ali'i</i> titles (others may be preceded by the address <i>susuga</i> (e.g., <i>Lau Susuga</i> Malietoa)
<i>lāuga</i>	speech, sermon, preach
<i>lotu</i>	to worship, church
<i>lu'au</i>	dish made with young <i>taro</i> leaves and coconut cream/water/salt, young leaves of <i>taro</i> plant used for that dish, also <i>palusami</i>
<i>mafutaga</i>	companionship, fellowship
<i>magumigumi</i>	<i>manuminumi</i> , tangled, crumpled
<i>makua</i>	see <i>matua</i>
<i>malae</i>	central gathering place of the <i>nu'u</i> , associated with residence of highest ranking chiefs of <i>nu'u</i> , an open space in villages where meetings are held
<i>malaga</i>	to visit, a visiting party, visiting <i>'āiga</i> , ceremonial visit paid according to Samoan custom: journey
<i>mālō</i>	the winning side, victors, government, to congratulate

<i>mamona</i>	Mormon
<i>mana</i>	divine power, God's grace
<i>masi</i>	biscuits, usually tins of the Cabin Bread type for ritual exchanges
<i>matagālua</i>	region
<i>matai</i>	political representative of 'āiga who holds a title bestowed by 'āiga, custodian of 'āiga land and property. There are two orders of matai - <i>ali'i</i> and <i>tulafale</i>
<i>mātou</i>	we, us, our, (exclusive pronoun which involves three or more persons - not including speaker)
<i>matā'upu</i>	subject, theme
<i>matua</i>	(be) mature (but not fully ripe), adult, grown-up, older, elder, be loyal to, parent, root core of a sermon/speech
<i>miki</i>	sound made by pursing lips together and sucking air in, noise made to get one's attention
<i>nu'u</i>	a polity or village, also <i>gu'u</i>
<i>'o</i>	pre-basic particle, used mostly in utterance initial positions, and having several functions, it is
<i>onotaga</i>	<i>o'otaga</i> , present/gift given on death
<i>oso'oso</i>	<i>osooso</i> , jump up and down, skip
<i>'outou</i>	you (exclusive pronoun involving three or more persons)
<i>pālagi</i>	also <i>papālagi</i> sky-breaker (lit.), white man, Europeans, foreigner, Samoan not born in Samoa in thesis context
<i>pāpā</i>	High titles and dignities
<i>pauā</i>	that's all, because..., that's the way it is (coll.)
<i>pea</i>	pair, woman's two piece costume (also <i>puletasi</i>)
<i>pese</i>	sing, a song
<i>pisupo</i>	corned beef, salted beef
<i>pōpese</i>	choir competition of sorts (between churches) at special occasions most usually church openings. Songs are usually original compositions written especially for the occasion
<i>pōsiva</i>	Samoa dance competition (between churches) which takes place at church openings
<i>pulega</i>	subdivided church district
<i>saofa'i</i>	ritual installation of people into <i>matai</i> titles
<i>sapasui</i>	chop suey (Samoan style), dish made with diced meat and chinese noodles/water/soy sauce/salt/onions
<i>Siōvili</i>	early Samoan christian cult (named after a Samoan sailor 'Joe Gimlet' who denounced <i>pālagi</i> religion, and who decreed that Saturday should be the Sabbath Day) taken over by a woman who used techniques of <i>taulaitu</i> to contact 'new' God, and prophesied the coming of a new God from the sea which would bring about the end of the world, also known as 'Sailor's lotu'
<i>sua</i>	a presentation to a chief (usually food eg. baked pig) with accompaniments
<i>tafa'ifā</i>	Hold four titles which (together) give full royal status. Sa ~ Salamasina: S. held the four (royal) titles.
<i>talā</i>	dollar/dollars
<i>tama</i>	child; <i>tamā</i> - father. In this context the latter
<i>Tama a 'āiga</i>	'sons of the families', the term used to refer to the four titles now recognised as being of paramount rank nationally, Malietoa, Tupua, Mata'afa, Tuimaleali'ifano.
<i>tapuaiga</i>	the forms of spiritual worship
<i>taro</i>	talo, a cultivated plant (colocasia), the corm of which one of the most important sources of food

<i>tātou</i>	we (inclusive pronoun) involving three or more persons, including speaker, you and we, all of us
<i>taualuga</i>	dance, the last dance (traditionally by village maiden)
<i>taulaga</i>	offering to church, sacrifice by priest (trad.)
<i>taulāitu</i>	a medium for spirits/ghosts
<i>taule‘ale‘a</i>	untitled man (plural: <i>taulelea</i>)
<i>tautua</i>	(of untitled men and other dependants) serve a <i>matai</i> , carry out orders of; those who stand behind those in authority
<i>teuila</i>	shrub, the red ginger, the ginger lily
<i>tinā</i>	mother
<i>toea‘ina</i>	elder (referring to men), Senior ministers of EFKS and PIPC
<i>tofiga</i>	an appointment/position, council of pastors and deacons who control <i>pulega</i> , <i>tofiga tele</i> = district representative body; a profession/occupation.
<i>to‘ona‘i</i>	main Sunday meal
<i>tuabacks</i>	sl. for the interior; 'back' villages regarded as more traditional/conservative and therefore more 'backward' in comparison to Apia
<i>tulāfale</i>	orator, talking chief
<i>tupu</i>	King
<i>tupu‘aga</i>	origin, descent'ancestors
<i>tusigaigoa</i>	collection of funds (for a particular purpose) including a feast and a publication of a subscription list
<i>uapou</i>	(C.I.) Cook Island style church singing/group
<i>umu</i>	earth oven, food cooked over heated stones
<i>vā</i>	referring to the distance/position of two people/places/things in relation to each other/their relationship, separate yet closely connected

PHRASES

<i>a‘ea i sasa‘e ma le a‘e i sisifo</i>	conquest of the hills to the east and west
<i>afio mai lau afioga</i>	welcome Sir! (greeting spoken to <i>matai</i>)
<i>ā‘oga ‘amata</i>	see ‘aoga Samoa
<i>ā‘oga Samoa</i>	Samoa language nest; Samoan preschool
<i>ā‘oga siva</i>	school of Samoan dance, to learn Samoan dance
<i>‘ēkālesia</i>	church body, communicant members of church
<i>ese le malie!</i>	How amusing/really funny!
<i>fa‘afetai tele lava</i>	thank you very much
<i>fa‘akele la‘u pili aa</i>	(I have) plenty bills huh!?
<i>fa‘aSamoa mo Samoa</i>	the Samoan way for Samoa(ns)
<i>fa‘avae i le atua Samoa</i>	Samoa is founded on God, Samoa's motto
<i>fono tele</i>	General Assembly
<i>‘ie lavalava</i>	also ‘ie sulusulu (carelessly wrapped), ‘ie solosolo (cloth with floral design), cotton wrap-around, worn like a skirt.
<i>kafaovale</i>	<i>tafaovale</i> , do no work, be idle
<i>keke pua‘a</i>	pork buns (steamed)
<i>komiti ese‘ese</i>	various committees
<i>komiti fa‘atonu toea‘ina</i>	advisory council made up of (prominent) Elders of church
<i>lima mālosi</i>	strong hand (lit.), strength, power
<i>loto alofa</i>	a loving heart, full of love

<i>lotu pope</i>	Catholic church
<i>lotu ta'iti</i>	London Missionary Society-based churches incl. EFKS and PIPC, Tahitian church (lit.) ie. church brought by 19th century Tahitian teachers
<i>lotu toga</i>	Weslyan church, Tongan church (lit.) ie. church brought by the 19th century Tongan teachers
<i>mafutaga tinā</i>	women's committee of Samoan group, PIPC
<i>ma'i āiku</i>	<i>ma'i aitu</i> , sickness of/brought on by spirits/ghosts
<i>ma'i Samoa</i>	Samoa sickness (lit.), referring to <i>ma'i aitu</i>
<i>mea alofa</i>	gift, present
<i>'O a'u</i>	It is I
<i>o le ala 'i le pule, le tautua</i>	the way to power/authority is by serving
<i>o le lau'avā</i>	the wife's
<i>o le si'i</i>	the move, removal of, carrying
<i>o le lafo</i>	the <i>lafo</i>
<i>o le sua</i>	the <i>sua</i>
<i>o le pasese</i>	the fare (lit.), passenger
<i>o le fa'aoso</i>	temptation, incite, egg on
<i>o maga o le matupu</i>	divergences in themes, questions, problems of a <i>matua</i> or root verse of a sermon
<i>o 'oe se Māuli?</i>	Are you a Maori?
<i>si'i alofa</i>	gift of love, carrying love (lit.)
<i>sili le oti i lo le mā</i>	death is better than shame
<i>tama failotu</i>	tahitian teachers, leaders/conductors of worship (lit.)
<i>tautala fa'aSamoa</i>	speak Samoan (fluently)
<i>tautala NZ-born</i>	speak English, understand <i>fa'aSamoa</i> language and culture
<i>tautua fia matai</i>	serving purely to become a <i>matai</i>
<i>tautua pa'u</i>	lit. fallen service
<i>ua ka'u i le pālāgi?</i>	have you told the <i>pālāgi</i> ?
<i>ua sau le pālāgi</i>	the <i>pālāgi</i> is coming
<i>ua tofa i vai, ai ala i 'ai</i>	though the present is bad, better times are ahead
<i>vā fealoaloa'i</i>	the relationships of mutual respect in socio-political and spiritual arrangements
<i>vā tapuia</i>	the sacred relationships in the socio-political and spiritual arrangements
<i>Va'ai le keige pālāgi lale!</i>	Look at that <i>pālāgi</i> girl!
<i>Va'ai le pālāgi</i>	Look at the <i>pālāgi</i> !

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGGS	Auckland Girls' Grammar School
AIT	Auckland Institute of Technology
APWF	Association of Presbyterian Women's Fellowship
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BBC	British Broadcasting Service
BNZ	Born in New Zealand/Bank of New Zealand
CCCS	The Chrisitan Congregational Church of Samoa (also EFKS)
CDM	Christian Dance Movement(ESG initiative)
Co.	Company
CUNZ	Congregational Union of New Zealand
EFKS	<i>Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa</i> (also CCCS)
ESG	English-Speaking Group
FOB	Fresh Off The Boat (Also FRESHIE)
info.	information
LA	Los Angeles
LMS	London Missionary Society
MA	Master of Arts
MAGS	Mt. Albert Grammar School
MBC	Management Board Committee
MIRAB	Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy
NCB	National Certificate of Business
NZI	New Zealand Insurance
PCANZ	Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand
PCNZ	Presbyterian Church of New Zealand
PI	Pacific Islander(s)
PIC	Pacific Islanders' Church
PICC	Pacific Islanders' Congregational Church
PIPC	Pacific Islanders' Presbyterian Church
Presby.	Presbyterian
re.	regarding
rep.	representative
SCHOOL C	School Certificate
SPINDA	South Pacific Island Nations Development Association
TECH.	Technical Institute
TROPICS	ESG missionary outreach programme
TV	television
UE	University Entrance
UK	United Kingdom
UNI.	University

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LALAGA O LE 'IE TOGA: THE THESIS

My purpose in this thesis is to examine contemporary notions of Samoan identity in New Zealand. I develop the idea that contemporary NZ-born Samoan identity is one that must be associated with the 'church' or 'lotu'. Much has been written in the literature about how christianity was absorbed and localised in Samoa (Gilson 1970, Gunson 1976, Meleisea 1987b, Wendt 1965). Today this process has resulted not only in an eclectic blend of practice and belief--a continuing source of confusion for Samoan people about the relationship of *fa'aSamoa* and church, christianity and culture and issues of identity, but also draws our attention to the persistence of Samoan identity embodied in the *fa'aSamoa* across time and space.

That Samoan people have Samoanised christianity is evident today, but merely stating this given does not explain what this actually means and how this state of affairs came to be. How has this Samoanised christianity come about? Have particular historical influences played a significant role in this process, and if so, what are they? Are there any underlying themes or concepts in the Samoan world view that inform this matter? What traditional elements of the *fa'aSamoa* have been retained today? What makes people who are born beyond Samoa's shores still identify themselves as Samoan sometimes even when they have never been to Samoa? What is the relevance of church and christianity for Samoans in New Zealand today? How does this phenomenon impact on issues of retention of *fa'aSamoa* and identity? What elements of the *fa'aSamoa* have changed, been retained or discarded? These questions are explored in this thesis.

The thesis focuses on the narratives that a people or community use to define their identity, and is therefore concerned with what Bateson (1958) calls *ethos*--the characteristic spirit or sentiment of a people or community, the emotional emphases on culture. In particular it is concerned with understanding the enduring cultural ethos that binds a people together from one generation to the next.

Central to the thesis are the subjective experiences of a group of NZ-borns, where I allow the voices of the members of my focus group to speak. In it, a particular recurring theme in all members' narratives concerning identity is expressed most forcefully as follows:

I am - a Samoan, but not a Samoan...
To my ‘āiga in Samoa, I am a *pālāgi*
I am - a New Zealander, but not a New Zealander...
To New Zealanders I am a ‘bloody coconut’, at worst, a ‘Pacific
Islander’, at best
I am - to my Samoan parents, their child

In the thesis I have called these lines the ‘identity verse’ for the following reasons. First in its literal sense, in the context of this study, it resembles both a metrical composition, and a short numbered division of a chapter in the Bible or other scripture, in the sense that it was constantly articulated and expressed almost religiously (though not in these exact words) by many members of my focus group when talking about their identity journeys. In this study, identity journey represents the experiences of constructing an ethnic identity by experimenting with subject positions as a result of challenges to members’ perceived self-identities--it is a search for the satisfactory self. The identity verse therefore expresses the core shared experience of the group and this thesis is an exegesis of it. Secondly, I use verse more in the Samoan sense of *matua* or *matā‘upu* (root, core verse of a sermon). The thesis thus constitutes the site where *o maga o le matā‘upu* (the divergences in themes, problems, questions, i.e., all different sides of the root verse) can be explored, so that a comprehensive understanding of the identity verse can be achieved. The identity verse therefore forms the heart of the thesis and subjective analysis of the condensation, the narratives of identity journeys, which are at its core.

The western theoretical frameworks and analytical concepts I have used in examining the emotional content of identity and culture have been provided in the first instance by Epstein (1978), Spicer (1971) and his concept of ‘opposition’ contained in ‘persistent identity systems’, and the psychocultural approaches of De Vos (1982,1990) which emphasise the experiential aspects of identity. Following from Spicer's theory of opposition, De Vos perceives ethnicity as a source of considerable conflict. He sees ethnic identity as based on a self-awareness that is informed by a recognition of past affiliation, saying that this notion of self and ethnicity may come into conflict with present situations and that presumably these conflicts are resolved through some forms of manipulation.

I have discovered, however, that the most useful analytical tool for exploring the experience of identity in a ‘distanced’ framework may be drawn from structuralist theory.

In this regard, I continue the notion of opposition at another level, to explore and analyse personal identity journeys as *rites de passages* (rites of passage) using structuralist concepts which when applied to my research shift at a crucial point.

Contrary to typical structuralist analysis, I focus on the power of human consciousness (of persons and groups) to understand and effect change, not only 'in the mind', but also in the real world. As my research deals with individuals and a group who are caught between conflicting interests and systems of meaning, I hope to show how structures are transcended by self-reflection on categorical oppositions inherent in the identity journey, i.e., an individual's transcendence of or at least overt confrontation with usually unconscious cultural structures. I therefore espouse the diachronic notion of structuralism whereby diachrony is there at the outset, thus involving transformation in the sense of 'progressive change' (Hooper and Huntsman 1985:6).

A 'native' insight is drawn from my own 'ways of knowing', as a NZ-born Samoan woman. Thus I have placed the people who are my focus group, NZ-born Samoans of the English-Speaking Group (ESG) of Newton Pacific Islanders' Church (PIC), and *their* views, *their* concerns, *their* experiences, *their* ideologies at the heart of my enquiry. In doing so, I use an eclectic blend of intra- and inter-disciplinary theories and perspectives, subjective and objective analyses, multiple Samoan and western epistemologies, to explore them.

In talking about Samoan people and their journey across space and time, I draw upon Samoan concepts of *alofa* (love), *tautua* (service, to serve), *feagaiga* (special covenant/relationship between brother and sister), *usita'i* (obedience, to obey) and *fa'aaloalo* (respect, deference), and make recourse to historical materials, political economy and structural-functionalist perspectives, as well as culturalist perspectives involving interpretive and structuralist models. More importantly I take on Kondo's challenge in attempting to "enact our theoretical messages..." by asking how selves are constructed variously in various situations, and how these constructions can be complicated and enlivened by multiplicity and ambiguity, and how they shape and are shaped by relations of power (1990:43).

The '*ie toga* thus plaited weaves a structuralist approach, empirical data and a native insight into what Marcus (1982:602) calls a 'new Polynesian synthesis'. I hope my research

findings will contribute to a growing contemporary Polynesian scholarship which deals with indigenous views of how the person is culturally perceived and constituted in their own societies, how emotions are organised and expressed in social relations, how personhood is revealed in expressions of identity in stages of the life cycle and gender relations, and how all this is manifested in observable patterns of interpersonal and intergroup exchange, in the expressed narratives and experiences of natives themselves. The great advantage of this synthesis is that it draws not only from historical explanations, but also directly from material gained from fieldwork among contemporary Samoans and Samoan communities, and thus provides important insights as to why Samoan culture and lifeways have remained so vitally Samoan in the contemporary, increasingly globalising world.

On the one hand, the conclusions that I reach are not definitive statements of a universal NZ-born Samoan identity. Rather, they are my conclusions based on narratives and experiences--the identity stories--of a particular group of NZ-born Samoans. Yet, on the other hand, this study is intended to contribute to global scholarship on the regional processes of migration, urbanisation, ethnicity and the negotiation of identity, with the subjective experience of identity as the focal point.

Thesis outline

Lalaga o le 'ie toga: The Thesis, is the preface to Part One and outlines the construction of the thesis.

Part one of the thesis is titled 'Settings' and is broadly concerned with locating myself in the work. Chapter One, titled '*O a'u/I: my journey*', deals with my own identity story, as well as taking a critical look at my own relationship with Anthropology. It also recounts my actual ethnographic experience. Why and how I chose Newton as the site for my research and how the Rev. Sio started me on my journey. Why and how the simple question of 'Why are our young people leaving the church?' spilled over into issues of the relationship between *fa'aSamoa* and church, culture and christianity, and how these impacted on a New Zealand-born Samoan identity represented by my focus group, the ESG of Newton Church. In accounting for how I dealt with methodological issues, I begin with a critical reflection on the relationship between anthropological practice and anthropological

theory and proffer my redefinitions of native and insider anthropology and anthropologists. Secondly, I describe my interaction with the Newton Church community and the ESG, and how interview sessions became more a reciprocal sharing of information with my role not so much inquisitor but counsellor, advisor and friend.

Chapter Two, titled 'Anthropological studies of identity', introduces western analytical concepts and discourses which have helped me analyse my material. I point out the serious flaws in many current theories of ethnicity--the focus on circumstantialist explanations and the relegation of emotional phenomena to primordialist explanations. I claim that circumstantialist accounts alone are deficient, and that primordialist explanations are inadequate, requiring the need to re-examine emotional underpinnings of ethnicity using another paradigm. I attempt to do this by focusing on the subjective experience of identity. The works of Spicer and De Vos are particularly illuminating in identifying opposition and conflict as the crucial element in examining ethnicity and identity, rather than the more popular theories (e.g., Barth 1969) which stress cohesion, co-operation and equilibrium.

Chapter Three, titled 'Christianity, church, identities', is divided into two parts. The first, 'The Samoan context', examines the historical record and looks at how the London Missionary Society (LMS) came to Polynesia, its consolidation in Western Samoa, the development of the Christian Congregational Church of Samoa, also known as Ekalesia Fa'apopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EFKS), and the process of the Samoanising of christianity. The second, 'The New Zealand context', follows this theme through and examines the continuing Samoanising of christianity in the development of the institution of the Pacific Islanders' Presbyterian Church, Newton. In this section a detailed account is provided of the origin of Newton Church, its present structure, and future developments. Incorporated into this account is an examination of how christianity, church and *fa'aSamoa* in the New Zealand context have become inextricably interwoven. It ends with a detailed account of the formation and structure of the ESG.

Part Two is the substantive portion of the thesis consisting of the ESG narratives--the content of encounter conversations and individual interviews--which express members' identity journeys. It is divided into two chapters. Chapter Four deals with the subjective experience of members' identity journeys, and is analysed by exploring the identity verse. "I am a Samoan...but not a Samoan" is organised under the headings of *fa'aSamoa*

(according to Samoan customs and traditions), Samoan language, *'āiga* (family, extended family), *matai* (*ali'i* or *tulāfale* titled representative of *'āiga*) system, church and discipline. "To my *'āiga* in Samoa...I am a *pālāgi* (alien, foreigner, European)" deals with images of Samoa, visits to Samoa, being called *fiapālāgi* (wanting to be like the *papālāgi*), coping mechanisms of *ita* (anger), *fa'amaualuga* (arrogance, conceit)/*fiasili* (to be the best), and *fa'amaualalo* (humility, subservience), and notions of home and homeland. "I am a New Zealander...but not a New Zealander", outlines members' experiences of the New Zealand education system, and traces their educational achievement. "To New Zealanders...I am a bloody coconut, at worst, a Pacific Islander, at best" is organised under the headings of opposition to not being considered a New Zealander and explores themes such as experiences of racism and the process of becoming politically aware, the relationship with *tangata whenua* (original people of the land), the assertion of Samoan identity and the commitment to helping other Samoans and Pacific Islanders as a coping mechanism. "To my Samoan parents...I am their child" looks at parents' and grandparents' reasons for coming to New Zealand, their expectations of their children and grandchildren, their liberal tendencies in some cases, and generational relations. The chapter ends with an analysis of what some ESG members describe as a "secured identity".

The subjective analysis of ESG narratives continues in Chapter Five, and outlines how Newton Church is involved in the identity journeys of NZ-borns. "The Church is...the battleground of change", examines the perceived dominance of Samoans within the multicultural Newton Church resulting in inter-ethnic conflict, and also explores the oppositional relationships between NZ-borns and island-born Samoans and younger people and elders within Newton Church's Samoan community. This conflict often leads to NZ-borns 'leaving' the Church or having 'time out' periods and this phenomenon is examined in detail in this chapter. Chapter Five ends with a consideration of the paradox represented by the relationship between culture and christianity and offers a redefinition of a 'coconut theology' as a theology of *fa'aaloalo* (respect) and *tautua* (service).

Part Three, titled 'A 'distanced' analysis of the identity journey', provides a theoretical excursion into structuralist discourse which examines the identity journey at another level. The identity verse, when viewed literally, appears to present us with a contradiction, that of chaos or confusion within an ordered structure and society. The lines

of the verse express both an affirmation and denial of on the one hand a Samoan identity, and on the other a New Zealand identity. This dual paradox lends itself to the structuralist analysis attempted in Chapter Six.

Chapter Seven, titled 'Construction of a NZ-born Samoan identity', continues the theme of a 'distanced' analysis of the identity journey and considers how identity 'of the group' is shaped. In this Chapter, I examine the concepts of "NZ-born" and a NZ-born "subculture" and the realisation of the ESG as a sixth ethnic group within the structure of the proposed Newton Church PIC Synod. I argue that for NZ-born Samoans the desire to be identified not as *papālagi* or New Zealanders but as Samoan, or NZ-borns, is evidence of a Samoan persistent identity system, and that the ethnic solidarity of this particular group of NZ-borns is a result of opposition mounted by island-born Samoans of the Church community. The strengthening of ethnic solidarity in this instance is achieved by the construction of a NZ-born Samoan identity to effect structural change within the institution of Newton Church.

The final section, titled '*Outou, mātou, tātou* (You, We, Us): conclusions, implications and considerations', sets out the conclusions I have arrived at from my research. Broadly, there are three major findings. First, my focus on *intra-ethnic ethnicity* rather than confining my study to intra-ethnic generational studies has provided new insights into NZ-born Samoan ethnicity. Secondly, at a theoretical level I claim that the redefinition of ethnicity as a 'persistent identity system' (Spicer 1971) provides a dynamic interaction of both primordial and circumstantial views of ethnicity. Thirdly, I progress towards the definition of ethnicity not only as the shared experiences of an ethnic group but also the shared experiences of an ethnic group of a particular persistent identity system, of a particular time, and of a particular place of birth.

Style

The written style of the thesis reflects and continues the metaphor of *`ie toga* in that the strands of a subjective writing style, prevalent in my own reflections and the narratives of the focus group, interweave with the objective writing style of academic conjecture, to

integrate both subjective and objective perspectives. This style perhaps more importantly provides the reader with insight into the workings of my own New Zealand-born Samoan mind, in illustrating the way in which I think and express myself, flowing easily across and in and out of both formal and informal writing styles reflecting both *papālagi* and Samoan thought and metaphysical processes.

Language

Having deliberately emphasised the perspective of the native insider, although this thesis is written in English, I allow the Samoan voice to pervade the text since it is the Samoan lived experiences in a Samoan context that I am dealing with. Usage of Samoan terms is thus deliberately intrusive, translations of words and phrases being provided in the Glossary. The Glossary also consists of Samoan words ‘as they are spoken’. Therefore the use of consonants of ‘t’ and ‘k’, ‘n’ and ‘g’, which reflect differences between formal and colloquial language, have been treated as freely interchangeable. I have also treated as interchangeable *pālagi* and *papālagi*. The former is by far the most colloquial and common rendition, while the latter is the more formal and commonly used in written academic scholarship. Italics are used for all Samoan words and phrases, and other non-English words. English words in the narratives and elsewhere are italicised or capitalised to reflect emphasis placed on them by the speaker. One reservation must be stated here. Samoans who are well informed in their own language need neither the glottal stop nor the macron to facilitate their reading and understanding of Samoan words and phrases, and I am aware of past Samoan legislation prohibiting the use of the macron and glottal stop in contemporary Samoan orthography. However I am also aware that as this is a doctoral thesis I must provide strategies to enable non-Samoan speakers (NZ-born Samoans included) to also make sense of the Samoan words and phrases contained herein. I therefore use the macron and the glottal stop to highlight the fact that in their absence some words have completely different meanings. I also provide an individual English gloss for each Samoan word at its first appearance, and a comprehensive Glossary which provides translations of all Samoan words and phrases as they appear in the text.

PART ONE

SETTINGS

Time is everywhere linking everything. To alter it in one place is to change the whole of it.
There is no time past or time future.
Only an ever-moving present.

Our *va* with others define us.
We can only be ourselves linked to everyone and everything else in the *Va*, the Unity-that-is-All and now.

(Wendt in *Ola* 1991:307)

The general aim of Part One is to provide the reader with the settings under which this work has been undertaken. It locates the writer in terms of a personal identity journey, and the writer's reading of anthropological theoretical discourses which impact on culture, the *fa'a Samoa* and identity. In doing so, it evaluates the adequacy of western academic discourses in explaining the contextual shaping of a Samoan identity. It argues for a dialectical conceptualisation of the global process of western christianity within local contexts to account for the articulation of processes such as the Samoanising of christianity, and in so doing, posits that the emotional, subjective experience of identity in contexts of opposition and conflict is the foundation of ethnicity. The conclusions drawn about what constitutes a dialectic of culture/christianity, *fa'a Samoa*/church (Chapter Two), are given concrete realisation in the third chapter through a historical exploration of the Samoanising of christianity in Samoa and in New Zealand.

CHAPTER ONE: 'O a'u/1 : My journey

1

Me and my identity

Reading *Ola* by Albert Wendt (1991) made me reflect on my own personal life experiences. I concluded that some of Ola's experiences resembled mine. That resonance is replicated in the following section.

Although I didn't feel alone anymore, I felt jealous of Ola. Ola was born in Samoa. I was envious that at least she was accepted by all and sundry that she is, was, and forever will be *Samoan*. She will always have her place in the sun. But my identity experience, and probably the identity experience of most New Zealand-born Samoans has been expressed as:

I am - a Samoan, but not a Samoan...

To my 'āiga in Samoa, I am a *pālagi*

I am - a New Zealander, but not a New Zealander...

To New Zealanders I am a 'bloody coconut', at worst, a 'Pacific Islander', at best

I am - to my Samoan parents, their child.

I can't even recall when I first felt this way. From birth and while growing up, I was warmly embraced in the cocoon of 'āiga and Church. My parents had come to New Zealand in the early 1950s under the rhetoric of "wanting a better life", or "a better education for their children". Perhaps this was the real reason. I'll never know (do I really need to know?). But for better or for worse out of a family of eight children, my youngest brother and I were the only NZ-born children.

The only world I knew was the *fa'a Samoa* that my parents brought with them (or that they could remember), and that was further moulded by our Pacific Islanders' Church (PIC). It found expression in obligations to family and 'āiga, in *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*, in taking care of grandparents and aunts, uncles and younger children, in discipline and respecting elders, in going to Sunday School and Church religiously and committing

ourselves to Church activities, in accommodating visiting 'āiga--often playing musical bowls (be it on the floor or wherever else), in endless cooking and cups of tea, and in the many *fa'alavelave*.

My parents spoke English to us kids all the time; Samoan, their mother tongue was reserved for speaking to each other and older members of the 'āiga. This didn't even bother me at the time. We could all understand Samoan anyway. Although I remember Mum getting mad at me heaps for correcting her English.

If he [Ola's father] could've cut his ties to our village and the fa'a Samoa, he would have. He raised me on what he admired: the Papalagi way...I was to speak English, get a degree...and marry a successful Papalagi... (Wendt in Ola 1991:125).

School was a breeze, and I excelled at learning virtually anything--schoolwork, piano, in fact I became Dux and Head Prefect of my Primary School, at the same time! I was told it was a first. But I remember it only because my mother was so proud that she bought me my first ever wrist-watch to celebrate. What I tend to remember more were the school sores, the milk we had to drink before play-time and marching around the playground--military-style--in 'Houses' before starting classes day after day.

I often wonder why I was the only kid in my family to do well at school. Sometimes I thought it was because we always used to sit Sunday school exams every year and the exam ritual was very comfortable and familiar to me--I just simply had to outdo everyone else in the class and outwit the teacher so that my parents would be proud of me. Unfortunately, friends at Sunday school thought the same thing and there was intense rivalry to get the top mark. Or it could've been all the times I sneaked into my aunty's old second-hand book cupboard and read as much as I could. I developed a penchant for Enid Blyton and Greek mythology. Then again it could be that I was born half-deaf which for some reason made me brainier?

I was more than comfortable in these surroundings as a young child. This was the only world I knew, and wanted to know. I didn't see myself as Samoan, or New Zealander or 'different', or anything back then. Just a kid. But this soon changed.

I think the first stage of my becoming happened in 1963, when I was eleven. The

wife of our *papālagi* Minister took a group of us bright kids from Newton Church to the Town Hall to listen to the Youth Philharmonic Orchestra. I felt alienated. Why were we getting stared at? I felt estranged, but not completely knowing why. More importantly I was learning that I was "different". Although I was an avid music lover, and was the pianist for the youth choir, I didn't appreciate this particular musical experience.

Secondary school was the site where it all happened. I attended what was then an elite all girls' school. I was in the top streamed class for the five years and soon became used to being the only Pacific Islander in class, though I hated it. Feelings of alienation and estrangement soon turned to anger and rage. Why wasn't the teacher picking me for answers? I felt invisible. I simply didn't fit in. Sometimes at lunchtimes I wanted to hide my lunch-big fat pieces of fresh bread with left-over *sapasui* or *pisupo*, just didn't seem to compare with the delicate, nutritious cheese and salad lunches of my class mates. In the same way, where their girlish chatter focused around parties, boys, travel, concerts and fashion, my experiences of 'āiga and Church could only remain silently mine. I felt I had become mute. My participation in class was the same, rather than being vocal, I chose to compete with 'them' the only way I knew how--by getting A's in exams and written work. I found solace in my friend Joan, a Maori girl from Ngapuhi, who introduced me to Maori issues. I felt a strong affinity to what Maori people were going through. I wondered why.

Embraced by the silence, I sat down and watched the blazing horizon swallowing the fireball, and listened to the murmuring water talking to me about the mysteries of silence as the sun dies. It told me I was alone, separate from other creatures and things. I tugged at my hair; pinched my stomach...Then rushed to a pool of water...and looked down at my reflection. Yes, it was me, I existed. I am. I am separate. I was myself (ibid.:35).

It was at this time also that I underwent a transition in my Church life and ideology. I began to question the givens I had been taught to accept. As I became educated I became critical. I began to question the moral, spiritual and cultural 'rightness' of western christianity, especially how it had impacted on Pacific Island people. Why had western christianity replaced traditional religious beliefs so wholeheartedly? My growing disbelief in the existence of a God was fuelled by the tragic deaths of five members of my family,

my grandmother, my mother (struck down by incurable illnesses), then my sister, brother and 18 month old nephew -killed in an aeroplane crash in Western Samoa--all in the same year!! (Was there a God?) How I even managed to pass the Bursary exam at the end of that tragic year I'll never know! I had spent half that year caring for my invalid mother and trying to cope with the loss of my family. I took passing the Bursary exam against all odds as a sign- maybe I should try going to University. After all that was what mum would have wanted. But I had changed. I felt that Christianity was hypocritical--that there was a God for me was debatable. I became agnostic (is that the right word?). I drifted away from 'āiga, Church and bible class. Many years later, I eventually reconciled my feelings about christianity into a personal belief. I began a one-on-one relationship with God, and refused to believe that any denomination, religion or institution could mediate that relationship.

Fact can rarely cut down to size the epic grandeur of our childhood mythologies. We see what we believe, or should I say, we see what we want to believe, or, put another way, we see what we were brought up to believe in the way we were taught to see (ibid.:121).

The next stage of my becoming was when I went to University. The empowering feeling that I experienced was awesome. The alienating nature of the university system wasn't a problem. I didn't care any more. I became political. I became involved with the foundation members of Maori activist groups and was part of their becoming. A few of us Pacific Islanders got together and formed the Polynesian Panthers in Ponsonby (see Chapter four), a group which tried to alleviate the subordinate position of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand--our parents, our grandparents, our 'āiga. We ran homework centres, visited Pacific Islanders at Paremoremo, put on concerts for the old people in homes, went on marches for the recognition of Maori as an official language of Aotearoa, protested at Bastion Point and became part of the anti-Springbok tour movement. This was my 'romantic' stage, where I became bitter about being born in New Zealand, bitter about why inequality surrounded me, bitter about why my parents never *forced* me to speak Samoan. I wanted to reclaim my Samoan identity, and I romanticised about 'real' Samoan culture and life.

The next stage was that I got a life. I got pregnant and later married my son's

father. Did part-time University study. The marriage didn't work out, mainly because he was a Maori trying to "find himself" and in the process kept me from the things that made me who I was--my Samoan 'self"--in terms of my family, obligations and Church. There was a separation and divorce. Quite symbolic really since it was at this time in my life that I reclaimed my previous life as it were. I moved back to Grey Lynn to be near my father and rest of my 'āiga, I returned to Church (had I ever left?), and buried myself in full-time work, my studies and 'āiga. All this was consolidated by a second union with a really neat guy who was secure in his own identity as a Maori (with Chinese ancestry also) and two more kids. Never in my life did I feel more secure about my identity than I did at this time. By now I had managed to get my BA in Anthropology and Maori Studies, soon followed by an MA, all through part-time study.

I am who I am plus my husband, my son, my father, my 'āiga, my other circumstances, and this sentence about who I am and the feeling I should be more... (ibid.:188).

I'm still here at University, teaching and studying. I've overcome the romantic stage. But now I am accused of being an 'academic', worse still, a 'colonised' Samoan.

*I've become a mere observer of other people's lives, an absorber of those lives to shape my own, perhaps to justify it.
As an observer I can't (fully) 'love' even those
closest to me, for I analyse them too; analyse
away my feelings about them.
My 'mind' won't let me accept people for who or what
they are; I compare them always to their greater
possibilities and find them lacking (ibid.:299).*

Another important stage of my becoming was my first and only trip (so far) to Samoa in 1994. I had deliberately delayed this epic journey. I had many a chance to go with friends, sports or Church groups over the years, but preferred to wait until my aging father was well enough to go back for a holiday. Over the years I had met some cousins, aunties, uncles and in-laws when they came over and stayed with us during holidays and *fa'alavelave* in New Zealand, but many more of them existed for me as faceless names. A small family group including a sister, two brothers, and four cousins went. The travel

package was for one week's accommodation at Aggie Grey's famous hotel (we didn't want to burden our Samoan 'āiga), and for the remaining period we were to stay at Sana'i, Falelatai--Dad's village on his Falelatai side through his father's 'āiga.

Words cannot describe the excitement and nervous anticipation that I felt about this journey. The only downer was that for various reasons *taku hoa rangatira* and kids were staying behind. On reflection I wished they had come because I felt as if only half of me was in Samoa, and the feelings of exhilaration and immense joy of returning to my homeland were tempered by their absence.

Although I had read extensively about Samoa, and had listened eagerly to other people's stories, nothing could prepare me for what I would experience. My most vivid recollection was arriving at 2am at Faleolo and the balmy drive from the airport to Apia. I was unprepared for the sight of all the seemingly (but not really) incongruent Gothic monstrosities dotted every half mile or so--too many churches I thought! (although I understood why). I will never forget the sights, sounds and smell of Samoa that I experienced that night: seeing people in their open *fale* (houses) in the villages, sleeping, sitting or lying around talking, even at 2am in the morning; the leaning coconut trees creating welcoming silhouettes against the blue night sky; the smell of barbecued chicken as we drove through the streets of Apia. Words eluded me--I was 'home'?

Apia was a busy, bustling kind of place--people, tourists, buses, 4-wheel drives, markets, hotels and the two waterfronted donor-funded Government buildings which looked so out of place. I soaked in the sun and the atmosphere and enjoyed the choice sounds coming from the American stereos of the open-air buses and taxis and understood the laid-back (frustrating to some) attitude of hotel staff and public servants. The air throbbed with the sweat and sounds of Samoa.

I retraced the steps of that fateful march of the Mau along Beach Road, and photographed the site where Tupua Tamasese was shot, the event which has become such an integral part of Samoa's history and the cornerstone of modern Samoa. I visited the Marist Brother's School, where Dad said that as a boy he had thrown a bottle of ink at the teacher (Brother Francis), and my great grandmother Tosoatagi's grave. I went to Mulinu'u where I spent some time researching a family title, and stopped by the National University of Samoa's Malifa campus and spoke to the acting Vice-Chancellor about the prospects of

teaching at the University. All this was interspersed with bouts of shopping and visits to the Bank--and even more visits to the Bank as more *malaga* came to see us. (I remember my nephew saying that being called "BNZ" [born in New Zealand] by island-born 'āga was steadily taking on its literal sense--'Bank of New Zealand'!) The sumptuous *fiqfiq* night meals at Aggie's were supplemented by quick feeds of mutton, chicken and doughnuts and refreshingly cold drinks of *nin* at the markets. I much preferred the contrast of Falelatai.

*Le Tau A'ana ua fa'anoa
 Sa Fasavalu ua lailoa
 Le Tauso ua sioa ina ua le iloa
 Ua motusia la'u fa'asolo
 Sa ou tiu ai i le solo
 Atona foi Falelatai, fa'apea Salogo*

All of Aana¹ is sad
 Sa Fasavalu² is tired
 Tauso³ is dazed and lost
 My garland of flowers has been broken off
 Which was proudly shown to the world
 like Falelatai and Salogo⁴.

*Aue tagi e, fa'avauvau e
 Ua tuumālō, le Tama a 'āiga.
 Le Tamā sa afio i Matanoho
 Sa fai ma Ao o le mālō
 Aue musu e, i ua falolo.*

Lament, mourn and be sad
 The Tama a 'āiga⁵, is gone
 He resided in Matanoho,
 he was the Head of authority,
 Oh be sullen, we are in a predicament.

*Moatoga loto nu'u moni e lena
 Tate ulavale ai i a Samoa.
 O le alo malosi, o i Mafafa
 Sa tauamo i Samoa.*

All of Moatoga⁶, you are my heart,
 that is so true
 which I show off to all of Samoa.
 The strong shelter of Mafafa⁷,
 which Samoa begs for.

*Oi se paga, o le alofa,
 Oi se paga, o le alofa.
 Oi le alofa e, ua le mavae
 Oi le teine lou sel rosa.*

Alas, what love!
 Alas what love!
 The love of the departed/dying wish (for this place)
 Is like the love for a woman.

*I 'āiga ma latou tama ua mālō o...
 Tamai, Tausala po'o upu i le Tauso
 Falelatai e ma le Tula, o le Tula o Salogo,
 Vae o le nofoafia le Faleupolu fa'analō.*

The 'āiga ma latou tama⁸ are satisfied,
 Tamai, Tausala, even the Tauso
 Falelatai and the Tula o Salogo⁴,
 Thanks to you the orator, and the
 rest of the founding members.

(Song composed on death of Tuimelealiifano of Matanoho, the *Tama a 'āiga* of the district, sung on numerous occasions while I was there, and for various events. Translation by Napo & Lamiia Asi and Melani Anao. See Appendix One for location of Falelatai).

1. The "'āiga ma latou tama' fa'alupega principle operates in Falelatai: The 'āiga is Tau A'ana; the *tama* is Tuimelealiifano. (See also 5).
2. *Fa'alupega* title of Falelatai
3. *Fa'alupega* title of Matanoho
4. *Fa'alupega* title: Tuivaeti
5. 'āiga ma latou tama/Tama foi ma latou 'āiga: the descent groups or 'āiga through their highest ranking titles. In this case, Tuimelealiifano.
6. Colloquial name used for the whole of Falelatai
7. Mountain in Sama'i, part of the mountain ridge dividing Falelatai from Lefaga to the east. Also refers to this place as much sought after by all of Samoa because during times of war, (e.g., Mau); people from Falelatai used to hide from the New Zealand soldiers here.

The bus ride from Apia to Falelatai is something else I'll never forget. My sister and I hopped on at the bus depot at the Market (Thank goodness it was half empty!). But after circling the bus rank several times in an attempt to entice more passengers we left--half an hour later than scheduled (that is, when the driver told us), and seriously overloaded. Personal space takes on another meaning in Samoa--it doesn't exist! My sister who suffers from claustrophobia grabbed any little kid that came on the bus proffering her knee for them to sit on wondering where the grinning *large* Samoan women carrying bags of bananas and shopping would fit. I worried about her. I thought this trip would either cure her or reduce her to a nervous wreck. I waited. As for me I didn't mind as long as I was next to the window. We were stopped by a policeman who made ten young *taulele'a* get off the bus. That was okay, but when we drove around the corner they hopped in again. *Ese le malie!* Then we stopped for about ten minutes and waited for a lady to finish her shopping, carting on two large boxes of groceries which had to be stored in the front of the bus. No-one complained. At the front of the bus next to the driver were several young men--his friends or 'aiga I presumed. They were very helpful, manoeuvring people into spaces which didn't exist, stacking up the now growing pile of boxes, and jumping out at various intervals to buy drinks and stores for the old people whenever asked. By now we had left the rather dusty and in places dirty outskirts of Apia and were heading for the *tuabacks* (the back or more traditional villages). The road skirted the beachfront and provided glorious views of the three shades of blue lagoon, but my view was oftentimes hampered by arms, shoulders or backs of *taulele'a* who were hanging by an arm and a leg off the bus stairwell. I didn't mind though preferring to soak in the sounds of the booming reggae songs on the bus radio.

We passed Faleolo airport, Mulifanua Wharf, where the ferry left for Savai'i, and we could see Apolima and Manono in the distance. When we hit the boundary of Falelatai district surprisingly the radio was abruptly shut off, and the young men at the back of the now half-empty bus quickly hid from view cans of beer they had been drinking. Peace and quiet, punctuated by stops for alighting and leaving passengers, pervaded the rest of the trip until we reached Sama'i, the last village in Falelatai. We had literally reached the end of the road. The gravelled road ended at Sama'i. It went no further. In front of us we could see Malafa beyond which was the famous Lefaga beach. My sister and I exchanged amused

glances--we cracked up, reflecting on the bus journey--only in Samoa!' I remember thinking maybe her fear was finally cured.

Memories of my stay in Falelatai are vivid. I can still remember the bright blue colour of my uncle's *papalagi* house which my 'āga here had helped financially to build, and the adjacent village shop owned by another aunty. Uncle's house was surrounded by a cluster of houses; other 'āga houses, the meeting house, the cook house, the *malae*, the communal toilets and shower, surrounded on one side by the lagoon and the inland bush on the other. Sama'i boasted its own water tap, and I remember clearly the 'bell', the vivid pinks and reds of the *teutla* and the lushness of the bush. All the houses had concrete floors which provided a welcoming coolness to the heat. I remember meeting all my 'āga--relatives who were strangers and yet had names of my brothers, sisters and other close relatives. I met a cousin who was named after me. Every day, the curfew bells rang at 6.30-7pm at night which signalled evening *lotu*, and at 6am every morning. Surprisingly there weren't many mosquitos and spiders--only geckos. Also I noted the absence of pigs and found out later that the *fono matai* had decreed that no pigs were to be kept in Falelatai because there was no spare food to feed them because of the *taro* blight epidemic. I remember the night walks with my cousins when the night literally 'has eyes', the hordes of kids, and those who would call out 'Va'ai le *psalagi*' when we would emerge.

The next day, after the formalities of the welcome ceremony were over, the container of second-hand clothing my brothers and sisters in New Zealand had collected, together with hundreds of dollars worth of butter, sugar, rice, corned beef, flour, *masi*, lollies and onions was broken open. It had been shipped to Samoa to coincide with our visit. The goodies were distributed to the eight different groups of our 'āga (in accordance with the *matai* titles of Dad and my eldest brother). Then too there was the large monetary gift (See Plate I).

Over the next few days various *malaga* visited us and money and gifts were exchanged. The village *komiki* put on various concerts for us with items they had composed and uniforms they had sewn especially for the occasion (See Plate II). It was a very mixed experience for me. My inability to communicate easily with members of my newly-found 'āga was frustrating. Although I could understand what they were saying, I could only respond in Samoan pidgin. Most of the time I said nothing, and I resented the fact that we

had been put on some kind of pedestal. I did not feel superior to any of them, nor cleverer, I just admired them--their way of life, and regretted the comparatively poor living conditions and lack of much needed monetary resources to sustain a comfortable life, as we knew it.

It was this trip to Samoa which finally consolidated my identity, and which provided me with the secured identity of what being a NZ-born Samoan means for me.

Until this final experience, I had never owned my identity. Ever since I can remember others have done and are still doing this for me. I, like my NZ-born cohorts, are continually being defined by others.

2

Me and Anthropology

Samoans have always had a consciously held and common identity quite distinct from those of other peoples of Polynesia. This identity has been marked by a common language and a strong nexus of social relations which is embedded in the *fa'aSamoa*.

This desire to be distinctly Samoan is mirrored perhaps most notably, in the reported Samoanising of christianity (Meleisea 1987b), or the refusal by some Samoans to accept the biblical account of creation as applying to Samoa, despite an otherwise literal belief in the Bible, and also the refusal to include Samoa in modern scientific accounts of Polynesian origins (Holmes 1958: 333).

Earlier anthropological theories which suggest that Samoa is the 'Cradle of Polynesia' are more compatible with Samoan beliefs about Samoan origins. In the Western Samoan view, Savai'i is identified as the legendary Hawaiki. Since this view does not conflict with the Samoan mythological view which holds that Samoans, and Samoan culture, were created by Tagaloa (Mead 1969:148-151), it enables Samoans to accept the anthropological evidence as compatible with traditional *fa'aSamoa* beliefs (Kallen 1982).

However, as we all know, Samoan culture does bear a close relationship to those of other peoples of Polynesia. The contributions of linguists point to the fact that Polynesian languages may all be considered daughters of a common proto-polynesian mother language. And archaeological evidence has provided significant theoretical insights into the peopling

of the Pacific. Other research has shown that social relations, technology, traditions and religious beliefs are similarly related.

So what is Samoan identity? But more aptly, how does anthropology define Samoan identity? Before answering this, the question must be considered against the backdrop of the development of the discipline.

The broad definition of anthropology is the whole study or science of humanity. But in reality, it is what anthropologists do, in terms of ethnographic accounts of the other, and in this context, what anthropologists write about other cultures and other people.

The ethnographic exercise in some cases has been disastrous. Historically it was the study of others defined as primitive, savage, tribal, pre-literate, non-historical, small-scale, undeveloped, non-western...the list goes on. Moreover, issues such as unequal power relations, and hegemonic world views of the researcher were largely ignored. Instead, anthropologists embedded the other in materialist or idealist debates about other ways of life. Positions proliferated: functionalism, structuralism, Marxism, hermeneutics. In some approaches primitives were marginalised, treated as objects of scientific enquiry; in others they were regarded as cultural robots 'locked in the sway of custom'.

Some writings of Pacific Island academics, have been critical of anthropologists' treatment of their 'objects of enquiry'. For example, Epeli Hau'ofa says that anthropology has been bastardised by how important aspects of indigenous peoples' humanity has been denied in the literature (Hau'ofa 1987). Wendt has this to say about anthropology: "Margaret Mead's Samoa continues to stereotype us Samoans and cause senseless wars between egotistical non-Samoan academics" (Wendt cited in Hooper et al. 1987:81). Again, regarding the Mead-Freeman debate, Wendt states: "...the question is, who, of the two expatriate anthropologists are correct about the Samoans? Never mind the view of we Samoans" (ibid.: 88).

Unlike some of my anthropological ancestors, I have no love affair or fascination with the bizarreness, strangeness or exoticness of other cultures, nor am I disenchanted, fed-up or disillusioned with my own Samoan culture. The purpose of my work, in looking at the identity of NZ-born Samoans, i.e., researching my own culture, is to continue the voyage of my Samoan ancestors across time and space, and to tell the story about the experiences of Samoan people across time and space.

I have no choice! Most of us native anthropologists go into anthropology as a means of helping our people. This suggests a strong commitment to the application of anthropological knowledge as a means of not only alleviating problems and providing self-help among native groups, but of also being mediator between the two worlds (Medecine 1987:284). Native anthropologists who identify as such are not only often compromised by their colleagues who persist in using them as 'informants', but are also exploited by their 'people' and communities who view them as counsellor or liaison to outside agencies (ibid.:282).

Therefore, I am very much a part of the people of my concern and research interests. Today, the concepts of acculturation or culture change, cultural transmission, bicultural and bilingual education, ethnicity are highlighted in anthropological research. For me, these concepts have become personal and real during years of learning to be an anthropologist while remaining Samoan.

It was Boas's interest in folklore, linguistics and other aspects of culture which led him to seek and train indigenous native Americans who seemed especially responsive to viewing their own cultures. Nevertheless the role of informant as anthropological reporter creates tension among natives who contemplate becoming anthropologists. A pertinent observation is made by Jones, a black anthropologist:

In the same spirit that Boas encouraged natives to become anthropologists, he also encouraged women because they could collect information on female behavior more easily than a male anthropologist. This attitude strongly implied that native and female anthropologists are seen as potential 'tools' to be used to provide important information to the 'real' white male anthropologist (1970:252).

Like Jones and others I am wondering whether there is a place for native or insider-anthropology. Is it recognised as legitimate anthropology? Do we need or want to encourage a local Maori or Pacific Island-orientated and focused anthropology? Do we want to legitimate other systems of knowledge?

We in the Pacific may not have many antique artefacts--acres and acres of these will probably be found stashed in some Museum in Germany, or at the Vatican. But what we do have here is a region rich in people--Maori, Samoans, Papua New Guineans, Cook

Islanders, Niueans, Fijians...the list goes on. All these people at some time or other have been, and still are, subjects of our anthropological enquiry.

Here in the Pacific, at least, anthropology must start doing in theory what I think it was always meant to do: uphold the integrity of anthropology as the study of humanity. I do not mean that we must turn into ourselves or 'navel-gaze'. We are all part of the world system, and our participation in a global anthropology is essential, but equal importance must be given to the validity of local systems of knowledge as well, especially here, in the Pacific.

The death of anthropology in its reliance on the concept of culture has been prophesied several times (Yengoyan 1986:373). First of all, the objects of study, that is primitive peoples and therefore cultures, were supposed to die off. Then when they did not, the discipline was threatened by modernisation and the death of different lifeways. A further threat now in the making is the hostility of the traditional subjects of anthropology's practice!

Surely after surviving thus far, through the development of so many different theoretical perspectives, and even the onslaught of postmodernist critique, anthropology will survive in some new transformation, and hopefully, people of the Pacific and others will be part of it. It is not surprising that anthropology in New Zealand is proving to be at the forefront of this endeavour. The debates over anthropology in New Zealand do reflect the presence of indigenous intellectuals and there is a greater emphasis on the relationship between the researcher and the researched. We have had the benefit of a New Zealand anthropology that encourages native and insider research (Pat Hohepa on Waima, Kawharu on Orakei/Bastion Point, Walker on Maori society, Mahuta on structure of *whaikorero*, Ravuvu on Fijian ethos, as well as Te Rangi Hiroa and Apirana Ngata).

What we need in the Pacific are anthropologists who care about people. In all anthropological investigations, mutual trust and understanding must be built carefully and sensitively. As with any human relationship, reciprocity, responsiveness, commitment and responsibility are essential. In turn this relationship will form the basis of our intellectual pursuit--the need to comprehend something in as many ways as possible to construct the composite that finally, more comprehensively allows us to understand an issue, phenomenon or culture.

What is so unique about anthropology is that it allows us to examine culture. People and culture are important to me, especially Samoan people, the *fa'a Samoa*, and how Samoans relate to the world. In the context of my own research, I am trying to make living and life for Samoans more fulfilling, and to deal with others by trying to apply anthropology to people of the Pacific and others in meaningful ways.

Me as an academic

The dilemma posed for minority academics working as researchers and teachers, as outlined by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1993) is inspirational and one of the few works in the New Zealand context which has had a marked impact on me, in that it mirrors my own experience as a Samoan academic. In her paper which explores some of the structural issues which underpins what counts as academic work for Maori academics Smith (ibid.:19) states:

My later re-entry to university gave me the time to reflect through reading, thinking and teaching....The context has changed and I have learned to be more explicit about the theories which inform my work but university did not give me my theories. Nor has it given me my practice, my history, my identity or my space. Those things I have lived and struggled for, claimed and reclaimed. My academic work is to continue to make spaces for the other generations of Maori following behind.

The dilemma for me is trying to retain Samoan identity and *fa'a Samoa* values and epistemologies despite attacks by conflicting western epistemologies and life-styles. How to not sacrifice my duties as daughter, sister, mother, wife, aunty, and member of Newton Church in the pursuit of *pālagi* academic work which focuses on producing publications, undertaking research projects, teaching and speaking commitments, attending numerous overseas conferences, sitting on endless committees--things which take me away from my priorities of 'āiga and Church, and my identity as a NZ-born. For many *pālagi* academics what is important to them is what Smith points out as "access to research time and autonomy over how they work, what they teach and security through tenured positions" (ibid.:18). For me as a Samoan academic these things are also desirable but it is a struggle to make them my priority. At university my work is to redefine what counts as legitimate

knowledge, and to expose the politics of research and the researched for Samoans, others and other Pacific Islanders. For my students it is to be a good role model to inspire them as I was inspired by a now eminent Fijian anthropologist, who was my tutor in my undergraduate years. It is also to try and make space for my students, space for them and us to be who they and we are without having to continually justify their and our existence. And while all this is going on, I am only too aware of my other roles as wife and mother to my own children, and mediator for my 'āiga in the absence of my mother and grandmother who have both passed on. Then there is my Church and Sunday school involvement. What are the costs? To my *pālāgi* colleagues the only me that they know is when they see me as a PhD student, as a tutor, as a guest lecturer, or as a colleague at Departmental seminars, or sitting on various student committee meetings. As a consequence of these different priorities, I sometimes find it hard to take on jobs, opportunities, attend conferences or produce publications—because I just do not have the time and energy to do *all* these things. But I still try, and I have managed to meet all my 'āiga and University academic commitments so far. To my 'āiga and Church community I am also seen as different. My academic habit of continuously and sometimes arbitrarily reminding people of their social and cultural responsibilities, and continually analysing people, situations, events, television programmes, childrens movies and cartoons on the hoof as it were and very often, must be perceived as 'strange'. As a Samoan who is also an academic there are few choices. This is the choice I have made.

3

Me and my focus group

"You're not really an anthropologist unless you study somebody else's culture you know..."

Ethnicity or ethnic studies is a field that provides an ideal focus for the discussion of the insider/outsider issue. More recently this has become a contentious issue not only for western or outsider researchers, but also for indigenous, native or insider researchers. The debate extends from the extreme viewpoint of classic cultural anthropology which

emphasised the need for the 'extreme outsider view' where the researcher is detached and objective, to the other extreme where ethnic studies focuses on an 'extreme insider doctrine' (Cerroni-Long 1995:7), where it is now asserted that only members of each ethnic group can most effectively study, teach about, discuss and generally speak for their fellow group members. Both extreme views are problematic. The first is ethnocentric and objectifies the people being studied, the latter implies that "one has to be one to understand one" (ibid.).

Are both these positions to be written off? Is there a meeting place between outsider and insider anthropology? Is there a difference between native and insider? What is studying up and studying down in my fieldwork context? I shall now consider some of these questions in the context of my own fieldwork experiences.

Before one starts labelling my work as a journey of self-discovery, navel-gazing, or creating an unnecessary polemic between outsider, insider or native anthropology, it is necessary to clarify what these concepts mean, and to understand my work in a holistic perspective. What I mean by the latter is that my reasons for doing the research, how I did the research, my relationships with my focus group/community, how I came to define myself as a native, insider researcher, and what I did with the results of the research must be considered as a whole and in the particular context of my research.

This thesis provides a site for Samoans born in New Zealand to tell their own stories, a place in which they can speak their experiences and explore issues of their own identity. It will therefore investigate the oppositions, conflicts and tensions that affect NZ-born experiences. But more specifically this thesis seeks to provide an understanding and an interpretation of the way *fa'aSamoa*, church and life in New Zealand impacts on life choices and on the construction of the 'self', and in some cases a group of 'like-minded' individuals.

This thesis does not however claim to represent or speak on behalf of other NZ-borns, nor does it provide a definitive set of NZ-born experiences. To claim to do so would ignore the complexity and diversity among us. Moreover, it would perpetuate the very ideologies that serve to stereotype, homogenise and control our experiences.

My journey began with my own identity as a NZ-born Samoan, and my relationship with anthropology as outlined in the previous section. Having no desire to adhere to the

traditional anthropological journey to do research in some exotic location (being from Oceania, might that be--Africa? The Midcast? USA? or perhaps Europe?), I puzzled about what I should do. All I knew was it was going to be about my people--but who were or are my people? My parents were both Samoan--my father, from Falelatai and Apia was also part-Chinese, and my mother who was considered *afakasi* (person of mixed blood, usually Samoan/European) and a 'town-girl' (her great grandfather was one of Western Samoa's first British magistrates) was from Lauli'i. I was born in New Zealand and, although I had been raised according to *fa'aSamoa*, had never been to Samoa at the time.

While accepting of foreign researchers (Mead, Freeman, Shore *et al.*), I was very aware of the critical stance of Samoans towards insider researchers, and understandably so--who was I (a Samoan not born in Samoa or familiar with the *fa'aSamoa* practised in Samoa) to write about Samoa and Samoans! I knew that my research arena would have to be an area that I was comfortable in and had experienced first-hand. I decided that it had to be about Samoans but focused on NZ-born Samoans. I felt I had no business studying other people in other cultures, although I had been trained to do so. Neither did I want to study up in terms of examining the dominant *papālagi* New Zealand society and its institutional systems and bureaucracies. It had to be research that I could relate to and be part of, research that would be useful and would help people--not sit in an archive or library somewhere and remain as text.

After church one Sunday I was speaking to the Rev. Leuatea Sio and he made the comment that he wanted to understand why young people were leaving the Church (I felt a guilty twinge)--it had been an on-going problem since the 70s, if he knew then perhaps some strategies could be put into place for retaining them as part of the Church community. He wondered about the future of Newton Church. I then pointed out to him that Newton had been in existence for more than forty years and that the 50th anniversary should be coming up soon. It was then that I knew what I had to do. I would carry out research on why young people were leaving Newton Church and as a *mea alofa* to the Church community I would also write the fifty-year history of Newton Church. My thesis journey had begun.

Access was not a problem. I had had an association with the Newton Church since birth. My family was one of the founding Samoan families of Newton, I was baptised as a

baby there, I had attended Sunday school and bible class along with my brothers and sisters, two of my brothers had been Sunday school teachers, my father and older brother were elders of the church, my aunty and uncle and their family were an integral part of the Church also. It was home. Even though I had disappeared for quite some time during my critical stage in which I 'had a life' (despite continuous pleas from my father at every family meeting to 'Go back to church!'), at least I had returned. I had been welcomed back with open arms by the people and families from back then who remembered me. But there were many more new faces and families who looked at me as if at a stranger.

I wrote a letter to the combined Church Session asking permission to carry out the research, and was told it was approved. I was given access to the meagre archive containing Church records (half of which I was told had been destroyed accidentally by fire some years ago) which were in a state of disarray. Nevertheless I began the tedious task of sifting through files and indexing records.

There were to be two phases to my research. The first was an examination of Newton Church records, and holding interviews with key figures involved with the founding of Newton Pacific Islanders Church, after which a history of the Church would be prepared both for the Church and to provide background for my thesis.

The second phase was to follow up issues raised in the first phase and others that may have arisen through participant-observation and discussion with young people and others. It was important to acknowledge the diversity of the Newton Church community, therefore the following categories had to be taken account of: (i) different island/ethnic groups, (ii) island-born and New Zealand-born, (iii) first generation New Zealand-born and second generation, (iv) middle class/working class, and (v) ethnicity of spouses.

This phase of the research involved interacting with and interviewing as many of the Church community as possible. Interview/discussion/life-story/participant-observation techniques were used here. Intensive participant-observation was carried out from March 1993 to December 1995, a period of two and a half years. At first I attended as many Sunday Church services, youth services and meetings as I could of the combined Session, 'aulalavou (church youth group), Sunday school teachers, bible class leaders, ESG, and various other groups. When I narrowed my focus group to the ESG, I arranged interviews with as many members as possible, the format of which were loosely-structured but which

always began with the life-story of the ESG member. I also arranged several discussion groups whereby the group dynamic allowed the more controversial issues to be more comprehensively considered. Throughout the interview process I attended and participated in other ESG and Church activities which allowed me to record the 'minutiae of everyday life' of this community.

The first phase interviews were with nine key figures of the Church whom I regarded as *tamā* (father) and *tiā* (mother) rather than informants, and took place over a six month period, from October 1992 to April 1993. They were mainly retired or semi-retired people. These interviews involved many hours of my elders telling me about their life stories: their lives in the islands and their experiences of life in New Zealand. It soon became obvious that Newton Church was central to these experiences. I encouraged them to talk about what was important to them and why they thought that way. The interviews were carried out usually in their homes.

I considered this part of the research as 'studying up' in cultural terms. First, I was a young female and yet it was I who was asking questions; secondly, their status as not only *matai* and, in some cases, ministers, but also as distinguished members and elders and leaders of the Church; and thirdly, their age and the wealth of experience and life embodied by these people was overwhelming. I felt privileged and honoured that they were sharing their experiences with me and I was told that my visits were eagerly awaited and a welcome diversion from their sometimes mundane existence (without exception I was made to feel at home and plied with cups of tea and goodies). At times I felt loathe to interrupt their animated accounts of their youth and experiences with statements such as, "I've got to go and catch my bus now. I'll see you next week". I also felt that because I was one of their daughters from Newton Church they were more open and at home with my comments and questions. I was also struck by the many times one would say, "But you wouldn't be interested in this...".

Although I encouraged them to speak in Samoan if they felt the need, most of the elders spoke in English, and when some of my Samoan elders lapsed unwittingly into Samoan or could not find the equivalent English expression, because I can understand Samoan fluently, I was able to understand or translate into English what they were trying to say.

The interviews during the second phase of my research were different. These were with ESG members and stretched over a period of 12 months. They were two to three-hour interviews, where again people were asked to talk about what they thought was important and why. These interviews--30 interviews over a 12 month period from September 1993 to August 1994--resulted in almost 60 hours of interviews, 250 hours of transcribing, and an analysis of some 500 pages of interview transcripts (for logistical reasons excerpts only have been used in this study however material contained in transcripts are available for further study). These were supplemented by three two-hour informal group discussions. Often interviews had to be rescheduled several times when some members had forgotten about the interview or when there were unavoidable crises to attend to. Interviews took place at Church in the offices, Sunday school classrooms or ESG headquarters (the Maori Hall, see Appendix 6), at my home, at University, at Wendy's and McDonalds (a promise of a feed never went awry).

Interviews were open-ended, and participants always encouraged to suggest other people whom I should interview, or other issues which I should pursue. They, in turn, asked for my views and advice on certain issues.

Each informant was given an information sheet which I explained to them. It introduced them to the topic, purpose and methodology of my research. Interviews were to be taped. Participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any time. Participant identity was to remain anonymous (this did not apply to first phase informants who were office-holders of the Church and therefore public figures). Transcripts of interviews were made available to them to verify, correct or edit. As well as one-to-one feedback sessions with participants, group 'work in progress' sessions were occasioned by 'seminars' or presentations to the ESG and Church community of papers which I had been asked to present at international conferences.

My first paper had been delivered at the LX Pacific History Conference at Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, Canterbury University, in 1992. I had managed to obtain some early black and white photos of the original Church and early families and people which I had made into slides, and also some tapes of the Samoan choir. I structured the paper so that for the first part I surrounded myself with the faces (slides) and voices (tapes) of my community--but not for the benefit of the audience. It was a

strategy that I had employed as a native to make me feel comfortable in an uncomfortable situation, i.e., standing in front of a large audience of predominantly *papālagi* distinguished academics. My reward was later, when a Samoan research scholar based at the University of the South Pacific, Suva came up to me, tears in his eyes, and reminisced about the five years he had spent at Newton as a young boy, and how it had been that experience--mixing with the different Pacific Island ethnic groups, and the strong 'PIC' identity, which had set him on his path to becoming a published writer and academic. I also received accolades from some *papālagi* academics which encouraged me no end.

In May 1995 I was asked to present another paper on NZ-born Samoan ethnicity at an international Ethnicity Conference at Brigham Young University, Laie, Hawai'i. After preparing the paper and having it edited somewhat by my supervisors, there was no doubt or hesitation whatsoever in knowing that the first to hear the paper would be my community. This second paper was more theoretical and focused on the *fa'aSamoa* and identity of the NZ-borns I had interviewed. I worried that it might be too technical and that it may not be understood by the Church community, so I decided to combine these two papers in the form of a seminar. The ESG set the date (it was to be after a Sunday service and would be followed by a *to'ona'i* [Sunday lunch]). The notice was read during the two Sunday services before the set date and I waited with nervous apprehension.

The day arrived, I anxiously waited as the people came into the Hall: some ESG members and their young children, my father, the elders I had interviewed, some kids from the bible class, Sunday school teachers and bible class leaders; I recognised a few of my anthropology students from Newton, whom I had tutored the year before. All had come with plates of delicious food which were placed on a table to the side of the room. I had come in much earlier and set up the tables, chairs, slide projector and tape recorder. But how could I make the setting more comfortable and less formal? I suggested to the Chairperson of the ESG that, after the prayer and welcome speech, everyone might have something to eat, mingle, grab a plate of food, sit down, at which time I would start my presentation. This provided for a really relaxed and informal atmosphere and was appreciated by our elders who were used to their *to'ona'i* straight after church.

After I had read the paper--some three hours later, hoping I had not bored them--I invited them to ask questions or make comments about what I had said. My father (who

had been sitting in the front row) said that I had spoken too fast (*fā'afetai tele lava* Dad!). One Samoan elder embarked on how and why the *fa'aSamoa* appeared to be corrupt in some instances, after which views and ideas were exchanged by young and old alike. A young boy commented that he didn't know that Newton had a 50-year history and how proud he now felt to be part of Newton and that more young people should know about the history. Another elder thanked me and commented that aspects of my papers had clarified a lot of contentious issues for him in a clear and unpretentious way. I was corrected on one point concerning the knowledge of Samoan language by NZ-borns, by a young Samoan university student. For me the feeling of awareness, willingness to learn and understand, closeness, spiritual unity, cemented by sharing of not only food but experiences of life in New Zealand from perspectives of young and old was both gratifying and one I will never forget and which accompanies me, whenever I am presenting a paper, whenever I am delivering a lecture. For unlike Geertz (1973:452) it is they--those to whom the culture "properly belongs" (ibid.)--who will always be peering over my shoulder and judging the words of the text that I am telling.

During both phases of my research I was both an insider and an outsider. As an insider, I was part of the Church community. I went to the weekly Sunday Church service and monthly Youth services when I could, attended Session and ESG meetings. My children went to Sunday school, so I was involved in their activities--the annual Sunday school exams, the choir and vocal festivals, Anniversary or White Sunday, prize-giving activities. I played the piano for the Primary choir and accompanied their solos and duets. I socialised with my friends and family in the Church--attending socials, picnics and sports fixtures.

Every time I wrote down things in my note-book, when I tried to consider things objectively, or participant-observe, I felt outside. The mere fact that I had my own but different relationship with God meant that I couldn't participate in some of the rituals that insiders took for granted. How could I tell them that although I believe in God, that I went to Church not for spiritual feeding, but because that's just what Samoan people do! To illustrate, one event proved very significant in this regard. I had mentioned to the Secretary of the Sunday school that I was interested in becoming a Sunday school teacher to offer my teaching expertise to help the Sunday school and support my five and eight year old

children--members of the Primary Department. I was told to attend a Sunday school teachers meeting the following week which I did. During the course of the meeting a request by someone else to teach was turned down because that person was not a communicant member. My heart sank! I was not a communicant member either. Before my request was laid on the table I stood up and let them know that I wasn't a communicant member--not because I was an atheist but that I did not agree with some of the tenets of western christianity. You could have heard a pin drop. I went on to say that while I could not therefore be a Sunday school teacher, that I would be pleased to offer my services as a parent helper or pianist or whatever. Smiles of relief spread across their faces. I could have lied and said that I couldn't teach because I was too busy--but I didn't. I felt I had won a major victory. As it turns out I have been able to help in a lot of ways, although I do not get formal recognition. I don't mind because I enjoy it so much but sometimes I get the feeling that people are saying, "There goes that strange anthro/academic person."

The format of the interviews in the second phase took on another interesting dimension. Rather than me asking the question and then listening to the response, I found myself sharing my insights and experiences with the interviewee wherever there was common ground (and there were many instances of this). So it was a reciprocal and responsive sharing of information. It was by no means one-sided. The intimate and personal nature of identity and identity confusion became very apparent. In some instances I took on the role of adviser, counsellor and friend especially when personal issues were being addressed, e.g., death in the family, confusion over identity, wrong life choices, why they didn't feel part of the Church. (So I'm the learned wise one??!!)

The task I had ahead of me seemed daunting and a heavy burden to carry. It was not to be just an academic exercise; it was as if I had the weight of my people on my shoulders. Issues of responsibility and accountability were ever constant. How could I reproduce on paper our shared experiences when we laughed together, cried together, reminisced together, shared our hopes about the future, and oftentimes when we just sat there sharing the sound of silence?

It was 12 months after initiating my research and after a lot of deliberating about the difficulties of my research topic and the complexity of the Newton Church community that I was able to refine my topic area and focus my study on the English-speaking group

(ESG).

In the process of interviewing, discussing and transcribing, I felt that another definite advantage was doing the transcribing myself. Aware that other researchers saved time and energy by employing transcribers, I felt that the personal nature of matters discussed during interviews was such that only I should have access to them. Also, because sometimes the length of time between interview and transcribing was quite lengthy, I found that transcribing tapes myself and hearing the material contained therein renewed my enthusiasm and gave me the impetus to keep going. I decided that I would write the History of Newton Church after my thesis, to coincide with the 50th Anniversary in 1997.

Throughout the whole research process I did not feel I was studying down at all. Studying up and perhaps across, yes, but never down. The insider/outsider aspect of native anthropology is more problematic, and it is time that I now attempt to clarify my perceptions of what these concepts mean.

From my reading of the burgeoning scholarship on insider/outsider anthropology (in particular Goldschmidt 1995, Jaffe 1995, Jones 1970 & 1995, Kuper 1994, Lielkow 1995, Medecine 1987, Narayan 1993, Womack 1995), three points are significant. The first is the apparent collapse of the boundary between insider/native, the second is the confusion of some native /insider anthropologists about their identities which leads to the necessity for clarification of native as opposed to insider anthropology, and the third is the need to reconsider the relationship between native and insider anthropology (or native/insider anthropology and outsider anthropology).

4

Insider ~ Native? How native is insider?

Recent critiques of anthropological practice have come from two directions: anthropologists who are postmodern in orientation and 'native' anthropologists ('native' in the sense of being committed members of a cultural group among whom they are engaged in research). These are quite distinct, but tend to be conflated mainly because, while coming from

quite different perspectives, they both critique "traditional" anthropological texts as doing "violence both to the process of creating an anthropological text and to the actual encounter of anthropologist and informant" (Glazier in Brettell 1993:37).

Brettell states:

The postmodern phase has been characterised by reflexivity, self-criticism, and increasing eclectism...and is a necessary response to the postcolonial world in which anthropology has no choice but to invent itself....It calls for a reevaluation of what we have been doing, of our relationships with informants, and of the written product that our work has generated and will continue to generate (1993:1).

The native anthropologist Delmos Jones is critical of the social-class and racial bias of anthropology and says that "... anthropology is essentially a discipline that studies oppressed peoples, but the concepts and theories used to describe the lives of these groups do not adequately deal with the realities of their oppression" (1995:58).

Neither body of critique is unitary. However the situation is exacerbated by 'loose' terminology and distinctions between "insider"/"outsider" and "insider"/"native". Here, I seek to sort out the voices, and clarify these concepts and issues. More particularly, they need clarification because they are all relevant to my own research: to where I have positioned myself relative to my subjects/participants while researching, and in writing. For postmodern views, I consider Geertz (1973) and Brettell (1993), and for native anthropologists I consider the views of Narayan (1993), Abu-Lughod (1991,1992), Jones (1970, 1995) and Medicine (1987). Finally I will examine these extremely complex issues in the light of my own research experiences

Postmodern views

The postmodern turn in anthropology is largely attributed to the influence of Geertz and his interpretive approach (1973, 1983, 1984). Geertz suggested that ethnography should be a form of "thick description" and that culture, as an "acted document", is public, and that the ethnographer's role is to "inscribe" social discourse (1973:Ch. 1). However, by arguing that "anthropological writings are themselves interpretations" (ibid.:115), and that each culture

is "an ensemble of texts, themselves ensembles, which the anthropologist strains to read over the shoulders of those to whom they properly belong" (ibid.:452). Geertz put a literary metaphor at the centre of the anthropological enterprise. This, together with invigorated literary criticism urged on by deconstructive approaches which severely critiqued earlier work, had significant results (see Clifford and Marcus 1986).

Cerroni-Long (1995) is very critical of this postmodern turn. She points out that with these deconstructive approaches, and concomitant doubts cast on anthropological representation, the most significant consequence has been the erasure of cultural boundaries: "Above all...and most significantly in terms of the erasure of cultural boundaries, interpretive approaches focused ethnographic research on the analysis of meaning, and since meaning is subjective and polyphonic, a view of culture as disjointed, unbounded...accordingly emerged" (1995:4).

Moreover taken to extremes, another consequence is a re-objectifying of the native (read research subjects) as "other", where in the debates about ethnography and the representation of culture--about identity, the "self" and the "other"--ethnography is more about the ethnographer than the people being studied. Kuper states, "If the focus is upon the experience of the ethnographer, the native may enquire why ethnography should serve as an exotic accompaniment to the psychotherapy of the Western self" (Kuper 1994:543).

For Cerroni-Long, this apparent "catastrophic outcome" has pointed to the centrality of the "insider"/"outsider" and "insider"/"native" debates, in which the blurring of boundaries particularly impacts on these issues:

...efforts aimed at de-reifying culture end up eliminating an indispensable element of cross-cultural comparisons: cultural boundaries. Without cultural boundaries there is no clear way of defining the relationship of the cultural analyst with the phenomena under observation; consequently, the differentiation between alien and native also disappears, and, as it does, anyone studying a social setting becomes an insider by the mere fact of "being there" to study it (Cerroni-Long 1995:2).

Cerroni-Long's sarcastic take on "insider" is a radical departure from the traditional practice of anthropologists and illustrates a postmodern conceptual shift. The classic understanding of "insider" is that it refers to the "natives", that is the subjects of research, who have an "insider" knowledge of their own cultures. Today, the common (popular)

understanding of "insider" is that it refers to both natives--as subjects of research and indigenous anthropologists who are assumed to have a prior set of social relations with their own communities--and Western anthropologists who have a long-lasting relationship with and a deep understanding of their research subjects and local context.

The problem which arises with the insider/outsider issue becomes more acute as more and more anthropologists turn to study their own societies (Jackson 1987). One commentator states, "Anthropology-at-home, for those of us who do not claim to identify exclusively with any country, social class or milieu, holds out a promise that aspects of 'home' will at last be disclosed" (Sciama 1993 in Cerroni-Long 1995:6). Interestingly, the two major collections of Anglo-Saxon "native anthropology" published recently both have the word 'home' in their title (Jackson 1987, Messerschmidt 1981). Cerroni-Long states that "It could be that this word 'privatises' a half-denied social identity. Or it could be that it reduces cultural membership to emotional familiarity. It remains to be seen however, what precisely is 'home' for people with multiple identities" (1995:6).

Brettell's volume moves beyond issues raised by reflexive, interpretive, and literary anthropology to consider "systematically the relationship between anthropological writers and readers, particularly readers who are informants or who are members of our informants' society and have a vested interest in the anthropological text that has been produced" (1993:3). The politics of audience reception is treated with "brutal honesty and exposure of self" (ibid), showing the complex nature of the relationships between fieldwork experience, ethnographic text and audience/readers.

The case studies from North America and Europe in this volume present an array of Western anthropologists' negative experiences of the insider/outsider dilemma--where ethnographic texts are challenged by those about whom they are written (Davis, Glazier), where they--in dealing with issues of nationalism, ethnic identity, and language--deliberately blur the insider-outsider boundary thus producing an ambiguous status (Jaffe), and where they are labelled as outsiders by their own communities (Handler, Sheehan)

Handler's case study is of particular interest because it highlights a situation where people took offence to their construction of cultural difference being comparable to similar processes in other parts of the world and who maintained that their experiences were unique and should not be generalised. The rage of some insiders at Handler's attempt to deconstruct

nationalist ideology is framed in accusations that he "should've known better". Moreover some of the other contributors in Brettell's volume fall prey to what Handler is being accused of, that "in our postmodern efforts to use the voice of "the other" by quoting directly, we may in fact open ourselves to more criticism than when we embed what particular respondents tell us in generalities" (Brettell: 1993:7).

Do non-Western native anthropologists fare any better?

Native anthropologists

Native protest against metropolitan ethnographers has been around for a long time, especially ones by African intellectuals--and others--from the 60s onwards (see Wendt 1967), and is not merely a product of the postmodern turn. Certainly writings from a non-Western world view abounded. It could be argued that postmodernism is the West's way of finally acknowledging non-Western intellectual frameworks, albeit claiming these as part of their own Western intellectual movement. However, in order to voice this protest an increasing number of native anthropologists have turned to researching their own communities and, in doing so, have also pointed to the problems associated with the claim that "only natives can study natives".

Kim (1990) a Korean anthropologist who carried out fieldwork in the United States and in his own country claims that he can experience the same kind of distance and marginality as that confronting an Anglo-American ethnographer. Half-Indian/half German American folklorist/ethnographer Narayan (1989) and Lila Abu-Lughod (1991) use the term 'halfie' to refer to people (and themselves) with mixed national or cultural identity who struggle with multiple accountability. Jones warns that insider anthropologists may question certain theories because their own identity is at stake. Yet, he argues the insider position is not more privileged; "The insider may depend too much on his own background, his own sentiments, his desires for what is good for his people. The insider, therefore may distort the 'truth' as much as the outsider" (1970:256).

Despite sharing many common features and difficulties in researching their own communities, native anthropologists express different concerns and address different issues

Here I compare the native anthropologists Narayan and Abu-Lughod with Jones and Medicine. Their difference I attribute to the postmodern stance that Narayan and Abu-Lughod uphold.

In the introduction to her *Writing women's worlds: Bedouin stories* (1993), Lila Abu-Lughod talks about problems of representation and advocacy. Narayan considers the insider/outsider debate by asking the provocative question "How native is a "Native" Anthropologist?" (1993). Kuper states that these native anthropologists:

...have expressed reservations about the privileged insight ascribed to insiders pointing out the difficulties that may confront the anthropologist working in his or her home country (though, almost always, among people to whom he or she is an elite outsider), and protesting against the chauvinistic rejection of foreign expertise... (1993:547).

This perspective reflects the views of Narayan and Abu-Lughod. Indeed Cerroni-Long states that Narayan and Abu-Lughod promote the postmodern view of social fragmentation, where cultural boundaries become erased, and where we can glorify in the accidents of birth or material conditions that provide us through our hybrid self, with easy access to multiple realities (1995:6).

Narayan states:

...identities are doled out to non-Western, minority, or mixed anthropologists so that exotic difference overshadows commonalities or complexities. That my mother is German-American seems as irrelevant to others' portrayal of me as 'Indian' as the American mothers of the 'Tewa' Alphonso Ortiz, the 'Chicano' Renato Rosaldo, or 'Arab' Lila Abu-Lughod (1993:677).

She complains that differences overshadow commonalities or complexities and that "every anthropologist exhibits...a 'multiplex subjectivity'... Which facet of our subjectivity we choose or are forced to accept as a defining identity can change, depending on the context and the prevailing vectors of power" (ibid.:676)

Thus in Narayan's view, the insider/outsider contrast is secondary "to the issue of dismantling objective distance to acknowledge our shared presence in the cultural worlds that we describe." (ibid. 680)

As a result of their apparent postmodern fixity, where boundaries are erased, where objectivity is attained by allowing all the voices to speak for themselves, hardly any mention is made by these native anthropologists about the significance and accessibility of the product (read ethnography) to the researched, nuances in methodology employed to overcome problems of representation, and active political involvement in their own native communities.

I refer here to the apparent dilemma that some postmodern native anthropologists are experiencing. Obviously Narayan is appealing to the idea that somehow 'outsiders' and 'halfies' (read 'insiders') can be equally objective, but is this really possible? What Narayan is of course advocating is that there should not be a fixed, sharp distinction between native and non-native anthropology. While I largely agree against fixity, I suggest that a distinction should be made,

The central question is whether a native anthropology advances the goals of social justice and social equality for the natives (research subjects), or whether it merely mirrors mainstream anthropology. The type of native anthropology advocated by Jones (1970, 1995) and Medicine (1987) provides yet another perspective to the insider/outsider issue, and goes some way in answering these questions.

Jones states in his earlier 1970 publication.

Thus it was my view that an individual who has experienced domination and oppression could probably add a new dimension to the anthropological description of the oppressed people. . . . [A] black man in this century cannot avoid identifying emotionally with his people. I am an intrinsic part of the social situation that I am attempting to study. As part of the situation, I must also be part of an attempt to forge a solution (1970:255).

While Jones' basic position has not altered over the last 25 years, his later publication provides a more explicit understanding of a native anthropology (Jones 1995). He points out the need for a native anthropologist to distinguish between commitments to one's people, commitment to ideas about one's people, and commitment to political goals for one's people. He also talks about the contradictions and dilemmas faced by native anthropologists studying their own communities in terms of the political and ideological choices that they have to make (1995:65).

The idea that members of an oppressed group become anthropologists is an important dimension of the relationship between anthropology, native anthropology, and the oppressed. Thus there are three problems that must be addressed: anthropology as a discipline, the native anthropologist as an individual, and the socioeconomic status of the population that the native anthropologist belongs to. The relationship between the native anthropologist and the native population is not self-evident, although it is often made to appear that way. That is, the anthropologist who is a member of the oppressed population may or may not be an advocate of an anthropology of the oppressed. The relationship of the individual to the discipline may have more of an impact on point of view than his or her membership in a specific population (Jones 1995:58).

This strikes at the heart of the insider/native distinction. Native anthropology, in Jones's view, should be research by a native that people of his/her community want to get done and should result in research that "ameliorates the human condition". The primary concern of native anthropologists is social equality and social justice, since all native anthropology requires grappling with issues of power. The starting point for a native anthropology therefore is to understand that non-white populations in pluralist Western societies, and the people of most Third World countries share a history of colonisation and other forms of domination, rooted largely in racial, ethnic, and cultural differences (1995:59).

Medicine's experience as a native anthropologist reflects the tensions inherent in Jones's native anthropology. Medicine's identity as a Sioux creates problems of professional identity as an anthropologist when colleagues persist in using her as an informant. Her identity as an anthropologist opens the door to similar exploitation by the Sioux, who view her as a counsellor and a liaison to agencies outside the reservation community. As an advocate of Sioux interests, Medicine is especially concerned with this latter role. She states:

I am a part of the people of my concern and research interests....The ambiguities inherent in these two roles of being an "Anthro" while at the same time remaining a "Native" need amplification. They speak to the very heart of "being" and "doing" in anthropology. My desire to be an anthropologist has been my undoing and my rebirth in a very personal way... (1987:283).

Both Jones and Medicine talk about the exploitation of the native anthropologist--exploitation by their own communities as well as their academic colleagues (Medicine 1987:282). They appear to be in a continual double bind. Furthermore the problem raised by Narayan resurfaces. That is, Narayan's argument that a native anthropologist cannot represent

an unproblematic and authentic "insider's perspective" on social reality Jones (1995) suggests that there are political implications to this claim: "This claim tends to deny the multiple voices of the native population for whom the native anthropologist purports to speak, and may serve to legitimise internal inequality" (1995:59).

The bottom line is that native anthropology is a problematic perspective just as outsider anthropology or native postmodern anthropology are, but for different reasons. So why do it? Jones offers an explanation:

It is by confronting, analysing and working through the multiple social realities, dilemmas, constraints, and choices that native anthropologists participate in as actors and observers that potential rewards of the undertaking exist. (Jones 1995:69)

What Jones reiterates is that native anthropologists are native by the fact that they have experienced racist contexts and are committed to work towards change in the status quo for their communities. But how do native anthropologists work through the problems of multiple commitments and loyalties, or being "halfies" (Narayan 1993), a situation where social class, race, and political ideology converge in contradictory ways?

The status of ethnographer as "native", or how native ethnographers relate to their own communities can best be understood by considering Kopytoff's (1990) contrast between ascribed/immanent and achieved/circumstantial social identities and roles. The crucial question being asked by Jones (1995) and Medicine (1987) is "How does one learn to be an anthropologist and remain native?" Perhaps the answer lies in the question Kopytoff deals with: Which social identity and/or role is more embedded?

Social roles and identities

To explore these issues I first look at the differences between social identities (Goodenough 1965 in Kopytoff 1990) as an aspect of the social self, and personal identities and the roles associated with them. Then, these concepts/issues will be related to by my own research experiences

Merton argues (1970) that the idea that knowledge is group-specific and that only insiders have access to it has absurd implications: "It would thus follow that only women can understand women--and men men" (1970:21). He argues that "individuals have not a single

status but a status set" (ibid :22). Consequently to suggest that "one must be one in order to understand one " is fallacious since one is not just a woman, or white, or a college graduate, or middle-aged, but may be all of these and more (ibid.:24). Cerroni-Long (1995:8) argues that some of these status sets come to us through birth (native membership) and some which we enter (insider membership). As Hall states "culture....simply adds another layer. It doesn't eliminate what's underneath" (Hall 1979:45 in Cerroni-Long 1995:8).

Merton's status sets can be expanded by attending to social identities and associated roles. Kopytoff talks about social roles as derived from either immanent existential identities or circumstantial existential identities in his examination of gender roles among the Suku and North Americans (1990). He states that "Some social identities are culturally defined as having to do with what people 'are' in a fundamental sense, indicating a state of being (...in the West, father, woman, or priest)...in contrast to social identities that are culturally perceived as being derived from what people 'do'...identity based on their roles (...physician, teacher, or policeman)..." (Kopytoff 1990:80). He defines immanent existential identities as: people do X because of what they are, and circumstantial existential identities as: people are X because of what they do. The latter implies that a circumstantial identity lapses when the role is shed whereas an immanent one is relatively immutable.

While Kopytoff's analysis focuses on social gender identities, I contend that it could well be extended to explain personal ethnic identity. To go back to Merton's example of a status set above, while one may be a woman, white, college graduate, middle-aged, married, mother etc., each status can be broken down into an aspect of social/personal identity, and of immanent/circumstantial existential identity. Moreover, out of all the statuses outlined in this example, only one status is an aspect of ethnic identity, i.e., white.

My research experiences as a native anthropologist.

In a previous chapter, I described in some detail my experiences as a native anthropologist researching my own community: the dilemmas I faced as a NZ-born Samoan and a young(er) female interviewing elders, how I was viewed as an outsider in some contexts, my fluctuation from insider to outsider status, what information to 'expose' and what to conveniently ignore, my need to become politically involved with the group. In this

next section I relate these experiences to the preceding arguments

There will be very few persons in this cosmopolitan and globalising world who can lay claim to be metaphorically a 'pure-breed' or 'one-blooded'. The status sets (Merton 1970) that each individual is provided with through birth and through early life experiences provide us with 'native' membership, but only if an individual is *emotionally tied* to those status sets. The emotional dimension in this sense, is akin to Kopytoff's (1990) immanent existential identity extended from social identity to personal identity.

In the case of my research group, not one individual was not of mixed blood, i.e., most were part-*pālagi*, some were part-Chinese, but not one of them identified themselves as part-anything. All of them either identified as Samoan or New Zealand-born Samoan. The point here is that blood quantum linked to transmission of cultural traits has been reified by foreign researchers and governments. What is more relevant is how people identify *themselves* and why they continue to identify themselves in certain ways. Ethnic identity is therefore personal with emotional long-lasting attachments experienced in the economic, spiritual, historic symbols that one is exposed to during a lifetime, and must be kept separate from the statuses which are transient and not emotionally-binding but a mere fact of life. Therefore although my status-set is woman, native of New Zealand (by nature of being born in New Zealand), of Samoan parents, university-educated, teacher, anthropologist (in training), piano-player etc., and although I identify with all of these statuses, I must separate my contingent social/circumstantial identities from my immanent personal identities in some contexts. My ethnic identity is a NZ-born Samoan woman because I am *emotionally tied* to these immanent existential identities--the other roles/identities are circumstantial or transient, merely facts. Another way of saying this is that an ethnic identity must be one that you can live with. As one informant stated: "I know I am part-Chinese as well as Samoan...but while I acknowledge my Chinese side, I draw more strength from being Samoan. I identify myself as a NZ-born Samoan".

Where does this strength come from? My answer to this is that if history is "the art of remembering" (Wendt 1987), then identity is 'the art of remembering who our mothers and grandmothers told us we were', and how these memories have impacted on our life experiences, and vice versa. Our ethnic identity is thus situated historically, socially, politically, culturally, but more importantly *emotionally* (comparable to Kopytoff's immanent

existential social identities).

In my research context, I consider myself a practitioner of the native anthropology being advocated by Jones and Medicine, rather than the postmodern insider anthropology being practised by Narayan. The native aspect is that the research I have undertaken is focussed on a group of NZ-born Samoans of which I am a member, an ethnic group in New Zealand which is politically, economically and socially subordinate to mainstream New Zealand society.

What I add to Jones' explication is that in my own context, native anthropologists are native also by the fact that they concomitantly identify with and are part of the persistent identity system of their communities, thereby maintaining strong links with the homeland. Native anthropology, according to my definition then, lends itself heavily to those natives who live and work in ethnic minority situations and who may or may not be located in their countries of origin. In my case it is my ethnic identity which influences much of my social identity. To put it simply I am a NZ-born Samoan who does anthropology, rather than an Anthropologist who happens to be a NZ-born Samoan.

My gloss on native anthropology requires distinction from postmodern 'insider' anthropology and the loosely undefined use of the word 'native' and 'insider' by both Western and non-Western anthropologists. It is appropriate to the situation of those of us natives who are involved with a special kind of anthropology in a nation-state setting where there are two homes: the home of our birth in which we are a non-dominant group, and the homeland we ethnically identify with. It includes being at home with indigenous or 'native' concepts and the set of social relationships of our own communities, as well as traditional disciplinary approaches to other cultures, and using appropriate methodology to reflect this positioning—a methodology which acknowledges accessibility, accountability, reciprocity and responsibility to the researched.

The native anthropology I am advocating is a deliberate mediation between different worlds of non-dominated and dominated, where it is the responsibility of the researcher to negotiate irreconcilable differences, exploiting ambiguities, and creatively managing the situation. In my research context, it meant involving myself politically in the affairs of my focus group (in drafting up the submission to the PCANZ—see Chapter Three), but not embodying the anthropologist involvement in the ethnographic text. This then is the focal

difference between postmodern insider/native anthropologist distinction. Negotiating different, often conflicting, notions of knowledge and self-knowledge (Strathearn 1987:27), identifying and using appropriate methodologies, active political involvement, communicating accessible results back to the non-dominant 'native' group to which the anthropologist belongs, and to the academic community, is the work of the native anthropologist. The aspect of how one communicates results is discussed in the next section

Writers, authors and audiences.

...my claim is that we should take the criticisms of our subjects in much the same way that we take those of our colleagues. Not unlike other ethnographers, so-called natives can be insightful, sociologically correct, axe-grinding, self-interested, or mistaken. They do know their own cultures, and rather than being ruled out of court, their criticism should be listened to and taken into account, to be accepted, rejected, or modified, as we reformulate our analyses (Rosaldo 1986:50).

Postmodern writing about culture raises questions about modes of representation, about objectivity and accountability, relativism and ethnocentrism, science and truth (Dwyer 1977, Marcus and Fischer 1986, Clifford and Marcus 1986, Marcus and Cushman 1982). Here, questions of readership and audience are considered in these works, but the audiences considered are only readerships of specialist ethnography, a general anthropology, other social sciences, students, action groups, the public etc. Curiously absent is a consideration of native (non-Western) readers (a point picked up by Brettell 1993). Crapanzano (1977a:72) demonstrates an awareness of the native reader in his claim that "the writer of ethnography writes [for]--and creates--a double audience: the audience of his own people and the audience of those other people whom he refers to in an act of presumptive if not patronising incorporation as 'my people' "

Native scholars, who are not anthropologists, are an extremely important readership for ethnographies and have been harsh critics (Crocombe 1976:68, Brettell 1993:22). I would enlarge upon this frequent comment. Not only indigenous and native *scholars* but also ordinary, literate and articulate indigenous and native *people*, both in their homelands and abroad, are fast becoming critics of works purported to represent them, their families, their

churches, their communities and their cultures to others. Issues of identity and representation are always at stake, and we need to be aware of this in the preparation of texts that will increasingly be read and contested not only by academics, but also by the people and communities about whom we write

This raises the issue of the validity of informants' statements, recollections, perceptions and experiences. In this study, Part Two contains this substantive data which consists of verbal self-reports and my analyses of these. A discussion of the equivalence of what people say and what they do is considered in the following paragraphs.

Verbal accounts cannot be taken at face value. Oral accounts are as partial, biased, in some cases blatantly untrue, as written sources. "That old research technique of checking, cross-checking and challenging information until contradictions, lacunae and illogicalities are revealed, is as applicable to oral, archival and academic sources as it is to participant observation" (Dureau 1994:14). In using all available sources of information I operate on the basis of three untested assumptions. I assume, firstly, that in dealing with historical material, where all sources concur, the material is reliable—especially as many members speak of the same event, and in this way I can cross-reference to ensure validity. Similarly, where all sources can be recognised as consistent in their revelation of different kinds of information, such as when discussion of formal protest may suddenly verify written accounts of the Polynesian Panther movement (see Chapter 5), I assume some connection to reality. In the same way, I tend to privilege witnessing and experience in assessing the reliability of information—where somebody actually did something or can recall their parents doing it, I grant their claims as actual experiences.

I assume, secondly, when dealing with members' past experiences, that the problem being presented is that I am dealing with the product of human memories—histories which may be reinterpreted over time. However, one of the noteworthy aspects of the research for this study has been the members' verbal self reports. With isolated exceptions the members do not appear to have made conscious efforts to deliberately hide or distort social or academic events which occurred during their identity journey experiences. The contents of encounter conversations and individual interviews have been considered primarily as narratives and to the extent that other sources were available the details have been re-examined in conjunction with the material from other people's records, experiences and perspectives. For example, these

contemplations prompted me to exclude content from some narratives because the events and achievements described were not confirmed by other people/documents, and negated by further enquiry. While I was aware of inconsistencies during these discussions, which created openings to allow content to be comfortably rescinded, I did accept them as narratives the scholars chose to communicate even though I was unable to determine their reasons. More importantly, they provided insights as to the particular individual emotional and personal turmoil recalled either spontaneously or retrospectively by members concerned. What is not assumed is my particular insider and native relationship with the ESG. People in this group know one another, are members of the same 'āiga group, and are aware that I am a member of the same church community and part of their church 'āiga. We engage in similar activities. My ability to verify verbal reports are increased through this knowledge and cross referencing through certain aspects.

Finally, I assume that, even where ESG accounts are clearly strategically manipulated, they can tell us much about contemporary mores, perspectives, issues, social structures and the emotionality which underpin members' experiences and perspectives.

To avoid exploitation of researched and to avoid pitfalls outlined above (see Brettell 1993), the methodology employed reflects the nativist anthropological stance outlined above. I now turn to audiences.

I have at the same time two main audiences. Samoan people and *pālagi*. These can be more specifically defined as NZ-born Samoan interviewees and peers, and *pālagi* academics, and Samoan 'āiga and elders and the general public. My decision to write a single ethnography accessible to both audiences led me to employ a dual strategy. The first is to use appropriate languages for both audiences, and the second is to use the accessible levels of analysis. The former involves the heavy use of Samoan words, concepts, phrases, 'as spoken', with appropriate analyses, and the latter involves more formal academic language with more detailed, theoretical analyses. In addition to this dual strategy I gave the informants a chance to edit their verbal self-reports. I considered multiple voices on the same issue (Chapters Four and Five), I used people's own words to describe their lives, and I have included a reflexive component in Chapter One. I repeat, I do not consider this a postmodern piece of work, mainly because of my native anthropologist stance and life-long and continuous social relationships with my informants, and also because I have provided both accessible analyses

for my informants, as well as academic and theoretical contributions for academics and colleagues. In other words, this is "dialogue between practice and theory in anthropological fieldwork that allows the personal and the practical to become theoretical" (Small 1997:211). In Part Two where these verbal self-reports are presented, I deliberately keep the interview material with minimal analysis accessible to those Samoan audiences concerned. In Part Three, for the second audience of *pālagi* and *pālagi* academics, a deeper analysis is undertaken informed by bodies of anthropological theory, in the language accessible by academics. This dual strategy has ensured that I have paid attention to the differences in communicating the way my focus group understand and frame something and the way it is framed within ethnography or social science.

Brettell has already alerted us to the dangers of drawing comparisons that are incomprehensible, if not irrelevant, to the researched community (1993:101). Similarly, Becker has observed that "the people who are subjects of ethnographic fieldwork become very upset when something that is unique or special to them is treated as an instance of a class of events or objects" (ibid. 101).

These dangers have been avoided by drawing comparisons which are comprehensible and relevant to the NZ-borns of the ESG. Thus although I started with the question why young people were leaving the church, the generalised notion of 'youth leaving church' turned to a unique leaving in the sense of 'time outs' (Chapters Four and Five), which led to identity becoming the focus of the thesis. And although I did not intend to examine issues in anthropology—such as the insider/outsider debate, or the audience(s) of the thesis—I had to because these questions were raised by the process of writing and reflection as a Samoan ethnographer.

As a result this thesis about identity is about NZ-born Samoans and island-born Samoans; it is about Christianity and the 'Samoan' church; it is a little about me, a little about New Zealand, and a little about anthropology. These disparate subjects belong together in this thesis because they are all part of the same phenomenon, the metamorphosis of social relationships in our world: relationships between migrants and non-migrants, between Samoans and New Zealanders; between NZ-born and Island-born Samoans, between NZ-born children and their parents and grandparents, and between anthropologists and informants (see also Small 1997).

As a native anthropologist then, I have no claim to 'objectivity' but as Wendt states, "...objectivity is for astronauts and moon flights; history is for mortals; and mortals, my friend, are not flawless and objective gods" (Wendt 1965: 111).

Whatever native bias I have, I have also drawn heavily from 'objective' Western histories, sociologies, theories, and discourses.

Finally:

...I want to single out...Srinivas, who patiently wrote up and shared with me some of his most recent ideas on "insider anthropology" and, when invited to include them in this collection, declined in favour of publishing in India, gently explaining that the whole point of insider research is to make sure that fellow insiders get to read it (Cerroni-Long 1993: 14)

In this section I draw attention to the politics of ethnographic writing, to the impact of a researched audience on both anthropologist and text. I have raised questions of theoretical, ethical, and practical importance for all anthropologists who will increasingly be confronted by a diverse audience of outsiders, insiders and natives who both read and react. Rather than merely re-evaluating the viability of the distinction between "insider" and "outsider", I have also explored the differences between a "postmodern" and "native" distinction between them. In Chapter One, I demonstrate how I have personally dealt with the challenges to authority and interpretation that I have faced either during the process of fieldwork and the writing up of the results of my research. I hope I have found a fruitful way to "involve our ethnographic subjects in their self-representation" (Bretell 1993: 22). I am yet to experience the effect my writing will have on my own community of Samoans in New Zealand.

CHAPTER TWO

ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES OF CULTURE AND ETHNICITY

your way
objective
analytic
always doubting
the truth
until proof comes
slowly
quietly
and it hurts

my way
subjective
gut-feeling like
always sure
of the truth
the proof
is there
waiting
and it hurts

(Konai Helu Thaman, in *Hingano* 1987)

The emotional underpinnings of ethnic identity and the social processes that explain the attachment of individuals to ethnic groups are now receiving much more attention from sociologists and anthropologists. However, most recent trends in the scholarship of ethnicity have tended to focus on the social structural conditions that generate ethnic group identity and behaviour.

This chapter surveys current academic discourses on culture and ethnicity and highlights the work of Spicer and De Vos and their focus on the emotional, subjective experience of ethnic identity. It follows from Spicer and De Vos in developing the concept of ethnicity as arising from conflict and opposition to some subordinate status position in which ethnic groups have been placed by the dominant society, and is concerned with extending this concept to explain intra-group dynamics. Finally, continuing this theoretical excursion, I explore Samoan theories of ethnicity and the *fa'a Samoa* and how these impact on inter and intra-ethnic interaction for NZ-born Samoans.

Theories of ethnicity

The lack in creating theorising of ethnicity has been a result of early sociologists' view that ethnicity would cease to have significance in modern societies, and with later sociologists' view that the assimilation process or the 'melting pot' process would undermine all forms of minority ethnicity. A more recent stream of theorising which followed and one which this study explores follows from the realisation that contrary to expectation, the mixing of diverse populations does not necessarily lead to the 'melting' of individual group characteristics (Glazer and Moynihan 1975), and focusses on ethnic competition and conflict, rather than compromise and accommodation (Banton 1983, Horowitz 1985). In this context ethnicity as opposition and conflict (Spicer 1971, De Vos 1995) is a durable form of identity and a viable basis for group maintenance.

Ethnicity is for many anthropologists only a recent concern, because anthropologists (and many sociologists) assumed acculturation and assimilation to be the end results of cultural and social subordination until relatively recently. Burgess (cited in De Vos & Suarez-Orozco 1990:214) suggests three reasons for the resurgence of ethnic consciousness at the present time. First, the increasing recognition that functionalist theory in sociology and anthropology failed to give due weight to conflict and change in overly stressing stability, consensus and conformity as reasons for social continuity (Geertz 1973); second, a prevailing modernisation theory that stressed convergence in cultures and an expectancy of diminution of ethnic diversity with modernisation; and third, the theoretical saliency of class conflict in theories of conflictual relationships. The last is a version of the modernisation theory that disregards ethnic affiliation as an antiquated form of belonging, and assumes that the ultimate struggle in society will be fought on a class basis (De Vos & Suarez-Orozco 1990:214).

The anthropological tradition concerning a folk-urban continuum or the assimilation of groups into the dominant white society, as represented at the University of Chicago under Robert Redfield, owed a heavy debt to previous sociological studies of the city of Chicago under Park, Burgess, Wirth and others. These Chicago sociologists concerned themselves with the ecological, economic and social patterns of city growth in a metropole such as Chicago that

was seen as absorbing or assimilating continuing waves of European immigrants (Sennett & Cobb 1972). An important turnaround point of view was marked by Glazer and Moynihan's *Beyond the Melting Pot* (1963). "Symbolically the theoretical homogenising crucible had been broken. We had become free to observe that no more in America than elsewhere was assimilation becoming the ultimate solution to multiethnic interaction..." (De Vos & Suarez-Orozco 1990:212).

In this most recent stream of theorising, ethnicity has been variously characterised and analysed. Its significance is seen in its persistence (Barth 1969, Epstein 1978), resurgence (Bell 1975, Glazer & Moynihan 1975), and revival (Smith 1981). It is also analysed in terms of its primordialist ('essential', 'natural') or circumstantialist (cultural) traits. Occurring in the contexts of large-scale migrations and settlements of people, it is commonly studied as urban ethnicity (Southall 1973, Cohen 1974, Hannerz 1980), with emphasis on individual options, intra-group networks, and intergroup competition, conflict or accommodation (Hannerz 1974, Gonzalez 1989). Ethnicity is also significant in connection with the nation-state, both within and across state boundaries (Farrerson 1960, Smith 1986) in the project of nationalism (Anderson 1997, Gellner 1997, Hobsbawm 1997), and in the project of migration (Massey 1997, Rex 1997, Clifford 1997), and with the advancement of a group's economic interests in the formation of 'transnational communities' (Basch, Schiller and Blanc 1995).

To understand ethnicity in the context of Samoans in New Zealand, two dimensions of ethnicity are relevant: ethnic identity and community, and ethnicity's relation to the projects of nationalism and migration. The former allows us to explore the relevance of *fia'a Samoa* to Samoan migrants and their children/grandchildren, and the latter to account for the Samoan 'diaspora'. These dimensions will be discussed as inter- and intra-ethnic interaction in the context of Samoans in New Zealand (see also Chapter Three).

Ethnic identity and community

As with the notion of *gemeinschaft* (Tonnies 1955), an ethnic community can be characterised by emotions and sentiments which bind members together as a collective. These sentiments are attached to common traits and distinctive markers, such as body, descent,

history, culture, traditions, core values, language, and religion (Smith 1986, Guibernau and Rex 1997). Their shared sentiments and meanings give members an exclusive sense of identity and community, and provide ethnicity with powerful cognitive, symbolic and organisational capacities for behaviour--in short, of being, behaving and belonging.

The strength and tenacity of ethnic identity are such that it assumes an appearance of 'naturalness'. This has led it to be variously categorised as primordial (Geertz 1963), inalienable (Gordon 1978), and biologically kin-based (van den Berghe 1981). Others stress its cultural (Barth 1969), symbolic (Cohen 1985, Smith 1986), and emotional and psychocultural (Epstein 1978, De Vos & Romanucci Ross 1982) features which this study explores. Barth emphasises cultural markers in boundary maintenance while Epstein stresses the emotional and affective power of ethnic identity over the 'rational' (1978). De Vos & Romanucci-Ross (1982) see "ethnicity as a subjective sense of continuity in belonging" in which the "ethnic identity consists of subjective or symbolic or emblematic use of any aspect of culture in order to differentiate themselves from other groups" (ibid.).

Culture and Ethnic Identity

The main features of an ethnic group--culture and common descent--require further examination. Culture is sometimes regarded as a specific ethnic emblem, but is also viewed as a more general characteristic embracing other ethnic markers such as tradition, core values, language and religion. In the latter sense, culture is the store of knowledge, practices and experiences possessed by an ethnic group which serves as a powerful symbol of its identity. But although it is closely associated with ethnicity, the two are not to be equated. The focus on a cultural group is on its internal structure, what is relevant in ethnicity is the *relationship between* ethnic groups. Epstein puts it aptly: "The connection between ethnicity and culture is in the process of interaction, when ethnic groups draw from their cultures, each with their own elements of affinity and identity, to mark out differences and to fix the relationship to each other..." (1978:11).

Several clarifications about ethnic identity also need to be made here. First, there is the implied notion that a culture is shared among members of an ethnic group. While an ethnic group may possess a core of cultural values, whether or not all members subscribe to them in the same

manner and to the same degree is a different matter. Depending on the context, an ethnicity may be central, peripheral or ambiguous to a group's members (Isaacs 1975). Cultural values and actual behaviour are mediated by constraints, opportunities, institutions and socio-economic background. Some members may be bicultural, multicultural, or ambiguous in their identities (see Part Two), others may choose to "pass" as members of another group in specific situations (De Vos and Romanucci-Ross 1982), yet others may emphasise their ethnicity. In short, culture is unevenly shared, and depends on the context of change, choice and constraint. Despite the earnest debates in anthropology about the viability of the concept of 'culture' (Brighman 1995), it is certainly alive and well for the Samoans I have met in both Samoa and New Zealand. As exemplified in many of the quotes in Part Two, they readily use terms such as culture, tradition and identity in our interviews and conversations, most often in relation to the concept of *fa'aSamoa*. The essentialist notion that "the Samoan culture" exists as some kind of stable, bounded entity is readily accepted. This is confirmed in the way Samoans born in Samoa measure themselves and each other against this norm, as being more or less Samoan (see Chapter Seven). Yet many NZ-borns with whom I have discussed 'culture' also acknowledge the characteristics more often identified in anthropology today: culture as strategic, constructed, fragmented, improvised, contested, and so on. They hold both views of culture, invoking them according to context and, most important, incorporating both in the construction of their cultural identities. As Morton states: "If anthropology has a lesson to learn from the 'natives' point of view' it is that these two conceptions of culture are not mutually exclusive and indeed that they are essential characteristics of the same phenomenon. That people hold both views simultaneously makes the constructions of cultural identities more confusing and complex than either modernist or postmodern accounts sometimes suggest" (1998:23).

The second clarification about ethnic identity pertains to its political significance. Cohen (1974) points out that in specific contexts, ethnic groups are political groups organised around economic interests, but which articulate themselves around cultural mechanisms. Bell (1975) emphasises ethnicity as an affective strategic site for political action because it combines well the symbolic-affective (based on emotional ties) and instrumental purposes (usually for material interests). In general, ethnic group identities do tend to shift with the political context. But ethnic affiliations are not simply there to be called forth for strategic reasons; rather, it is the context which largely determines to what extent group boundaries are

mutable, affinities can be manipulated and identities constructed (see Chapter Seven). Overall, what is important to understand are the concrete manifestations of ethnicity in a variety of contexts and the links between its economic, political and cultural-symbolic dimensions.

The third clarification about ethnic identity is its articulation with national, class and other identities. The links between ethnicity and identities in the context of nationalism and migration are discussed in the next section. Where class is concerned, ethnicity is often associated with the articulation of group economic interests (Cohen 1974). Cohen is also of the view that where social class lines cut across ethnic groups, class allegiances override ethnic allegiances in that the poor unite against the rich; but where class and ethnicity coincide, then cultural differences may be heightened to articulate the struggle between classes, i.e., ethnic allegiances override class ones (Bell 1975). In general it should be remembered that the individual has numerous identity options (Wallman 1983) and choices (Banton 1983). However, depending on context, those pertaining to ethnicity may form one of the strongest, and may exist in competition or in complementarity with other identities (Eng 1995:10). This study bears the latter observation out in that for some members of the ESG, it is the ethnic identity option which is pivotal, especially for members with secured identities (see Part Two).

Ethnicity and the projects of nationalism and migration

In nationalism discourse, the nation-state is thought of as coming into being almost as part of the modernising project (Rex 1997:273). According to Gellner (1983) the nation depends on a political and intellectual elite imposing a shared culture on the whole population in a territory particularly through a national education system which ensures that all members of the nation have a minimum of competence and a degree of flexibility so that they can fulfil a variety of roles. Such a nation-state is bound to encounter resistance from ethnic groups within its borders. Rex states:

It may deal with this by either destroying these groups and their culture, or by granting them a measure of subordinate autonomy....The modern nation also rarely rests content with the bonding of its own members as simply as individual citizens. It needs to create a national sentiment and a sense of belonging to the nation....It therefore has to create its own symbols, mythology, sense of sacredness and belonging. In doing so it will be using many of the strategies used by pre-modern ethnic groups....What the theory of

nationalism has to do therefore is to describe a complex process of interaction between modernising nation states, ethnic groups and ethnic nationalism (1997:273).

Regarding migration, the second project of ethnicity, Clifford states: "An unruly crowd of descriptive/interpretive terms now jostle and converse in an effort to characterize the contact zones of nations, cultures, and regions: terms such as 'border', 'creolization', 'transculturation', 'hybridity', and 'diasporas'" (Clifford 1997:283).

Although much of the theoretical writing about ethnicity has been about the attachment of an ethnic group to a territory, in fact ethnic groups/communities are often concerned precisely with their *detachment* from a territory, that is with the business of international migration (Rex 1997). In trying to relate such groups to the theory of nationalism, a commonly used notion is that of the diaspora. A diaspora is said to exist when an ethnic group or nation suffers some kind of traumatic event which leads to the dispersal of its members, who, nonetheless continue to aspire to return to the homeland. Rex states that "Diasporic nationalism is thus seen as a kind of nationalism, e.g., Jews seeking a return to Zion; blacks seeking a return to Africa etc." (ibid.:274). The term diaspora however has also usefully been used to refer to any national or ethnic group dispersed across several countries, who may/may not have suffered a clear traumatic experience, and are not necessarily primarily concerned with a return to some kind of Zion. They are not in fact nationalist at all even though they have some kind of transnational community as a point of reference.

Rex states that there are three cases to be distinguished (1997:275). First, groups of migrants from economically backward to economically successful countries. Individuals from the former migrate to the latter to seek work. Some may have no strong desire to return to their country of origin and seek assimilation to their country of settlement. They commonly may send remittances home and plan to return there, i.e., they retain some kind of myth of return. Second, there are those who are a part of a more extensive migration movement who migrate to a number of countries and who intend to continue to live abroad and to exploit whatever opportunities are available within the several countries. For them there is an international community distinct from both the community of homeland and that of the territories they are temporarily/permanently settled in. They are sometimes referred to as secondary colonialists for whom opportunities open up within another country's former empire, e.g., Indians of the Punjab settled in South-East Asia, through Europe, to North

America. Finally, there are communities of refugees in varied situations. They may constitute diaspora of some kind seeing their immediate position as temporary and envisaging a return to homeland when the political situation improves. They will not be nationalistic in outlook.

In understanding ethnicity and migration of Samoan people, this study shows that the second scenario most closely resembles the situation of Samoans in New Zealand. Despite all the variation it is clear that in all cases we are dealing with transnational communities which are not primarily nationalist in their orientation (except in relation to surviving homeland issues) and in which an element of diasporic yearning for return is not the overwhelming political factor (see Macpherson 1981, 1995, 1996).

Safran (1991) discusses a variety of collective experiences in terms of their similarity and difference from a defining model. He defines diaspora as: "expatriate minority communities" (1) that are dispersed from an original 'centre' to at least two 'peripheral' places; (2) that maintain a "memory, vision, or myth about their original 'homeland'"; (3) that "believe they are not--and perhaps cannot be--fully accepted by their host country"; (4) that see the ancestral home as a place of eventual return when the time is right; (5) that are committed to the maintenance or restoration of this homeland; and (6) whose consciousness and solidarity as a group are 'importantly defined' by this continuing relationship with the homeland. According to Safran's definition of this 'centered' diaspora model oriented by continuous cultural connections to a source and teleology of 'return', Samoan culture (as with African American/Caribbean/British cultures) does not qualify. This is because Samoans are not so much oriented to roots in a specific place and a desire to return as around an ability to maintain/negotiate the *fa'a Samoa* in diverse locations. Samoan culture therefore falls outside Safran's strict definition of 'diaspora'.

2

Ethnicity in the Pacific

My training in materialist and culturalist interpretations of culture, made me aware that each theoretical approach was valid and had a story to tell about people and cultures. However, at the same time I knew that each of these stories was only one (albeit vital) part of the whole

story. The more I read about Western paradigms of culture: the British and American schools of thought, postmodern approaches of the interpretive (Geertz *et al.*) or dialogical (Tyler *et al.*) schools of reflexive anthropology, critiques of the postmodern turn, and critiques of critiques, the more I became convinced that although I understood that it was now generally unacceptable to view other cultures as monolithic and with relatively fixed sets of shared beliefs and symbolic systems, there was no clear definition of culture or ethnicity that could be applied to my focus group. As I listened to all the stories that the members of my focus group had to tell me I began to realise that culture is not text, a translation, an interpretation. Culture is for these people the *fa'aSamoa*--a lived experience grounded in context, which at the same time expands vertically and horizontally, inwardly and outwardly, and which intersects lines of history, social structure and organisation, myth, economics, psychological processes--and which finally is captured in the emotionally charged ethos of Samoan ethnicity.

The issues confronted during fieldwork centred around the internal conflict in many individuals as well as within the group as a whole: the tension experienced by being Samoan while living in New Zealand, the difficulties of being a good Newton Church member, intergenerational conflicts, the differing perceptions of the *fa'aSamoa* and the emotionally charged content of ethnicity.

As I struggled intellectually with these issues, I kept coming back to the fact that despite this tension and conflict, there was undoubtedly, a persistence of Samoan identity. Inextricably intertwined with this identity were the Church and *fa'aSamoa* (with its diverse meanings for members of my focus group), and the various mechanisms used by ESG members to cope with identity conflict at personal and group levels.

An essential part of my attempt to confront this problematic was exploring the role that emotions play in identity formation and reviewing the growing body of work done by other anthropologists on the issue of identity in the Pacific.

In reviewing the growing body of work done by anthropologists on the issue of identity in the Pacific, the most important of these, I concluded, was the Linnekin and Poyer edited volume *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in the Pacific*. The collection of papers in this 1990 publication attest to a significant theoretical development in ethnicity, and that is the divergence between primordial and circumstantial analyses of personal and group identity. In recent and contemporary Pacific Island societies, they argue, identity is described as either

primordialist (designated as a Mendelian model that stresses inheritance of substance as the key factor), or circumstantialist (designated as a Lamarckian model which suggests that relationships defined by their social placement underpin Oceanic ideas of group affiliation).

The primordial approach seeks a *psychological* (or psycho-cultural) explanation for the behavioural aspects of ethnic group solidarity, and the circumstantial approach seeks a *social* explanation. The latter views ethnic group solidarity as resulting from certain social circumstances (both internal and external) which control the group's existence. What is obvious in the literature is that these two approaches have been treated as if they were mutually exclusive (see Scott 1990 for examples of unsuccessful attempts to synthesise both approaches).

The rich historical and ethnographic material contained in the ⁷eleven chapters of this book suggest that notions of cultural identity and binding of social groupings emerging from the Pacific are different from the western paradigm of ethnicity (defined by editors as a paradigm used to indicate a natural, unambiguous bond 'in the blood', and that people are as they are because they were born to be so). The editors claim that the term 'ethnicity' describes both the western popular theory of group identity and a theoretical construct developed by western scientists (Linnekin & Poyer 1990:2).

The volume includes a range of Pacific Island situations, from independent island nations and states to examples where indigenous peoples have become minorities in their own lands, but noticeably absent is the phenomenon of identity in the context of established Pacific Island migrant enclaves in New Zealand, Australia, Hawai'i and the USA. The editors have confined the scope of this volume to ethnicity in colonial or post-colonial contexts and have thus ignored the more or less voluntary geographic mobility of contemporary Pacific Island populations (see also Hau'ofa 1993).

While the editors pay lip service to the notion of a 'modern synthesis' where both primordial and circumstantialist approaches are combined (Linnekin & Poyer 1990:3), the Micronesian, Melanesian and Polynesian ethnographic examples cited almost all exemplify the preference of Pacific scholars to employ circumstantialist explanations for the persistence of identity (Watson on Kainantu, Pomponio on Mandok, Lieber on Kapingamarangi and Pohnpei). The book raises large questions about the conceptualisation and organisation of cultural differences, both in the Pacific and elsewhere.

...what are the indigenous assumptions that underlie prevailing categorical distinctions among Pacific Peoples?...and how have local modes of group ascription changed as a consequence of the colonial encounter? It suggests an extremely general answer that Oceanic notions of cultural identity tend to emphasise the factors of environment, behaviour and situational flexibility, in contrast to the emphasis on descent, innate characteristics and unchanging boundaries that characterise Western views on ethnicity (James 1992:425-26).

This statement is problematic. I contend that this is because approaches stressing the emotive aspects of ethnicity have been mostly based on uncritical references to the notion of primordialism as formulated firstly by Shils (1957) and followed by Geertz (1973), in their focus on the a priori, ineffable and affective qualities of primordialism (see Eller and Coughlan 1993 for a critique of these).

What is unfortunate is that in the process aspects of ethnicity not seen as strictly material or instrumental, such as cultural, spiritual and emotive phenomena, seen as real and enduring by indigenous peoples, have been reified and mystified by relegating them to some kind of mystical appeal and natural instincts, and therefore ignored.

Two points are significant here. The first is the relegation of indigenous minorities' attempts to express *their* ethnicity and *their* identity to notions of primordialism. These explanations tend to be criticised by ethnicity scholars and countered as "irrational" by providing alternative circumstantial examples, thereby undermining indigenous notions of ethnicity (Linnekin on Hawai'i, Sinclair and Dominy on Maori, Tonkinson on Australian Aborigines), and fuelling misapprehensions that culture, tradition and cultural identity are static. Hence the accusations of the invention of tradition and culture (Goldsmith 1989, Hanson 1989, Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Is it not the case that culture, tradition and cultural identity are reshaped by circumstances, and are rational responses to changing challenges to ethnicity? (see Ryan 1994 for deconstructionist/genealogical analysis of western and non-western mandates on truth and authenticity) .

The second is that indigenous concepts of identity--the *fa'aSamoa*, Melanesian *kastom*, *tikanga Maori* etc.. have been labelled as primordial, and exclusively confined to emotional, cultural and symbolic attachments only.

Eller and Coughlan state:

Yet it may be a subtle form of imperialism, or at the very least ethnocentrism, that has led Western thinkers to apply the notion of primordialism (with its implications of pre-modern and non-rational) to those ethnic movements that lay claim to the loyalty of their following on grounds other than material interests....Invoking the notion of primordialism only serves to obfuscate the nature of ethnic group solidarity... (1993:197).

In reading several works by anthropologists, both primordialists and circumstantialists (see Linnekin and Poyer 1990, Scott 1990), what continually struck me was their collective failure to offer a theory or model of identity which could convincingly be applied to my focus group. Most seemed to describe situations in which identity is circumstantial (Watson on Kainantu, Pomponio on Marak, Lieber on Kapingamarangi and Polinpei). Even where data is presented and events outlined which suggest irregularity, unpredictability etc., the analyses tend to treat such as mystical, natural instincts and therefore dysfunctional (i.e., primordial). The emotional content is never seriously contemplated. During my time in the field, and in the periods of reflection, it became increasingly clear that the dominant paradigms of anthropological theories of ethnicity were inadequate--as they had been polarised and dichotomised--and not up to the task of dealing with the reality of contemporary identity.

That the primordialist/circumstantial dilemma exists today is obvious, but rather than taking a polarised position, I contend that it would be more useful to regard affect and circumstance not as variables to be handled separately, but to be treated in their complex interaction. As Epstein states:

if we are to achieve a deeper understanding of many of the problems that ethnicity poses, we shall need to develop...approaches more fine-grained...which takes full account of the interplay of the external and the internal, the objective and the subjective, and the sociological and psychological elements which are always present in the formation of ethnic identity (Epstein 1978:112)

An added task was to re-examine accepted notions of primordialism: "...the entire structure of primordial analysis has been based on a faulty approach to affect; and we...conclude that there are logically no circumstances in which ethnicity can be described as primordial" (Eller & Coughlan 1993:184).

I concluded that, while circumstantialists had part of the answer, primordialists were way off track. Primordialism it is argued is a "bankrupt concept for the analysis and description of ethnicity..." (ibid.). It was time to examine the affective or emotional content of ethnicity anew.

I needed to turn my attention to material which focused on the subjectivity of ethnicity. I found Epstein's emotionality, Barth's interactional model, Spicer's oppositional approach and De Vos' psychocultural approach (pioneered by Mead) particularly illuminating. I have therefore drawn heavily on their work. However, whereas Barth focuses on *integrational* aspects of identity, I contend that it is the *oppositional* and *conflictual* nature of identity that sheds more light on not only the emotional aspects of subjective identity, but also on contemporary ethnic-based interaction.

Re-examination of primordialism: the emotional content of ethnicity

In 1969 Barth published *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. This work was revolutionary for anthropologists because he forthrightly pointed out the subjectivity of ethnicity. Using an interactional framework, Barth studied boundary-maintaining mechanisms that kept groups distinct, rather than simply depending on distinguishing cultural traits.

An experiential subjective approach was notably absent until recently in considering ethnic groups in the anthropological tradition. In present-day anthropology, generally increasing interest in ethnicity now marks a shift in the use of the concept of culture from one that depends on the categorisation of behavioural or material traits towards a concern with a cultural identity as a subjective continuity in the minds of people (Barth 1969, De Vos & Romanucci-Ross 1975, Spicer 1971). Following closely was Epstein's work (*Father and Identity: Three Studies in Ethnicity* 1978).

Reflecting on all the varied approaches to ethnicity, the one major conviction that emerges for Epstein, is the powerful emotional charge that appears to surround or to underlie so much of ethnic behaviour (Epstein 1978:xi). Epstein explores the parameters of this concept through ethnographic data in his 1978 publication. While aware that the concept of identity is usually thought of as the domain of psychoanalysts and because of the debate as to

whether this area is an unwarranted excursion into the domains of psychology or sociology (ibid. xi), Epstein states that:

... an anthropologist interested in ethnicity is likely to concern himself [sic] with questions about the emergence of ethnic groups and categories, the relationships between them, and the forces which keep them in being or lead to their decline. By contrast, the concern of the clinician is of course the individual; it lies in the complex process by which the patient's image of self has been achieved, and how it has come to be impaired. Given this divergence of interest, in what way can the concept be helpful, or indeed relevant, to the concerns of the anthropologist? The answer, I believe, lies in the fact that, with its primary interest on perception of the self, focussing on identity not only suggests new perceptions on old dilemmas, but also draws attention to aspects of the problem that have hitherto been overlooked (ibid. xii).

Epstein claims that ethnic identity is neither given or innate and states that the way in which it is generated is a psychosocial process (ibid. xiii). He poses questions as to how identity is maintained over a number of generations and acknowledges the central importance of history in ethnic identity formation--not in substantiating historical development, but in providing people with a perception of their past, enabling them through the selective stressing of certain values to make positive identifications with their forebears.

A significant point in the transmission of this 'history' is the centrality of role models, early attachment figures, especially grandparents in fostering ethnic identity (see Part Two). He states that "... it is in the experience of childhood, that the roots of ethnic identity are laid down, acquiring in the process that emotional charge that can make it such a potent force in later life. That is...the affective dimension of ethnic identity..." (ibid.). In the persistence of ethnic identity Epstein outlines, firstly, that in the transmission of identity it is not the practice in itself, but the meaning that attaches to it, and the way it is "cached" that is important. Secondly, it follows that many of the subtler expressions of ethnic behaviour that are revealed in the ongoing life of the home, in the company of friends, or at ethnic gatherings, expressions of what Epstein calls "intimate" culture is also of importance. More significantly Epstein clearly defines emotional content of ethnicity as the persistence and transmission of:

... certain values and attitudes despite their abandonment of much of the 'public' culture....such values are cultivated and transmitted as part of the 'intimate' culture. In studying how they are transmitted to and experienced by the young we may hope to

discover how the cognitive aspects of identity are buttressed by unconscious associations and identifications, and so come to a deeper understanding of the affective component of ethnic identity and intra-ethnic identity (1978:111-112).

It is this understanding of the role that emotions play in identity formation that informs this study. In light of the data presented in Part Two it is evident that the transmission of the 'intimate culture' expressed as either parental *fa'aSamoa*, NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* and/or secured *fa'aSamoa* is underpinned and driven by the affective/emotional component of ethnicity and intra-ethnic identity, as defined above.

Ethnicity as 'opposition' and 'conflict': situations in which emotionality and circumstances merge

I have resurrected an anthropological ancestor to help me work through this-- Edward Spicer (1906-1983). His concepts of opposition, persistent identity systems, and enduring peoples have provided valuable insights for my re-examination of the emotional content of ethnicity.

In addition to launching a lifelong personal and professional involvement with Yaqui peoples (which originated in his dissertation research in Pascua, a Yaqui village enclave in Tucson, Arizona 1936-37), Spicer's particular interest in the survival of traditional culture guided much of his professional career. Through field research and synthesis, he produced a corpus of ethnographic material on Southwestern cultures that stands as a major contribution, and challenge to, traditional ideas about identity. A case in point is his remarkable *Cycles of Conquest*, a volume dealing with the impact of the Spanish Empire, Mexico and the USA, on Indians in the Southwest over a 400 year period. Complementing his interest in culture change process and the persistence of traditional culture, his major breakthrough in this area came in 1971 when he conceptualised the sociocultural unit involved as a "persistent cultural system" and suggested identity symbols for its analysis (Spicer 1971:795). He was on the verge of developing his concept of "enduring peoples" when he died in 1983. His manuscript, tentatively titled "Enduring Peoples", was only half-finished. Spicer describes this concept as providing a means for broader understanding of 'a people', their history and identity. He claims that as empires

have disintegrated during the 20th century, enduring peoples have emerged in most parts of the western world (this theme has been developed more recently by Friedman 1992).

When large-scale states disintegrate, they often appear to decompose into 'persistent cultural systems'....It is possible that, while being formed, states depend for their impetus on the accumulated energy of persistent peoples. A proposition for consideration is that states tend to dissipate the energy of peoples after transforming that energy into state-level integrations, [which] then regularly break down in the absence of mechanisms for maintaining human motivations in the large-scale organizations that they generate (Spicer 1971:800).

What is it then that enables enduring people to persist? It is now widely known that factors of identity such as race, territory, language are not permanent features and certainly no single one of these is essential among the characteristics of Spicer's 'enduring peoples'. Is it then a way of life, a culture which persists? Could the life of Samoans at the time of John Williams (1830) be compared with Samoan life in Apia or Tutuila in the 1990s? Is there any overlap in a listing of cultural traits of these two widely separated phases of Samoan history? I contend that a listing of cultural traits in 1830 would almost be identical to a similar listing in 1990. What changes in a listing of these traits would be the way in which they are manifested at particular times and in various places.

Spicer points out that it is a *sense* of common identity rather than elements of race, language, cultures and territory that make enduring peoples persist (1971:800). In every case of an enduring people there are common understandings concerning the meaning of a set of symbols which have associations with the unique experience of a people through their history. Every people has a historical experience which no other has undergone, accumulated experiences which they pass on as traditions from generation to generation. As Spicer so eloquently states:

The experiences are associated with specific places, with specific persons, with triumphs and defeats, with sufferings, friendly alliances, persecutions, betrayals. These events are known to a given people from the inside as they are told from parents to children and transmitted with the feelings about them that have moved the preceding generations. Thus the meanings of which we speak consist of both knowledge of the things, the persons, the named actions, the places of a people's historical existence, and also the sentiments associated with all those events, that is, the love, the pride, the sorrow, the hatred, the respect, the love, the regret, the

approval and disapproval. Each event, person, place is remembered in a matrix of feeling, and no other people has felt as the given one does about those events, persons, and places....It is the symbols which a people develops, together with their meanings, concerning their experience as a people, that constitute their collective identity (1980:348).

Thus according to Spicer, the persistence of a people rests on a set of meanings about actual events of history, as uniquely experienced by the people and stored, as it were, in a stock of symbols. He states that although the genetic constitution, the place of residence, the language, the customs and beliefs (i.e., culture) change through time, that as long as the common understandings of what has been experienced in relations with other peoples are known and felt, a people will persist. "It is this sense of what has happened to them and how they have performed in the course of it that makes a people a people..." (ibid.:349).

I extend Spicer's concept of 'enduring peoples' as applying to Samoan people in the following way. I extend Spicer's definition of the 'state' or 'empire' to include not only colonialist contexts but also western (or First World) forces of christianity, capitalism, development, modernisation, globalisation as these forces are articulated by Samoans, and I use 'enduring peoples' to refer to ethnic minority enclaves in large plural western nations, viz., Samoans born in New Zealand.

Spicer holds that people's awareness of their experiences through time, their historical understanding of themselves is the basis of enduring qualities. In their sense of identity, every people moulds a vessel into which they pour from generation to generation the meanings of their historical experiences (see also Benedict 1959, De Vos and Romanucci-Ross 1975). Each such creation is for them a summation of the meaning and purpose of life. The spirit of a people is upheld by the vital dimension provided by the emotional content of identity. This dimension is how the people *feel* about the way they have performed and the *values* they have upheld in the course of their life history as a people. "Such associations with real events in which people have suffered and triumphed are poured into the mould of identity and so come to have a significance..." (Spicer 1980:360).

Spicer's seminal work (1971) is a cornerstone in examining the emotional aspects of ethnicity. Other scholars have also acknowledged his work as exemplary. Given the simple

yet powerful explanatory quality of Spicer's oppositional approach, Scott states that "...it is surprising that this conceptualization has gone largely unnoticed in the literature on ethnicity..." (1990:157).

Spicer warns against cataloguing forms separately from their proper context, which is in meaningful relationship with human beings, and avers that one must view cultural artefacts in terms of the meaning they have for the people who use them. This conception runs counter to the many earlier definitions of ethnic identity, which ignore the cultural dimension--the fact that artefacts have meaning for their creators and users (Scott 1990:157).

Whereas Barth (1969) claimed that inter-group *interaction* was a factor in creating and maintaining identity, Spicer maintained that it was *inter-group opposition*. Although similar, these are two quite distinct processes as Scott points out:

Barth maintains that social interaction and acceptance are frequently the cornerstones on which ethnic distinctions are built and that cultural differences can persist *despite* inter-ethnic contact. Spicer, on the other hand, argues that these differences persist *because of* the inter-ethnic contact, especially if the contact is one of opposition (1990:158).

Of course Barth (1969) was referring to a particular setting and not generalising about the 'world at large', but his emphasis on interaction rather than opposition is obvious. Spicer describes a 'persistent identity system' as:

...a system of beliefs and sentiments concerning historical events...a cumulative cultural phenomenon, an open-ended system that defines a course of action for people believing in it. Such peoples maintain continuity in their experience and their conception of themselves in a wide variety of sociocultural environments. (1971:799).

Spicer uses the concept of the persistent identity system to refer to those ethnic groups that have demonstrated their ability to survive over long periods in different cultural settings. Several aspects of Spicer's persistent identity systems make his approach important. First, he departs from Kroeber's (1944) concept of systematic patterns when he posits a relationship between persons and their cultural artifacts and points out that the

essential characteristic of any identity system is "an individual's belief in his personal affiliation with certain symbols, or...with what the symbols stand for" (Spicer 1971:796). Second, Spicer's concept of history as meaningful for those who subscribe to it, in that Spicer views history "as people believe it to have taken place... history with a special meaning for the particular people who believe it..." (ibid.). Third, Spicer's persistent identity system explains individual motivation as that motivation to continue the identity system which stems from a people's cumulative image expressed in symbols meaningful to those who identify with a particular historical experience (Scott 1990:158).

All the persistent identity systems Spicer cites (e.g., the Jews, the Basques, the Irish, the Welsh, the Catalans, the Mayas, the Senecas, the Yaquis, the Navajos, the Cherokees) are the results of continued opposition, which has been maintained throughout each people's respective history, and in the face of attempts to incorporate or assimilate them into a larger dominant society. Conflict varies from open warfare to passive resistance but the one constant is firm opposition to incorporation. At the same time, however, this 'oppositional process' produces "...intense collective consciousness and a high degree of internal solidarity, accompanied by a motivation for individuals to continue the kind of experience that is 'stored' in the identity system in symbolic form" (1971:799).

Opposition therefore may take various forms--it may be economic, political, social, religious, or some combination of these forms, depending on which rights the group perceives it is being denied. Scott points out that Spicer's view of opposition is a "...healthy step towards viewing situations of ethnic-based interaction as they exist in reality" (1990:163). Moreover Scott, acknowledging Spicer's concept of ethnicity as accommodating change, goes a step further in stating that, "According to Spicer's theory, then, the degree of an ethnic group's identity will vary in direct proportion to the amount of opposition encountered by the group, the greater the opposition, the greater the degree of identity, and conversely, the lesser the amount of opposition, the lesser the degree of identity" (ibid.). That is to say that in the context of opposition, it is likely that the degree of resurgence, construction, reconstruction, deconstruction--or what I prefer to call the negotiation, of identity will fluctuate according to the degree of opposition. Similarly, exclusion of people from belonging also produces persistent identity systems--a history of persecution from exclusion is as powerful a force for persistent identity systems as attempts

to force assimilation or incorporation on people.

Following from Spicer's theory of 'opposition', De Vos (1982, 1990) perceives ethnicity as a source of considerable conflict. He sees ethnic identity as based on a self-awareness that is informed by a recognition of past affiliation, saying that this notion of self and ethnicity may come into conflict with present situations and that presumably these conflicts are resolved through some forms of manipulation. He states that, "All human behaviour, whatever the cultural context or social circumstances, derives from basic psychological mechanisms shared by us all. What differs with socialization experiences is the emphasis given, and the...balance maintained among mental mechanisms" (1990:243). His three main contentions in analysing ethnic individual/group behaviour are firstly, contrastiveness, secondly, a psychological and psychocultural level of analysis, and thirdly, a conflict approach to modern society in understanding change (ibid.). De Vos hereby comes down firmly in the primordialist part of the primordial-circumstantial controversy about ethnicity, but he supplies a sophisticated theory and method for dealing with the difficulties that have plagued the primordialists, and provides us with an alternative reading of the emotive content of ethnicity.

De Vos contends that ethnicity is a source of considerable conflict because ethnic groups do not stay put in fixed systems of stratification. Ethnic identity, when it persists in a group, pushes toward a separateness or competitive affirmation that can be used in readjusting systems of accommodative social stratification. Therefore, one must start from a theoretical position that conflict in some form is a 'normal' and 'healthy' condition of society (see also Spicer 1971, Scott 1990).

De Vos differs somewhat from Barth in seeing ethnic interactions not as boundaries but as 'emblems of contrast'. Barth symbolically suggests that ethnic boundaries are kept inside by certain symbolic processes; from De Vos' point of view, the attributes of ethnicity are more apt to be worn or practices for others to see (1990:212). With respect to the continuing controversy about the respective saliency of the rational and irrational components of ethnicity, De Vos believes that ethnic identity is composed of both. He states:

There are rational experiential usages of a political and economic nature that one

finds today in many ethnic groups. There is even the innovative, quickly mythologised creation of ethnicity in new social and political circumstances (Roosens 1989a)....On the other hand there are certain irrational features that can go counter to a group's immediate or ultimate best interests. It is precisely the fact that there is this tension between the rational and the irrational that creates internal conflict in many individuals as well as groups - part of the dilemma of continuity versus change... (ibid.).

The methodology outlined in De Vos's 1990 publication is extremely sophisticated and complex. It contains five main sets of ideas which are simplified and summarised here.

(i) *Incorporating both objective and experiential approaches to behaviour.* De Vos maintains that social science must use both objective and experiential approaches to behaviour. He maintains that the experiential self can and must be considered apart from the structuring of social roles in a society, and that human behaviour, however selectively observed, remains the result of continuous tension between experiences of self and one's social role expectations (ibid.:18). From an examination of the large body of materials on the self in culture, he summarises that ethnicity can be defined with reference to four levels of analysis: in respect to a social structural level (the social-ecological models of Durkheim, Marx, Weber, Mannheim), as a pattern of social interaction (Mead), as a subjective experience of identity (De Vos, Suarez-Orozco), and as expressed in relatively fixed patterns of behaviour and expressive emotional styles and how self and non-self (or in-group and out-group) operate to maintain social distinctions (Freud) (ibid.:210).

De Vos states that in cross-cultural studies it has been found that the analysis of the self in social interaction is a necessary intervening level of analysis between that concerned with social role interaction within a social structure on the one hand, and personality structure on the other. It is this third level of analysis, the subjective experience of identity which I am concerned with in this thesis.

(ii) *The focus on the psychological aspects of motivation ("rational" and "irrational" behaviour).* De Vos considers all social attitudes and concerns a reflection both of socialised motivation and socialised perception of interpersonal roles. In his Japanese study he found it possible to include almost every story taken from a stratified sample of 728

rural and urban Japanese within ten basic categories, each with a number of subcategories (De Vos 1973). The concerns placed in these categories are universal, found in one form or other in every culture. The content can differ, but human concerns with nurture, appreciation, harmony appear in every social group. Cultures differ as to how some concerns are emphasised, inter-related or blended with one another. They divide into concerns that are essentially expressive or emotional in nature, contrasting with instrumental or goal-oriented concerns (1990:35).

(iii) *Conflict defined in terms of allegiance and belonging.* De Vos defines conflict not only in terms of allegiance and belonging as related to the status system of the society (ibid.:218), but also to personal conflicts over priority of past, present and future-oriented forms of social self-identity. In the primary sense of belonging, there are orientations of a present-oriented general concept of citizenship and allegiance to state or a more specific occupational definition, a future-oriented transcendent/universalist/religious/political definition of self, and a past-oriented ethnic identity based on ancestry and origin.

(iv) *Factors characterising ethnic membership.* These are defined as ethnic and racial differences, territoriality and economic criteria, religion and ethnicity, ethnic customs and practices, language, and a *subjective sense of continuity* (ibid.:219-227).

(v) *Mechanisms for ethnic adaptation.* De Vos distinguishes these as 'coping' (introjection, projection, and denial (ibid.:61)), and 'passing' (to hide one's background as a cause for social stigma socially or psychologically, whether social class, ethnicity or race is the primary consideration (ibid.:254)).

De Vos states:

Underlying a diversity of individual responses to the complexities of living in a multiethnic environment are the operation of a limited number of psychological mechanisms that humans share as a common heritage. All human behavior, whatever the cultural context or social circumstances, derives from basic psychological mechanisms shared by us all. What differs with socialization experiences (culture), is the emphasis given, and the complex balance maintained

among mental mechanisms... (ibid.:242).

Seen from this perspective, the history of social life in any particular culture is a continual rhythm of conflict and accommodation of groups to one another, both externally and internally.

De Vos' theory as I incorporate it in this thesis is: firstly, that ethnicity is on a par with, perhaps even more important than, social class as a central topic of social theory; secondly, that a psychocultural approach to an understanding of social belonging is a necessary vantage point from which to consider social behaviour; and thirdly, that a conflict approach to a society, rather than one based on formal structure or functional integration, could be more productive to understanding change generally.

In Part Two of this thesis I use De Vos's concepts and methodology to explore NZ-born Samoan *personal* identity with the following caveats:

While I employ the points (i), (iii) and (iv) as outlined above, and take account of these factors in my subjective analysis of the identity experience, points (ii) and (v) require modification in my research context.

In organising my material, which included in depth individual/group interviews with members of my focus group, rather than using the restrictive categories employed by De Vos (viz. nurture, appreciation, harmony and so forth [thematic apperception testing], [p.33 & table p.38,39]), I used Samoan concepts of *maua*, *feagaiga*, *fa'aaloalo*, *fa'amaualalo*(*fa'amaualalo*), *fa'amaualuga/fiasili*, *ita*, *alofa*, *usita'i*, in the contexts of *fa'aSamoa*, 'āiga, church and the *matai* system, to categorise the narratives. This enabled me to *inclusively* classify all the narrative material in a more complex way, without discarding any of the narratives. Secondly, while De Vos' psychoanalytic mechanisms of 'coping' and 'passing' are crucial to understanding conflict in personal identity, I address these by undertaking a structuralist analysis of the identity journey in Chapter Six. The mechanisms of coping and passing are seen as a crucial part of the liminal period of the identity journey.

The increasing awareness in the social sciences of psychocultural questions concerning social self identity and a subjective sense of belonging or alienation as related to minority ethnicity has been accompanied by a revolution in the writing of history. The

previously defeated and presently oppressed have become literate and articulate, and the conflicts of past history have become more two-sided. More rarely have social scientists stopped to ask why ethnic enclaves persist, sometimes to their own continuing social or/and economic disadvantage. Yet it must be considered relevant to social theory to discover why certain peoples are insistent on maintaining their discrete sense of self with symbolic forms of cultural differentiation throughout a long period of history, despite a lack of political autonomy or the capacity to maintain particular territory (De Vos 1990:206, Spicer 1980). Although the question is valid, it involves psychological processes, and De Vos maintains that it needs a psychocultural approach to attempt an answer (1990:206). It is impossible to reconstruct how such processes may have operated in the past, but given abundant present opportunities to observe them firsthand, there is no excuse for neglecting the question of how and why ethnic identity functions as a continual source of group identity and political instability in complex stratified systems of nation states. I address these questions by considering the enduring ethnic identity of Samoans in New Zealand.

3

Ethnicity and the fa'aSamoa

Samoans are reputed to be culturally the most conservative of the Polynesians (Holmes 1974:93, Keesing 1934:477). Yet they have experienced considerable change both at home, and abroad as ethnic minorities in large modern capitalist states.

We know that innovative cultural differentiation has taken place, and this suggests that it is misleading to view the persistence of a Samoan identity among Samoan migrants simply as a consequence of this famous conservatism. While an ideology of conservatism characterises the *fa'aSamoa* in the islands and wherever Samoans may be, recent research indicates that this ideology does not prevent change when individuals and groups find it to their advantage to change (Macpherson 1991, 1996). So perhaps the function of Samoan conservatism is not so much to *prevent* change as to *preserve identity* in change. For anthropological research among Samoan communities abroad, this means that

representations of *fa'aSamoa* require examination in the context in which it has emerged rather than regarding it as an extension of this Samoan conservatism *per se* or as an imperfect replica of cultural traditions back in Samoa.

According to Shore, Samoan identity is embodied in their *aganu'u*, their *fa'aSamoa* (1982:222). But the *fa'aSamoa* itself is problematic. There are many perceptions of what *fa'aSamoa* is and means.

My concern here is with the tension between the rhetoric and the reality of Samoan identity--the *fa'aSamoa*, and how this is perceived by Samoan people. For heuristic purposes, a contrast can be made between what people are doing and what people value. The first is easy to document as we can see what people are doing, but this may not correspond to what people are thinking. Viewed heuristically, this is exemplified in two distinct views of what *fa'aSamoa* is, although this division is a matter of relative emphasis of particular aspects of *fa'aSamoa* in various contexts, and not a major divergence in definitions. The point here is that I am not setting up a dichotomous approach to the delineation of *fa'aSamoa* but highlighting the fact that defining the *fa'aSamoa* is problematic. It is therefore interesting to examine the relationship between what people say the *fa'aSamoa* is and the values which are embedded in it.

"*Fa'aSamoa* is what Samoan people do".

In Meleiseā's seminal work (1987b), the *fa'aSamoa* is described as a reaction to colonialism. *Fa'aSamoa* is analysed in terms of claims, reactions to Land Court decisions, the biting realism and pragmatism of the changes in the political economy of Samoa, and the effects on the traditional, and rational legal system (ibid.:208).

Meleiseā's analysis of what *fa'aSamoa* represents focusses not only on the material base of Samoan culture, but also outlines the dynamic relationship of this with the cultural, spiritual and philosophical base of the *fa'aSamoa*. So that although his analysis follows the Weberian/Marxist theoretical preoccupation with identity centring on land, the political and economic systems, and how these impact on the social structure (see also O'Meara 1990), Meleiseā also recognises the ambiguity of *fa'aSamoa* when he also analyses the social and structural changes by emphasising the complexity, diversity and multiplicity of *fa'aSamoa*.

Another Samoan scholar describes the *fa'aSamoa* as follows:

The *fa'alupega*...is the pivotal institution of things *fa'aSamoa*, under which comes a broad range of activities...*fa'alavelave* i.e. anything that interferes with normal life and calls for special activity; for example, *o le lau 'ava*, *o le si'i*, *o le lafo*, *o le sua*, *o le pasese*, *o le fa'aoso*, funeral feast, title bestowal ceremonies, weddings, church inaugurations etc....In practice 'the Samoan way' is 'the way Samoans behave'... (Tuimaleali'ifano 1992:5-6).

Fa'ataa states: "The *fa'asamoa* has grown to be a very expensive affair. The *fa'asamoa*...becomes more expensive and the burden is upon the people and the gap between the people widens [refers here to difference of *fa'aSamoa* in Western and American Samoa]" (1988:55).

Much of what is observable about these views of *fa'aSamoa* is that they are in the area of cultural practices, where everyday choices and impositions both represent Samoans to 'others' as well as themselves. Thus *fa'aSamoa* is what Samoan people 'do'.

These views can be said to highlight the circumstantialist approach to ethnicity (Linnekin & Poyer 1990:3) where ethnic attachments are seen as a function of historically variable social and political conditions. That is, ethnicity results from certain social circumstances, or structural conditions, which act directly to enhance ethnic group solidarity. Some researchers using this approach maintain that these circumstances lead to rational strategic selection of ethnic identity (Scott 1990), as a means of attaining desired political and economic, and other social goals (Lieber 1990, Pomponio 1990, Watson 1990).

"Fa'aSamoa is why Samoan people do what they do"

Other views of *fa'aSamoa* emphasise culturalist/interpretive views of *fa'aSamoa* which focus more on the worldview of Samoans. For example consider this definition by Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese, Samoa's third Prime Minister. After a brief description of what Samoans do, he states:

Fa'aSamoa is a body of custom and usage. It is a mental attitude to God, to fellow

men and to his surroundings. It is a distinctive life-style. It is not the physical make-up, the mood, or passion of one man. It is a collection of spiritual and cultural values that motivates people...It is the heritage of the people. *Fa'aSamoa* provides individuals, the '*āiga, nu'u*, with an identity and a place in the society with carefully defined, but unwritten roles and rules... (cited in Field 1984:20).

Senara, after commenting that *fa'aSamoa* is in danger of being lost, thereby recognising consequences of contact and conflict emphasises the values which are crucial to its persistence in defining *fa'aSamoa* as:

...abstract values which are important for our understanding of Samoan life....Respect and love...expressed in the duties of the *matai* caring for family and in the duties of the family members to look after their *matai*....Respect, especially of the elders...many other customs are based on this respect... (1987:122).

A multi-aspected identity

Foucault warns against privileging any one form of identity as inherently dominant through an insistence on an understanding of personal identity as constituted by a myriad of social relationships and practices in which the individual is engaged. These relationships may be contradictory or unstable, and therefore identity is fragmented, dynamic, always open to debate (McNay 1992:109).

Moreover, we are shaped by many vectors, and no one form of identity can adequately account for the complexity of an identity in which multiple countries, hegemonies, regions, religions and classes may come together.

This phenomenon can be compared to what Narayan refers to as a 'multiplex identity', where a person may have many strands of ethnic identification available, strands which may be "tugged into the open or stuffed out of sight" (1993:673), depending on the context of the situation; or Shore's description of Samoan identity as a 'multi-faceted' gem, where each face expresses a different aspect revealed in different cultural-political contexts (1982:141).

Especially significant is Shore's analysis of the Samoan concept of person (ibid.:136-149), in which he states that the Samoan concept of identity consists of an identification of particular sides or aspects of an individual, and a relative weighting of

those sides. This is echoed in Macpherson's call to investigate the causes of the changing orientation to the elements of Samoan ethnicity (1991:67-84).

Following from Shire, Narayan and Macpherson, I contend that the concept of a Samoan identity is one in which the individual's identity is multi-sided or aspected. Which side/aspect the individual decides to show or reveal will depend on the context of the particular situation: where place, ethnicity, age, status, gender and kinship relations will come into play. But in all cases, the focus is on context coupled with the emotional investment in the relationship(s).

This complexity is clarified by Tamasese, Peteru and Waldegrave in their study of Samoan perspectives on mental health and culturally appropriate services in New Zealand (*Ole Taeao Afua: The New Morning* 1997). The authors point out that the Samoan participants' (elder men and elder women) understandings of the Samoan self is that the "Samoan self is a relational person" (ibid.:28). They state:

Samoa's traditions and protocols explain the nature of the Samoan being as that of a relational being; that is, the Samoan self does not exist as an individual. There is myself and yourself. Through you, my being is contextually meaningful and whole. Through myself, you are given primacy in light of our collective identity and places of belonging (fa'asinomaga), our genealogical lineage (tupuaga), and our roles, responsibilities and heritage (tofiga) (ibid.).

The comments provided by the participants provided the *sense* of how the essence of the relational being exists in identity with others--from specific locations of belonging as in their villages, districts, and country; that they are born into genealogical continuums and that during their lifetimes they undertake positions and roles of responsibility. But this belonging and the undertaking of these positions and roles is not automatic. The emotional investment along with other considerations underpin this relational obligation and understanding of the relational self. The underlying ideology is the maintenance of *vā fealoaloa'i* (the relationships of mutual respect in socio-political and spiritual arrangements) and *vā tapuia* (the sacred relationships in the socio-political and spiritual arrangements) (ibid.:29). The authors conclude then that the Samoan self, that is the *vā fealoaloa'i* and *vā tapuia*, is legitimised by identity and belonging, genealogy, and roles, responsibilities and heritage (ibid.).

The *fa'aSamoa* has always given prominence to the spiritual forms in which Samoan people worshipped their gods. *Tapu'āiga* (the forms of spiritual worship) therefore, at the time of missionary arrival (from early to the mid-nineteenth century on), was already a long standing custom within the principal social and political institutions of Samoan life. In the next chapter where the historical record of the Samoanising of christianity is examined, we will see how introduced western christian and secular influences have affected *fa'aSamoa*, and in Part Two and Chapter Seven, we will examine in detail the effects *fa'aSamoa* has had on my focus group--the 'younger' generation of Samoans born in New Zealand. We will explore their understandings of the *fa'aSamoa* and the Samoan relational self and examine their understandings of the *vā fealoa'oa'i* and *vā tapuia*.

4

Ethnicity and NZ-born Samoans of the ESG, Newton Church

It is timely here to consider the possibility of a distinctive NZ-born Samoan ethnicity and the possibility that NZ-born Samoans constitute a separate ethnic group. How much difference between two groups--in this case Samoans born in Samoa and NZ-born Samoans--does there have to be for the latter to be designated as a separate ethnic group? Or, do Samoans make up more than one ethnic group? On the surface this would be determined by whether the NZ-borns "felt" they did *not* by a simple listing of traits. But it is much more complex than this.

In order to consider this question we need to firstly explore the relationship between ethnic identity and other forms of identity, particularly those that potentially undermine ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is one of the many identities available to people. It is developed, displayed, manipulated, or ignored in accordance with the demands of particular situations. At the same time, however, it is the maintenance of consistent behaviour as a member of a group and as an individual that allows people to cope with these multiple identities. That is, people have many different forms of identities available to them--ethnic, class, gender, post-colonial, neo-colonial--and these can be analysed through

various avenues. Omitting detailed analyses of these forms of other identities systematically was a deliberate choice dictated largely by the limitations of time and space. Moreover, as stated earlier, I have focussed on ethnic identity in particular as it may form one of the strongest identities although existing in competition or in complementarity with other identities (Eng 1995:10). Epstein refers to ethnic identity as a "terminal identity" as it "embraces and integrates a whole series of statuses, roles, and lesser identities" (Epstein 1978:101), and I have put forward the argument (in Chapter One) that ethnic identity is personal with emotional long-lasting attachments experienced in the economic, spiritual, historic symbols that one is exposed to during a lifetime, and must be kept separate from the statuses and identities which may be transient and not emotionally-binding but a mere fact of life. Another way of saying this is that an ethnic identity must be one that you must live with, especially when it is marked by skin colour thus making some people more visible. This study bears this observation out in that, for some members of the ESG, it is the ethnic identity option which is pivotal, especially for members with secured identities (see Part Two). Chapters Three, Five and Seven contain some of the larger institutional contexts that affect ethnic behaviour. Contexts such as capitalism and (im)migration affect the experience of ethnic identity at a level beyond the control of the individual. In Chapters Four and Six ethnicity is considered primarily from the individual point of view by examining its role in motivation, the construction of symbols and coping mechanisms and strategies.

Studies of ethnic groups have tended to consider them in isolation from the institutions and populations of the broader society, and consequently to focus inwardly on "ethnic culture" rather than outward on social and economic environment (di Leonardo 1984:11). To overcome this, rather than assuming an homogenous NZ-born Samoan ethnic (sub-)culture, I assume ethnic variety and incorporate circumstantial factors to attempt to understand it. I therefore use the following methodological strategies to do this. First, rather than considering a generic group of NZ-borns, I chose a specific group (ESG) who fortuitously represented a group of NZ-born Samoan households whose economic statuses ranged widely (see appendix 8). Secondly, I explicitly considered the meaning and reality of kinship, economy and gender for members of this group (Chapters Four and Five). Thirdly, I attempt to bridge the gap between the present and past through seeing individuals

in terms of their life histories and experiences, and through placing those histories and experiences in the contexts of broader regional, national and global economic-historic change. Finally, as well as considering individual ethnic identities (Chapters Four and Five), I also examine the construction of a group identity (Chapter Seven). These new approaches (see also di Leonardo 1984) allow me to consider the varieties of ethnic experience and to explore the interrelations among ethnicity, economy, kinship and gender, and to assess their changing relationship over time. In doing so, I reconsider the current models of ethnic mobility, offer new perspectives on ethnic family and kinship, and re-evaluate ethnic gender.

Summary

In this Chapter I have surveyed current academic discourses on culture and ethnicity and highlighted the work of Spicer, Epstein and De Vos and their focus on the emotional, subjective experience of ethnic identity. I have also explored Samoan theories of ethnicity and the *fa'aSamoa*.

The main findings are these: Firstly, rather than describing Samoans born in New Zealand as an 'ethnic group' and NZ-borns as another ethnic (sub-)group or (sub-)culture (see also Chapter Seven), I maintain that it is preferable to consider Samoans in New Zealand as 'enduring peoples' following from Spicer (1971) and the *fa'aSamoa* in the New Zealand context as a persistent identity system (ibid.). In doing this I am suggesting that it is possible to incorporate both the reality of changing traits with the concept that NZ borns are a continuation of Samoans as a "people" based not only on their identification with a set of values associated with a persistent identity system, but also on their shared experiences as a specific group defined by a specific time and place. We know that the genetic constitution, 'homeland', language, customs and beliefs change through time, but so long as the common understandings of what has been experienced in relations with other peoples are known and felt, the *fa'aSamoa* will persist for those not born in Samoa but beyond. If viewed as a persistent identity system, the membership of a group will fluctuate as the costs exceed those that particular members will accept.

As Part Two will show the opting in and out of the persistent identity system is a

result of fluctuating circumstances and experiences not only of the *fa'a Samoa* but also of racism in New Zealand experienced during the identity journeys of a group of NZ-borns. The thing that survives is the system itself, and this system must maintain minimal membership. At present we are assured of this membership as Samoa as a homeland and Samoans as its people still exist. It follows then that even if by some freak accident the islands of Samoa were somehow obliterated the Samoan persistent identity system would still exist in the minds and memories of its people and would therefore continue as it does with the Samoan diaspora--in the context of this study, island-born Samoans and those NZ-borns with secured identities. Samoans as 'enduring peoples' may lose many members over space and time, but as long as the core endures to preserve continuity the people remains. Moreover, what this study shows is that for NZ-born Samoans, a NZ-born Samoan persistent identity system with its own shared experiences has emerged.

I am thus assuming that the kind of ethnicity this redefinition produces is a dynamic interaction of both primordial and circumstantial views of ethnicity--primordial not in the 'strict' sense of Geertz (1963), Gordon (1978) or van den Berghe (1981), but in my re-evaluation of the notion of primordialism in revisiting the emotional content of ethnicity (Epstein 1978) in contexts of opposition and conflict (Spicer 1979, de Vos 1982, 1995), and circumstantial not in the strict sense of historical materialist and Marxist analyses (Thompson 1989) but in and of the sense that this primordialism is always triggered as a result of an actual event or experience of some social, economic or structural aspect of the environment. Thus in this sense ethnicity is contextual--there are many varieties of ethnic experience, and NZ-born Samoans are continuously involved in the renegotiation and construction of social roles and identities--but what remains at its core is the persistent identity system. In essence then, what NZ-born Samoan ethnicity is concerns an accumulation of identity journey experiences of the Samoan persistent identity system in New Zealand which take into account both individual and inter and intra-group dynamics.

Secondly, when considering the relationship of NZ-born Samoans to aspects of the nationality of their place of birth, from this study, it can be asserted that assimilation and multiculturalism (as defined by Rex 1997:279) may not be the ultimate goal for Samoan migrants and their NZ-born children and grandchildren. NZ-borns during their identity journeys do take on different identities and may "assimilate" at different times in their lives,

but on maturity and on having children of their own, regardless of the ethnicity of their spouses, they will assert their Samoan ethnicity in various ways (see Part Two). Rather, the kind of ethnicity being exerted here may not be primarily concerned with the project of nationalism (Rex 1997:280), but with the maintenance of a transnational community, or a version of Saffran's 'diaspora'(1991)-- in which cultural, social and economic advantages can be pursued by Samoan people across time and space. This study shows that NZ-born Samoans may and do have both multiple affiliations and national ones related to their place of birth, education, and socialisation experiences etc. and an ethnic identity based on the Samoan persistent identity system in New Zealand. The relevance of these national and ethnic identities will vary with circumstance and are not mutually exclusive but rather choices that are made during the identity journeys of NZ-born Samoans.

My reformulations of ethnicity remain tentative, and are offered in the belief, following from Comaroff in parodying Lévi Strauss, that "ethnicity is good to rethink" (1992:66).

In the next Chapter, "Christianity, church, identities: LMS in the Pacific", I hope to complete and consolidate the "Settings" (Part One) which will provide the platform with which to examine in detail the identity journeys of a particular group of NZ-born Samoans-- the RSG of Newton Church (Part Two). More specifically Part Two will show how experiences of *fa'aSamoa* and "church" impact on inter and intra-ethnic interaction for NZ-born Samoans.

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIANITY, CHURCH, IDENTITIES

I now focus on the persistence of identity over time and space. But rather than converge on the continuity of cultural traits *per se*, we need to concentrate on the continuity of 'a people', and what it is that makes 'a people' identify themselves in certain ways. I contend that important insights can be gained from a consideration of the cumulative cultural and historical experiences as a vital part of this process. Therefore the historical context is of paramount importance.

To do this we must examine the specific devices, strategies and mechanisms of cultural reproduction, and the relationship of these to the economic, historical and socio-cultural environment that a people uses to preserve and transmit its cultural identity. This chapter begins with an overview of christianity in Samoa but with a specific focus on the New Zealand situation. In particular, it provides the historical context in examining the dialectic of culture and christianity, *fa'aSamoa* and church by tracing the development of the 'Samoanised' Congregational Church introduced by London Missionary Society missionaries to Samoa in Part A, and its transformation in the New Zealand context in Part B. The latter section considers the global migration of 'Pacific Islanders', viz., Samoans to New Zealand and traces the transformation of the Samoan *Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EFKS)* to Newton Church, on which much of the Pacific Islanders' Congregational Church's (PIC) structure and operations are based. Part A and Part B consist of chronological accounts of the development of christianity and the church in their specific contexts, however both parts end in thematic summaries. In doing so I show how the important role of religion and the church, both in Samoa and New Zealand in the social organisation of Samoans, has largely been influenced by a persistent Samoan identity system despite the restricted participation of Samoa in the global community, and Samoans in New Zealand society.

In this Chapter, at times in my analysis and in the stories of ESG members and others in Chapters 4 and 5, the reader may gain the impression that Newton Church is a Samoan church. This is because of the dominance of the pervasive Samoan influences during the pioneering 36-year ministry of the Rev. Leuatea Siu (see Plate VI), the

relatively larger size of the Samoan group and therefore their larger financial contributions, and the Samoan bias emanating from Combined Session decisions in the hierarchy of the Church structure. This Samoan dominance is also reflected in the make-up of the ESG whose members are mostly NZ-born Samoans. Despite Newton Church's actual *ekālelā* (church community) consisting of Samoans, Cook Islanders, Niueans, Tokelauans and Tuvaluans (and a few *pālagi* and Maori spouses), and the acknowledgement that it is this multicultural make-up which makes Newton Church unique, many members, elders, ministers and Samoan people still perceive Newton as being Samoan because of the Samoan dominance outlined above, and speak of Newton Church and the ESG in these terms. My intent is not to diminish the status and importance of the other ethnic groups, but to accentuate the strong Samoan presence and influence in the make-up, structure and dynamism of Newton Church.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY (LMS) IN THE PACIFIC

Some anthropologists and others have justly accused some missionaries of attempting to sweep away as rapidly as possible all vestiges of traditional cultures in the name of christianity and progress, yet changes rarely if ever occurred as quickly or completely as the missionaries would have liked or intended.

Much of the earlier anthropology was devoted to attempts to reconstruct or document traditional life-ways in non-western societies (Firth 1936, Krämer 1902, Malinowski 1922); in recent decades anthropologists have devoted more time to determining ways in which cultures have changed as a result of prolonged contact with Europeans. Thus early missionary accounts have provided starting points from which anthropologists have been able to trace subsequent change.

Throughout, a kind of basic antagonism has characterised the historical and even contemporary relationship between anthropologists (and historians) and their accounts of nineteenth-century missionaries in the Pacific (Phillipson 1992:1-2). In his study of the history of Anglican influences in New Zealand, Phillipson regards the stereotype of missionaries as blindly ethnocentric --a monolithic force whose sole intention was to destroy all social and cultural values of indigenous peoples--as resulting in the practice of

'missionary bashing', and largely attributable to Gunson's work in the 1950s on LMS missionaries in the Pacific (see his 1976 publication), and Binney's *Legacy of Guilt: a life of Thomas Kendall* (1968). Quite apart from the considerable diversity in policy and strategies employed by missionaries in different denominations at different times and in different places, generalisations such as these, do little to help us understand how missionisation was experienced and articulated by Pacific Islands people.

Dureau states:

Gunson (1978), Jolly (1991), Langmore (1974; 1989a), Latukefu (1978), Thomas (1992a) and others have analysed "missionary lives" from various perspectives as part of the study of colonial culture....To varying degrees, they represent missionaries as people who acted in ways that were logical and appropriate to their own class and cultural milieu (1994:18).

Still, Dureau points out that missionaries "were nonetheless assertively engaged in a project of undermining the cultural milieux of their flocks and in establishing an authoritarian theocracy. Power and sacrifice can hardly be separated in acknowledging the missionary presence" (ibid.). Barker states:

First, the study of missionaries is anachronistic in many parts of Melanesia where most foreign clergy have long departed....Second, those who focus upon the missionary tend to think of religious change in dualistic terms: missionaries versus natives, Christianity versus Melanesian religion, Western versus traditional culture, and so forth...(1992:148).

Barker goes on to say that this dualism then provides explicit arguments for denying a Melanesian-supported christianity by portraying christianity as irreconcilable with authentic indigenous religious beliefs, and thus allows ethnographers to dismiss christianity as not authentically Melanesian, while buttressing the essentialised notion of indigenous religion (ibid.:149). One reason for this is that christianity was generally not regarded as a relevant subject for anthropological inquiry (White 1996:161).

Besnier (1994) points out that only a handful of anthropological works on christianities have focused on religion as an everyday social practice (Kulick 1992, Thune 1990, Watson-Gegeo & Gegeo 1991, White 1991), and Barker (1992) demonstrates that most anthropological writing about western Melanesia presents christianity as somehow

'inauthentic', and thus distances it from the practice of everyday life (Besnier 1994:339).

As a result of this neglect, little is known about such topics as how religious institutions affect the day-to-day running of society, the relationship between church and culture, christianity and tradition, but more importantly the implications of these for the negotiation of identity for present day Pacific Islands people. A major contribution to this area of scholarship is Goldsmith's work on church and society in Tuvalu (1989) in which he analyses the ideological connections between indigenous communalism and the western notion of consensus evident in social science, official descriptions and missionary accounts. Much scarcer are works which examine the role of the everyday practice of religion in the formulation of identity for Pacific Islands people. (A significant contribution in this regard is Dureau's doctoral thesis (1994) which examines the significance of conversion to christianity and subsequent christian practice, in shaping social and cultural issues in the 1990s for women in Samoa).

For many contemporary Pacific peoples, christianity and 'tradition' are so intermingled that in some areas they have become indistinguishable.

...scholars working on these questions have demonstrated that Christian ideology, under its many guises, has penetrated many aspects of social life in Pacific Societies....As a result, many social formations and cultural processes in the Pacific cannot be successfully understood without reference to the Christian context in which they are embedded, and, in turn, Christianity in the region can only be studied in tandem with society and culture (Besnier 1994:339).

Therefore, before we can understand contemporary christian Pacific Island communities, in the islands and abroad, we need to look at the historical context in which these communities developed, and how the missionary influence was experienced and articulated by Pacific Island people themselves. Specifically, I look at how the LMS came to Polynesia, its consolidation in Samoa, the development of the Ekalesia Pa 'apopotoga Kerisiano Samoa (EPKS), and its influence in the emergence of the PIC, Newton. In doing so I hope to show that christianity has come to occupy a central place in Samoan thought and practice, and that Samoans have transformed an imposed ideology into meaningful practice; christianity is a point of universal reference and meaning, a dominant local idiom and a source of personal comfort. It is not appropriation or transformation of colonising

influences per se, but more their incorporation to perpetuate indigenous concepts of *'āga*, *matai*, *fa'alupega* (genealogy) systems and associated notions of *alofo*, *tautua*, *jā'aaloalo*, *usita'i* (obedience) and *feagaiga* embodied in the *fa'aSamoa*.

PART A: THE SĀMOAN CONTEXT

1

LMS in Samoa

Fuelled by the descriptions of the South Pacific by Captain James Cook, and the possibility of heathen converts, the LMS established the first mission to the South Seas in 1795 (Gunson 1976:12), and 35 years later, it was the Rev. John Williams who became the pioneer missionary for the LMS in Samoa (Meleiseā 1987b). The LMS made rapid progress despite competition for converts by the Lotu Toga (Wesleyan/Methodist church), and Lotu Pope (Roman Catholic church), and quickly became the dominant religious force in most areas of Samoa (Crawford 1977, Gilson 1970, Goodall 1954, Gunson 1976).

Irrespective of the underlying political motives of British and French missionary involvement (Meleiseā 1987b:52-67), christianity impacted markedly on the religious beliefs of Samoans, resulting in almost total conversion. The record tells us that conversion to christianity began in 1828 with the arrival of the Lotu Toga, with the LMS being established by 1830, and the Lotu Pope by 1845 (Pitt & Macpherson 1974:50). Goldsmith states:

Two factors stand out....First, most commentators have argued that by the mid-nineteenth century the LMS had become a largely Congregationalist body in terms of its support, the leanings of its missionary personnel, and the rhetoric, if not the substance, of its policies....Second, it was this body that claimed the adherence of about 75 % of Samoans...(1989:176).

The LMS was decidedly Congregationalist, anti-Church of England, drawing on the Calvinist tradition, and was founded in a covenant relationship with God, giving absolute obedience to none but the sovereign spirit (Comaroff 1991). The autonomy of these

"Independents encouraged self-reliance, and was well suited to the isolation and uncertainties of the mission frontier" (ibid.). Little did South Pacific LMS missionaries realise that it was their insistence on acting on these principles and their focus on Calvinist independence that allowed 'the natives' to indigenise western christianity, especially in the Western Samoan case. Given the dogmatic pursuit of Samoan conservatism in trying to retain traditional values and systems in the face of this new order, "LMS Calvinist Independency and Samoan society seemed to have been predestined as partners" (Garrett 1982:121).

To the missionaries, the assimilation of christianity into Samoan cultural life was a significant first step into a larger world system. But on closer examination of seminal works by Garrett, Gilson and Gunson, supplemented by indigenous accounts of the church in Samoa (Fa'ataa 1988, Meleiseā 1987b, Nokise 1982, Senara 1987, Sem 1988), although drawing from the same primary source material, a clearer picture of what was actually going on emerges.

When the LMS arrived in Samoa in 1830 the people had already heard about the new God *Iehova* (Jehovah). Meleiseā tells us that the coming of a new religion had been foretold by the legend of Nāfānuā, a war goddess who prophesied that a new religion would come and end the rule of the old gods (1987b:52). Meleiseā states that according to oral traditions, Nāfānuā successfully fought a war *A'ea i Sasae ma le A'en i Sisiifo* (Conquest of the Hills to the East and West), after which she had complete political control of Samoa. She gave the *mālō* (governance) to the district of A'ana and its allies. When Mālietoa Fitiseanu arrived at Faleālupe to ask her for a share of the *mālō*, Nāfānuā told him that he would have to wait for his turn, and that it would eventually come from heaven (see also Meleiseā ibid.:57).

Coxon states that "When John Williams...arrived in Samoa...he followed the missionary strategy of seeking the sponsorship of a powerful chief" (1996:122). This chief was Mālietoa Valūupo, one of Mālietoa Fitiseanu's successors, who soon after conversion, established claim to the four *pāpā* (high titles and dignities), and became the *tafa'ifa* (holder of four titles which give full royal status).

...under his patronage missionisation proceeded rapidly throughout the 1830s and

thereafter. When he was dying in 1841, Mālietoa...being fearful...of politically motivated wars after his death, broke up the *tafa'ifa* by dispersing the constituent titles between chiefs from both the major alignments, thereby becoming the last of the *tupu* [Meleiseā 1987b:74] (ibid.)

Christianity (viz., LMS) was thus introduced to Samoa via one of Samoa's most powerful-ever chiefs.

Meleiseā states: "Before a village became Christian the subject was debated by the *Fono*...When a village decided to become Christian they built a church and a house for a teacher or pastor, and began to contribute to the church by supporting the pastor with food and services..." (ibid.:54). He points out how chiefly competition for access to the new religion, probably with the hope of controlling and benefiting from it, introduced sectarian rivalry into Samoa from the earliest years of the church (1987:13).

However, although it was common for groups of Samoans to become Christian, each group did not necessarily join the same church sometimes resulting in two, three or more denominations within the one village. The presence by 1845 of the three denominations of christianity--LMS, Methodism and Catholicism--provided a new opportunity for the expression of the rivalries endemic at all levels of Samoan society. Both the ferocity of denominational competition, and yet also an indifference to the doctrinal issues which so harried the missionaries, may be explained largely in these terms. It was suggested that from the beginning, the function of the new religion was similar to that of the old, namely as a means of gaining access to *mana* or supernatural power, which could overpower enemies, influence the whole range of cultural activity and ward off ill-fortune and calamity.

It was clear that a fully developed movement by Samoans towards Samoan control took place. This movement, which included the firm establishment of the pastors in the villages, the conversion of the office of church minister into another 'sacred chief' (Meleiseā 1987b), and a moulding of the practices and doctrines of christianity to traditional values and beliefs, was to prove permanent, and a conservative influence in Samoan village life. But this conservatism was not a blind refusal to accept change, rather it was a determination to subdue new influences, ideas and technology and place them firmly at the disposal of the maintenance of the integrity of Samoan social identity or the

fa'a Samoa. In other words the major function of Samoan conservatism was and still is to a large extent not so much to prevent innovation as to preserve identity and political autonomy in change (Rolff 1978:235).

2

The historical record of the 'Samoanising of christianity'

Indigenous accounts (as well as some *papālagi* accounts, viz. Gilson 1970 and Gunson 1976) of the coming of christianity to Samoa, all emphasise the proactive stance that Samoans took, contrary to many earlier *papālagi* accounts which portray Samoans as passive receptacles for the new christianity.

Setu states: "...the missionaries won the confidence of the people and set to work amongst the group of converts within a village which was accepted as the basic unit for purposes of religious instruction, not because the missionaries wanted it that way but because the Samoans did" (1988:56). He describes the difficulties that Williams' Tahitian teachers had with the Samoans who resented them and regarded them as equals rather than their superiors, even inferiors at times: "The Tahitian teachers were generally referred to as *sama failotu*, literally meaning leaders or conductors of worship...in contrast to Williams' term 'teacher' of the word or religion....the teachers were seen [rather] as 'agents' of the new lotu" (ibid.:44).

It was not long before Samoans themselves wanted to take on what their Tahitian and Cook Island predecessors had tentatively begun. Gunson (1976) cites numerous instances of Samoans taking control of the situation to enforce their will on the *papālagi* missionaries, Tahitian and Cook Island teachers, and the people whom Samoan pastors/teachers missionised (for a detailed account of these and references see Appendix 3).

Gunson particularly notes Samoan teachers' "attitude of superiority over the peoples to whom they ministered" and states that "...this was true of the Samoans in all the lands they went" (Gunson 1976:321). These characterisations are also substantiated by indigenous accounts of the Samoan missionising process in other islands of the Pacific. Nokise's research of the work of Samoan missionaries is particularly critical of this process

claiming that the "'Samoa' Gospel has damaged other cultures" (1989:22). He concludes that the Samoan missionaries taught a heavily 'Samoanised' version of the Gospel (especially in Niue and Tuvalu). The missionaries he claims imposed language, culture, patterns of worship and liturgy, and the attitude of deference they were accustomed to from their people, and describes this as "spiritual imperialism", ruling the extent to which the Samoans have Samoanised Christianity so that there is little Christianity in it (ibid.). Nokise concludes by stating that "Pacific Islanders have been spoon-fed about God. They have had little chance to think about God for themselves. The communal acceptance of God leaves the individual out. Only ministers have been able to relate to God individually..." (ibid.). Indeed other scholars have recognised and analysed this factor--the sacred status of 'sacred chief' being replaced by modern pastors/*fale'au* as one of the main elements which has added to the social cohesion of Samoans (see also Schoeffel 1995).

The most important factor in the indigenisation process, and perhaps the most striking example of Samoans exerting their autonomy over the *papālagi* missionaries was the Tutuila teachers strike in 1851. This event more than any other showed how Samoan teachers exerted their independence of missionaries not only to enhance their own position, but also to establish their own autonomy as the 'new' teachers of christianity. The basis for the strike were two demands: that the Samoan teachers be given free books and clothing, and that "[*papālagi*] missionaries' salaries would be financed by British donors and that all local contributions would be paid out to the trained Samoan teachers" (Gilson 1970:129). If these demands were not met they would resign *en masse*. Although the principal ringleaders were dismissed, within two years their demands were met (Gilson 1970:128-37, Gunson 1978:311-12).

By 1875 all Samoan teachers were ordained and permitted to exercise full pastoral powers (Gilson 1970:135). In the same year the superintendence of church members' candidate classes was turned over to the Samoan pastors and were no longer in the hands of the missionaries. In a report published by the 1888 Deputation sent to Samoa by the LMS Directors, the following was reported concerning the Samoan church:

A Samoan pastor is called to a village by the local church members in conjunction with the chiefs, and the missionary cannot veto their choice. Pastors of the subdivided church districts (known as *pulega*) meet monthly and discuss questions

affecting their churches and seek advice from one another. The Fono Tele or General Assembly of the Samoan Church was instituted in 1875. The form of church government observed in Samoa is Presbyterian rather than Congregational, with a semblance of Episcopacy in the relation of the British missionary to the native churches (Lovett 1899:400-401, see also Gilson 1970:91).

The Fono Tele began originally as a consultative organisation and gradually assumed directive status. For its first 18 years, "

...it was composed of pastors only (i.e. Samoan pastors), drawn together annually from all Samoa for consultation with the missionaries. In 1893, it was strengthened by the addition of lay representatives of the churches....The most important stage in the development of its authority was in 1898, when responsibility for ordination was transferred from the local churches to this annual central assembly (Gilson 1970:91).

The first seventy years of christianity in Samoa presented a history of what the Samoan people see as their movement from "the days of darkness into the marvellous light" (Sew 1988:112). Samoans accepted new changes voluntarily and made revolutionary changes to their social structure and religious institutions. Sew states that, "These changes were scrutinised in village *fono*...changes initiated from within, as was shown clearly when the people killed and ate their *aitu*" (ibid.). Gunson states: "The real process of cultural adjustment or religious revolution, arising out of the European contact situation, was initiated and carried out by the Samoans themselves" (cited ibid.:113).

The Samoanising of christianity was consolidated by the turn of the century. It was further strengthened in 1906 with the establishment of the *'au toea'ina* (advisory council) system by the Fono Tele (Goodall 1954:367-368).

By 1918 the churches were largely self-sustaining, meeting costs for upkeep of the churches and schools, and paying pastors' salaries. But the management of all the church's institutions remained the prerogative of the missionaries alone. However after the *Mau* (a nationalistic movement having its roots in precontact times and exploding in the *Mau* movement's revolt against foreign influence and control in 1929--[see Meleiseā 1987, Field 1984, Wendt 1965]), the Samoans pressed for more autonomy in the running of the churches (Senam 1987:86). Wendt states:

Christianity had been successfully absorbed into the Samoan system. For instance the pastor was accorded a social and political position in accordance with custom and tradition. Even methods of collecting and distributing church funds were adapted to the *fa'aSamoa*. Instead of praying to 'gods', prayers were now to one God. But here ended the difference between the old and the new. The Old Testament was favoured because it was more in harmony with the Samoan past than the New Testament. Christian concepts of political and social equality were either conveniently forgotten or ignored. By the 1920s, therefore, Christianity - much to the horror of missionaries - had been 'samoanised' successfully. And Christianity had become a positive force in strengthening traditional Samoan conservatism (1965:14).

The Samoan pastors had tremendous prestige and were well taken care of by their respective congregations, but,

...the influence of the pastors was not confined to the affairs of the church. They took great pride in their superior education; and many of them made sure that their children, in turn, should share their advantages. From pastors' families came not only future pastors and school-teachers but government clerks and secretaries and the wives of many important chiefs. The church added an aristocracy of education to the Samoan social structure... (Davidson 1967:37).

The Samoans developed a ministry that best suited their needs, despite the aims of the missionaries. As Davidson noted: "the authority of the *faiife'au* over his congregation as of the *matai* over his household became central to the Samoan conception of religion" (1967:34). The ordering of village congregations closely followed the patterns of village administration. The *fono* and *matai* presided over matters affecting the whole community by a process of "debate, negotiation and compromise, in which the paramount chief of each *nu'u* (village)...was but one voice....In the same way, the *faiife'au* surrounded by his influential lay deacons....when there were arguments...would be but one voice in the achievement of consensus" (Meleiseä 1987:13). The office of *faiife'au* thus became firmly rooted in the *fa'aSamoa*. Setu states:

The *faiife'au*...is a creation of the Samoans to meet the needs of the Gospel in the *fa'aSamoa*. He has become a chief in order to have access to all people in society, although in essence he is still a servant of God....Whatever titles culture has bestowed upon the *faiife'au*, they are intended to remind him that he is a servant of both God and man (1988:116).

At the same time, the institution of *faiʻeʻau* replaced the ideological justification for attributing great powers to a few great chiefs and redefined chiefly power as a secular political authority, reducing the crucial distinction between *aliʻi* [sacred chief] and *tulāʻale* [orator/political chief], which became more ceremonial than actual" (Meleisā 1987b:14). In an effort to bring about some separation of church and state and the local congregations and independence from the influence of the *matai*, it was decided that pastors could not simultaneously hold *matai* titles. Additionally, pastors were permitted to serve only in villages in which they had no 'āiga connections (see Goodall 1954:366 and Gilson 1970:27,101 for reasons which lie behind these developments).

By 1934, the gradual Samoanising of christianity within the LMS denomination was complete, and is represented by the present structure of the EFKS. At the Fono Tele of May 1961, the name was changed officially to the Congregational Christian Church in Samoa (CCCS), known also as the Ekalesia Fa'apopotoga Kerisiano i Samoa (EFKS). LMS missionaries had not been in attendance at the *Fono Tele* in some years, and the Society was duly notified of the change by the CCCS (The Constitution of the CCCS 1962:1). Each village had its own church, headed by the *faiʻeʻau* and controlled by a *fono* of *matai* who were the elected deacons. A group of villages formed a *pulega* (LMS unit of church administration), three or four of which together formed a *matagāuega* (district). The *pulega* was controlled by a council called a *tofiga* (professional group), consisting of the pastors and deacons, while the district had a representative body called the *tofiga tele*. At present there are fourteen districts (five in Upolu, two in Savai'i, one representing Tutuila and Manua, one each in Tokelau, Australia and USA, and three in New Zealand), each sending pastors and deacons to a Fono Tele, which meets annually at Malua. Each section of the organisation has its prescribed functions, the local organisations "thinning out and amending" the business brought before the national body. As outlined, special honour attaches to an office known as *toea'ina*, there being one *toea'ina* pastor to each *pulega*, and one *toea'ina*-deacon to each district; these individuals are prominent older people and sit in the Fono Tele.

The 160-year history of the LMS in Samoa has been one of a gradual and increasing shift from English mission station to Samoan church. First, because the specific policy of

LMS turned over an increasing share of administration and support of local churches to the people. Second, because there were always too few resident English missionaries for the population and thus early and heavy reliance on native agents, at the village level the LMS mission church has always been predominantly in the hands of the Samoans (Roach 1984:94). From indigenous accounts, however, I contend that these elements were secondary to the overpowering force of the influences of *fa'aSamoa* in that Samoan people, through *matai*, aggressively sought ownership of the English mission and the new religion (see also Senara 1987, Fa'ataa 1988).

From a review of the literature it is evident that two over-simplified pictures of the contact between European christianity and its impact on Western Samoa emerges. Missionaries on the one hand were not the agents of catastrophic change which devastated traditional patterns, a popular and generalised anthropological critique, and on the other hand, neither were they the enlightened artisans of a beneficial influence which swept before it the 'dross of superstition' and wrought a glorious change in the interests of the gospel which was the message in 19th century missionary publications (Comaroff 1991).

Both overestimate the extent of missionary influence and underestimate the resilience of indigenous culture in its ability to incorporate the beliefs, practices and values of *papālagi* missionaries and ideologies into its traditional patterns. As Meleiseū writes.

Although there is evidence that Christianity 'revolutionised' Samoan culture during the mid-nineteenth century, these changes were absorbed and Samoanised.... In this way, over the past one hundred and fifty years of Christian Samoan history, Christian and *papālagi* customs and institutions have been made distinctively Samoan (1987a:69).

3

Fa'aSamoa and Christianity: a new orientation towards existence

A new orientation to the world was provided by christianity as communicated to the Samoans by Nāfauua (Meleiseū 1987b:52) and the *papālagi* LMS missionaries. The *papālagi* were always on guard against Samoan traditional religious practices and outlawed them. Moreover, there were determined efforts on the part of *papālagi* to bring Samoans increasingly under the influence of the christian religion. This was accomplished in part by

acquainting Samoans with the Bible. It possessed great influence as a source of supernatural knowledge because it was a sacred book. I do not intend to give the impression that Samoans completely assimilated the moral idealism of christianity or even understood the language of the Bible. Selected parts of the Bible such as the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments were used continuously by ministers for religious instruction. Samoans became familiar with the well-known biblical characters and their role in the drama of salvation as it was presented to them. Through the preachings of the *faiife'au* the stories in the Bible were dramatised and many characters and incidents were interpreted in terms of Samoan experiences. The Bible was the means by which Samoans acquired a new theology. Samoans were taught that the God of the Bible was the ruler of the universe and superior to all other gods. They were taught that the God of the Bible punished and rewarded Samoans as well as *papālagi*. If they were obedient, honest and truthful they would be rewarded in the world after death. In providing a theology and thereby a new orientation towards the world and humanity, the Bible and western christianity provided Samoans not only with the rich imagery which has characterised the sermons of *faiife'au* and the sacred hymns of Samoans, but also a way in which the principles of the new order could be pragmatically articulated in Samoan life.

In this way, the invisible institution of *fa'aSamoa* merged with the institutional Church, the EPKS. What should be obvious from the discussion to this point is that Samoans adapted western christianity to meet their own psychological, philosophical, emotional, physical and social needs, and that was to reinforce *fa'aSamoa*. The merger resulted in the structuring and organisation of Samoan life that had not existed before, and which has persisted until the present time.

This is the starting point to the analysis of a Samoanised christianity. If early christianity was the local face of colonialism in Samoa, it has come to occupy a central place in local thought and practice today. Samoans have transformed an introduced ideology into meaningful social practice: Samoanised christianity is a point of universal reference and meaning, a dominant local idiom and a source of morality, sociability and personal comfort (as with Tinoni Simbo, see Duriau 1994). This is not to say that the apparent facility with which this occurred can obscure the influence that this western ideological complex had, and has, as a central and enabling system of meaning. Nor can it

obscure the influence of western lifeways: the Protestant ethic, sexism, capitalism and the intrusion of a global world economy which have transformed previous Samoan lifeways. This imposition was inevitable. What I point out is that Samoanised christianity has transcended its colonial imposition (ibid.).

Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) contend that economic and political factors have been unduly stressed in accounting for the spread of christianity. Dureau states that: "They [the Comaroffs] attribute this to a Western ontological bias which privileges the material over the meaningful. The success of Protestant missionaries, they argue, lay equally in the fact that 'their civilizing mission was simultaneously symbolic and practical, theological and temporal'" (1994:20). I think this is also true of the consolidation of LMS in Samoa. Moreover what is interesting is that in the indigenising process, this western bias has been turned on its head in that a Samoanised christian ontological bias privileges the meaningful over the material. That is to say that *faiʻfeʻau* continually emphasise that promised salvation and future spiritual rewards is more meaningful for adherents than their discomfort or hardship experienced in the sometimes excessive financial demands made on them by the church. In Samoan thinking, speech and the ways in which things occur in the church, giving and future spiritual rewards are clearly connected. A case in point is where a congregation is admonished for not giving enough to the *faiʻfeʻau* (Macpherson: personal communication). The church and its *faiʻfeʻau* thus expect, and Samoan congregations ensure, that financial demands are met regardless of their economic status, or external factors influencing Samoa's economy. Another example of the church's expectations is, on the one hand, the absence of any mention of the devastating social and economic effects of Cyclone Ofa (1992) in *Samoa in Suva*, the official EFKS church monthly publication (Meleiseā 1996:personal communication), and on the other, Samoans demonstrating their love for God by giving unconditionally.

Rather than abandoning one's ethnic identity by totally adopting the transcendent worldview of western christianity, or outrightly rejecting it as a white racist religion (De Vos 1982:14), Samoans have chosen to Samoanise christianity. firstly by anticipating and justifying its arrival in the prophecies of Nāfanua, and secondly because the 'new order' was not and has never been perceived by Samoans as a real threat to *faʻaSamoa* or Samoan autonomy. As noted by Ravuvu (1997:7), for many Pacific Island peoples who have been

indoctrinated to believe and fear that if they do not go to church and contribute they will not be blessed by God and will not enter his heavenly kingdom, "saving the soul" has been increasingly used to "save the church" and those who benefit from its continuing presence.

Thus it is not unusual for many Samoans to regard and attend church services as a social event. They do this merely because one is expected to, and that this is what Samoans do, rather than to 'get religion', receive 'spiritual feeding' or spiritual guidance. For some going to church provides a temporary relief from everyday village life (Meleiseā:personal communication). In many cases it has become a symbolic act with which to assert one's allegiance to Samoan identity, Samoan-ness, the *fa'aSamoa*. It is not surprising therefore for Senara to point out that:

...under the influence of the modern forces for change like urbanisation, bureaucracy, secularisation, pluralisation, and modernisation in general, religion has become socially less significant in the lives of Samoans. People in most of their activities are little touched by any religious intimations. Even those who regard themselves as believers, who subscribe to the operation of the church, and who attend services regularly, nevertheless operate in a social environment in which their beliefs about and awareness of the sacred are rendered in large part irrelevant (1987:140).

Senara, sees this as a consequence in the changing roles of the *faiife'au* from central leadership in both religious and social life to a role of merely providing religious instruction on Sundays (ibid.:142). He calls for change in leadership roles to rediscover the meaning of symbols (churches, bibles etc.) and their relationship to the divine, so that Samoan people can lead a more meaningful life.

PART B: THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

1

Polynesians, migration, and the world system.

The whole business of the migration of peoples from the Pacific has to be considered against the backdrop of modernisation, dependency, development and

Wallerstein's World System theories (1974, 1976) to fully appreciate that these processes have not 'steam-rollered' the islands in the Pacific. That is, each island nation has been affected by, defined and articulated these notions in quite different ways. Hence the difference in reasons, locations and adaptive strategies of Polynesian migrants across the globe through time and space.

But for a more contemporary view, I turn now to three articles. The first two, written from a political economy perspective, appeared in two issues of *Pacific Viewpoint* in 1985, and were jointly authored by Geoff Bertram, an economist, and Ray Walters, a human geographer, both at Victoria University. The third 'Our Sea of Islands', was written by Epeli Hau'ofa, a Tongan anthropologist, sociologist and writer based at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, whose non-fictional work in the main is informed by the political economy perspective.

The aim of the first two authors was to draw attention to the structural changes which had taken place over the previous twenty years or so in the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Western Samoa (the latter only by inference). They claimed that in all these countries, there had been a breakdown of the old export economy and a transition to what they called a MIRAB economy (a neologism - Mi = migration, R = remittances, A = aid, B = bureaucracy). These factors they say all work together to make up the driving force of a new economic system. I focus on the factor of migration. All the countries of the region, Samoa included, have high rates of natural increase, but either low rates of population growth or some kind of negative growth, and the overriding factor, of course is emigration, especially from the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau - who are also citizens of New Zealand - but also from Western Samoa (subject to special protocols governing emigration to New Zealand). The destination of most emigrants has been New Zealand, but there has also been movement to Hawai'i, California and Australia. In all these cases, and especially for Western Samoa, it is important to note that the homeland and migrant communities are closely inter-linked, and from this perspective, the migration which has occurred from all the islands is not for the most part the result of individual decisions by young people cutting ties and going to make their fortunes in a new land, but of decisions made by family groups of various kinds, representing an important diversification in what Bertram & Walters have called investment strategies of

"transnational corporations of kin" (1987:37).

In the third article, Hau'ofa distances himself from the MIRAB thesis which predicts a perpetual dependency of Pacific Islanders on migration, remittances and aid, arguing that these are by-products of colonial and neocolonial constraints on Pacific Island people. His account is supposedly optimistic (for whom?) by focusing attention on some positive aspects of Pacific Island development initiated and carried out by 'ordinary' people in a globalising world. He describes how Pacific Islanders are shaking off artificial national boundaries, inherited from the colonisers, and have enlarged their world by physical and social mobility. Pacific Islanders are now found in relatively large numbers in rim countries but their social networks remain intact in the islands.

His account offers both a philosophical and psychological redirection of Pacific Islander self-perception, by firstly reconceptualising terms of reference beyond small geographical spatial confinement, and including cosmological explanations for the unbounded Pacific world, and secondly by re-arranging the conventionally structured perception, so that Pacific Islanders can see themselves in a more 'magnified' form than the one they now supposedly passively accept.

What Hau'ofa successfully points out is that contemporary Polynesian migration, or at least migration that has occurred in the 20th century, has come about not as a result of a whole lot of individual decisions, but by the way in which Pacific Islanders and their families, and each Pacific Island nation has *chosen* to become articulated with the modern world system. The reasons for migrating are not simply economic but are tied to complex social, cultural and political factors which should not and cannot be ignored.

For migrant and non-migrant Polynesians, culture has to do with not only the anthropological notion of culture as "the whole way of life" or beliefs, attitudes, customs, rules of conduct, social relations or "everything that constitutes the specific characteristics and originality of a people or community" (Hooper 1991:personal communication), but it also has to do with political economy, and this is an aspect which I think cannot be left out, especially when considering *fa'alavelave* of the *fa'aSamoa*. In other words culture should be considered in both culturalist and materialist, emotional/experiential and circumstantialist, terms of reference, and not be defined in mutually exclusive paradigms.

The most important feature of Samoan life is the *fa'aSamoa*--the day-to-day social

existence for Samoan people, their institutions (*matai*, *fa'alupega*, *feagaiga*, church, reciprocity), and associated values of *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo*, *usita'i* etc. All these are embodied in *fa'alavelave*--major events which are qualitatively quite different, in which these principles are given explicit visible form. These events make up the cement which glues together Samoan social organisation and makes possible the manifestations of Samoan values and institutions. Among the marked occasions of *fa'alavelave* are the ceremonial events which revolve around the life cycle--marriages, births and deaths, *saofa'i* (installations of titles) and *fa'aulufalega* (church openings). These rituals involve the elaborate oratory based upon archaic knowledge of myth, legend, *gafa* (genealogy) and precedent by the holders of the knowledge, coupled with the giving and exchange of valuables--*'ie koga*, pigs, kegs of beef, tins of *masi* and money, in increasingly huge quantities, it seems, despite any recession there may be. During each exchange the host *'āga* is meticulously noting down what is being said, by whom, in terms of rank and status, and what is being given, so that the appropriate counter gift can be presented immediately, the visitors fed and farewelled properly, so that preparations can be made for the next round of *'āga si'i* and contributions. It is therefore the "day-to-day living" of the *fa'aSamoa* cemented by occasions of *fa'alavelave* which are crucial to "lived" *fa'aSamoa*.

What is significant is that cash is not being used to develop Samoa (although Brown & Walker [1995] observe that this situation is slowly changing in that conspicuous consumption is declining and investment consumption is increasing). What it is being used for is to power the *fa'aSamoa*, the cornerstone of Samoan culture. It has to do with the investment strategies of transnational corporations of kin and the MIRAB economy. Samoa has chosen to export her labour, and the remittances being sent back home (\$61 million dollars in 1991, when exports earned only approx \$3 million dollars [Hooper 1991:personal communication]) are used to buy necessary commodities as well as used as a participatory item in the *fa'aSamoa*.

In Samoa 83 percent of the land is still in the hands of the Samoan people--it is not a commodity and does not enter the market but is held in undivided tenure for the *'āga*, by the rules of the *matai* system. Rights are determined by *'āga* or kinship principles--kinship is thus tied to place. Although the relatively smaller freehold land market is quite active, which suggests that many people value individual tenure (see O'Meara 1990),

corporate ideology remains firmly in place as does the land.

This is the connection between culture and political economy: the distinction between home and place, kinship and the migrants in the urban sector, whether in Apia or the factories in Otara. Culture in this context has to do on the one hand with getting cash remittances or 'goodies' from the world system, and on the other with having to "keep the fires burning" or ensuring 'āga back home are relatively financially secure for their *fa'aSamoa* obligations and 'āga commitments, in compliance with their *vā fealoa'ia* and *vā tapuia*. The focus is not so much *owning the land* in Samoa, for it is less than likely that Samoan migrants and their NZ-born children/grandchildren will return to claim the land. Rather, the emphasis is to *ensure the comfort and security of 'āga members* who are still living on and working the land, as a "cultural investment" in 'āga strategy.

It therefore makes sense that in the contemporary situation, culture in the South Pacific is not "...some empty notion of tradition but it's what constructs, reaffirms...it makes manifest the social relations based upon land and place...the participants may not be living on the land since they're doing what's economically rational and migrating, but they have not abandoned the land..." (Hooper 1991:personal communication), nor have they abandoned their 'āga.

What these political economic analyses gloss over though, in particular the latter account, is why Samoans articulate *fa'aSamoa* in this particular way - what powers Samoans to make these (ir)rational, economic decisions? Although highly relevant, what is lacking in these analyses is the emotional content of culture - ethnicity, and the experiential aspects of identity.

2

Samoans become 'Pacific Islanders'/'Polynesians' in New Zealand

Pacific Islanders exist only in New Zealand: I am called a Pacific Islander when I arrive at Auckland airport. Elsewhere in the world, I am Samoan (Wendt:personal communication).

Pan-ethnic identities are defined by Cornell (1995:16) as "discovered" identities. By this is meant that pan-ethnic identities are frequently occasioned by the classificatory actions of others--the state, dominant groups, academics, ordinary people trying to make sense of a complex world--and combine the previously uncombined in a new category.

Recently some scholars have begun to question the validity of the parameters which define Polynesians as Polynesians and their place of origin as Polynesia. As we know, Oceania is made up of three culture areas--the 'nesia' part comes from Greek and means 'islands', and the prefix 'poly'--meaning 'many', 'micro' meaning 'tiny' and 'mela' meaning 'black'. The term Polynesian is most often used in reference to the geographic area of triangular Polynesia with its basal side in the West-Polynesian Tongan-Samoan area, and its apexes in Hawai'i, Easter Island, and New Zealand.

At the time of European contact these islands were occupied by a people who were said to be remarkably homogeneous in language, geographic community and culture. But this designation is not as clear-cut and as well-defined as it is made out to be. As more linguistic and archaeological evidence comes to light the boundaries of this culture area are changing shape, and becoming more problematic to define. For example, the area does not include all those who speak languages recognised as Polynesian, or all who might be assigned to a race or culture that identified them as distinctly Polynesian. The reference here is to the Outliers of Melanesia and Micronesia which on a variety of grounds are also termed Polynesian. This is backed up by geographical evidence, and evidence from linguistic data, material culture and racial category as Green (1994:171) has pointed out.

Polynesian or Pacific Islander as a term is a pan-ethnic construct of outsiders--explorers, European colonisers, later anthropologists and archaeologists, and now western bureaucrats, policy-makers, and Pacific Island elites. Today it is as widely used as ever. It functions as a useful term for researchers as it helps in understanding historical matters based on an identity with a particular group. For politicians, bureaucrats and administrators it functions as a useful term in dealing with an ethnic minority. Also it has now acquired a forced ethnic salience in that Samoans and other people from the Pacific Islands use these labels to refer to themselves in some contexts. Macpherson points out:

Much has been said and written of the Pacific islands community in New Zealand. Implicit and...explicit in this discourse is the image of a continuous, co-operating entity, based on some cultural substrate....this image was a creation which has never really existed in practice....Pacific Islands 'community' is...a collection of distinctive groupings which have occasionally formed coalitions to pursue interests in common....a unified community was, and is, unlikely to emerge" (1996:124).

The reifying of terms or concepts like--Polynesia, Polynesian, Pacific Islander and more recently the 'Pacific Way' serve to create a myth of Pacific Island 'unity' or 'community' (for critiques of this refer Macpherson 1996, *Our Sea of Islands* reviews 1993). Some claim that some shared cultural substructure exists and provides the basis of Pacific communities (Tuimalaali'ifano 1990). Hau'ofa's claim (1987) is that a very recent shared regional economy provides the basis for an elite South Pacific society which stratifies and thus divides within each country. Tuimalaali'ifano (1990:156) states that some Pacific Island scholars echo the continuing tension between ideals of national independence and the broader concept of the Pacific Way. In the contemporary scene, these views have highlighted the total lack of regard for the distinctiveness and diversity of each Pacific Island nation encompassed within this culture area. This homogenising tendency has led in turn to the practice of generalising and stereotyping Polynesian migrants in their host communities. While these inventions prove useful when making global comparisons in a very general sense, they become futile when applied to actual people and groups of people who consider themselves not Pacific Islanders nor Polynesians, but Samoans, Tongans, Fijians, Cook Islanders etc.

To many New Zealanders the generic concept of Pacific Islanders is considered to be a homogeneous ethnic group (Krishnan, Schoeffel and Warren 1994:1). When considering racism in New Zealand, Pearson states that: "National sovereignty denies the self-determination of specific groups within the nation....minorities are forced to adopt the practices and beliefs of the majority" (1990:170). This situation is exacerbated by the use of these pan-ethnic identities. Social organisation of people from the Pacific differs according to their country of origin. For example, Samoan social groups are said to be differentiated in extended or 'āiga lines, Cook Islanders on island lines (there are many islands which make up the Cook Island group) and Niue on village lines (Nokise 1978:2).

It is increasingly becoming anathema to the older generation of people from the

Pacific Islands living in New Zealand to be labelled as Polynesians or Pacific Islanders for the following reasons: they are not indigenous terms but *papaālagi* constructions and ones which arise out of the colonial context, they blur the different experiences of the people to whom they refer, they imply homogeneity throughout the Pacific. As a pan-ethnic label, "Pacific Islander" officially incorporates people living throughout the whole of Oceania—Melanesians, Micronesians and Polynesians, and ignores the uniqueness of these different culture areas and individual island nations, and the existence of differences in culture, language, philosophies and respective histories.

Perhaps the most significant reason for people objecting to this label is the negative, distorted, stereotypic image of Pacific Islanders as "overstayers", portrayed by the media during the overstay debate. In the early 1970s, Pacific Islanders, especially Samoans and Tongans, were used as scapegoats by the New Zealand National Government. The issue of overstayers was used to deflect attention away from the economic problems and Government policies which caused or contributed to the recession. While many Samoans and Tongans were guilty of overstaying, it was the Government's handling of the matter, and their focus on these two ethnic groups in particular which became unacceptable to many Samoans, Tongans and ensuing generations of Samoans and Tongans. Regardless of their citizenship or migrant status, Pacific Islanders became the scapegoats of a state-manipulated migrant problem wherein they were portrayed as a social and economic liability (See Appendix 4). Ross (1992) has pointed out that Pacific Island migrants made up only a minority of all migrants to New Zealand. In the peak immigration year of 1973-74, Fijians, Western Samoans and Tongans collectively accounted for only 40% of all temporary migrants. By far the greatest immigrant influx was from the United Kingdom and Australia. Since the 1973-74 dawn-raids by police on potential overstayers many new migrants, for economic reasons and family reunification, have shifted their destinations to Australia or the USA (Duncan 1990:128, Va'a 1992). For Pacific Island parents, grandparents and *āiga*, the traumatic, emotional dawn-raids are still very vivid memories, indeed bitter memories. The emergence of "The Polynesian Panthers" in the early 1970s saw the articulation of the idea that racism was the basic social cleavage in New Zealand society. Fuelled by the outrage caused by this openly racist attack on people from Samoa and Tonga, they sought to overcome this injustice:

The revolution we openly rap about is one of total change. The revolution is one to liberate us from racism, oppression and capitalism. We see many of our problems of oppression and racism are tools of this society's outlook based on capitalism; hence for total change one must change society altogether (Polynesian Panther Party, 1975:226).

Pan-ethnic identities such as the "Pacific Islander" category has become an active component of the dominant group's worldview. It has organised *their* action, and consequently *our* experience. Cornell states that "The result is a revelation: we discover that, in their eyes, we are something we have never been in our own" (1995:17).

One option, of course, is to reject the category, to insist on the identity we carry and reject the one they ask us to take on. But because this synthetic categorisation and subsequent action are part of the state and other powerful entities, rejection is at times pointless; the world is continuously being reorganised conceptually and the consequences of that reorganisation are very real (ibid.). The challenge then moves from category to content from label to narrative. Those who created and use the label have a story to tell: the story that led to the inception of the category. The story may be meaningless, and the identity a mere convenience, a way of simplifying complex social life, in which case the story says little more than "they all came from there" or "they look the same to us" or "they speak the same variety of language" (ibid.).

All groups construct narratives that give sense and meaning to their lives, their situations and reasons for living, and many do so in opposition to these pan-ethnic identities. For the pan-ethnic group, Cornell (1995:18) identifies three parts to the reclaiming of ethnic identity: (i) discovering the identity as a self-referential category or label, (ii) discovering the already-existing narrative--good or bad--to which the label refers, and (iii) "discovering" the story, or counter narrative, the newly self-conscious group itself wishes to tell. The caveat I would add to Cornell's new discovery story is that the 'new' ethnic identity is not a fictitious one--it is not simply made up--it is based on the persistent identity symbols embedded in the history, memory, current experiences and emotions of a people. Of course there is still the question of which story will gain dominance as the primary representation of the group.

In Chapter Two, the concept of culture was discussed. The questions asked still resonate. Is culture primordial--'in the blood'--as many people will insist, or is it shaped by

external influences? Are cultural traditions invented, as some scholars claim, and used to validate a traditional past? Is culture a whole way of struggle, or does the anthropological notion of culture as a whole way of life reign supreme?

Regardless of one's inclinations towards one definition or another, more salient today is how the rhetoric of culture has become a "buzz-word" in New Zealand society, as elsewhere in the world. In the 90s' climate of political correctness and cultural appropriateness, one finds "culture" in newspapers, magazines, educational policies and programmes, on television programmes, on the doors, letterheads and in the greetings of Government Departments, part of everybody's shiny corporate plan, part of the rhetoric of all public occasions. But perhaps more sinister is the appropriation of aspects of a minority's culture by the dominant group to maintain the former's subordinate position. Here in New Zealand Webster stresses this point in his discussion of the expert definition of Maori culture in which the resurgence of Maori culture at the ideological level is being allowed to flourish while the machinery of state is slowly widening the gap between *tangata whenua* and mainstream New Zealanders (Webster 1989). It is clear that the actual situation of *tangata whenua* relative to other ethnic groups in New Zealand is in a state of crisis in terms of employment, income, health, education and justice statistics. And this situation has been exacerbated by the recession, and stringent restructuring, free-market New Right ideologies and policies of the Government (Smith 1992).

This same dynamic is operating between Pacific Island culture and people in New Zealand. The Pasifika Festival held annually in Auckland is a case in point. Begun in 1990, and developed and sponsored by SPINDA (South Pacific Island Nations Development Association) since 1992, it has become a popular forum for the celebration of Pacific Islands culture. The Mayor of Auckland stated that "...there will be opportunities for all Aucklanders to immerse themselves in the rich cultural diversity of the Pacific Islands" (Pasifika '93 Auckland City publication:1, New Zealand Herald 10/3/93). An organiser states:

We have second, third and even fourth-generation Pacific Island New Zealanders who have a traditional heritage combined with a New Zealand upbringing.... They have a new way of design, of music and of looking at the world—and the world is starting to take notice of them in a big way.... The [fashion] show reflects what it is

like being a Pacific Islander in this country today....We are moving forward in a global culture, while retaining threads back to our own cultures. The diversity of styles within the show mirrors [Pacific Island] reality... (ibid.:3).

What is ironic is that Pasifika promotes this pan-Pacific ideology of the Pacific Way, as well as reducing culture to aesthetic, traditional elements represented in music, dance and fashion mixed with modern globalising influences producing the 'hybrid' model as discussed above. This celebration happens at a time when in the 1990s, national statistics show that Pacific Island people are the most unemployable, most uneducated, poorest, most likely to be criminals, most state-dependant (even lower than Maori), most unwanted sector of the New Zealand population. They are at the bottom of the heap in all demographic, socio-economic indicators in New Zealand. What is there to celebrate? (See Pardon 1995 for positive prognosis of Pacific Island involvement in New Zealand's economic culture.)

The contribution of celebrating Pacific Islands cultures through the arts and at an aesthetic level is successful in making the Pacific Islands presence felt albeit in a positive way. But more importance should be given to the critical assessment of 'top down' delivery of resources to Pacific Islands people, and their 'bottom up' articulation of their particular needs and service requirements. The point is that instead of trying to define culture at an academic or populist level where foreign diplomats, including Pacific Island elites, business promoters and media suddenly become the definers of culture, we need to critically examine and understand what culture, cultural identity and ethnicity means not for some kind of generic Pacific Islander, but for the different ethnic minority populations caught within this pan-ethnic identity.

The continued use of pan-ethnic identities is problematic. While their construction points to western homogenisation of people from the Pacific for the former's own pragmatic reasons, the question then arises: How do people from the Pacific differentiate between themselves and others including people from other island groups, not only in the islands, but those born elsewhere? The answer is that they too indulge in the practice of constructing pan-ethnic identities to explain these differences. But this matter becomes even more confusing when considering NZ-born 'Pacific Islanders'.

The emergence of a "PI identity", "PI music" etc. is a recent phenomenon which requires some consideration. This identity has been taken up in the main by the younger

generation of NZ-born Pacific Islanders. NZ-born Samoans and other NZ-born Pacific Islanders may feel a greater commonality with one another than their island-born elders feel with those born in other islands--hence island-born elders' resentment at being considered Pacific Islander may not be shared by their children who have gone to school and work with NZ-borns with other Pacific Island ancestries. This self-identity by the younger generation is certainly bolstered by structurally designated "Pacific Islander" spaces rather than individual ethnic group ones within the various schools, organisations and programmes (e.g., PI youth programmes, PI tutorials). The appeal of identifying as Pacific Islander may be explained. It offers an identification that is much broader and less specific than "Samoan" and incorporates a much larger peer group. It is also more easily adopted by those who are not fully versed in the language or culture of one or both of their parents' "Born-again Samoans" and those who have always identified as Samoan also identify to varying extents as Polynesians and PIs. In the past such identifications were imposed by outsiders, with all Pacific Islanders lumped together for the purposes stated previously. For young people today it is increasingly a matter of what Barbara Lal calls "ethnicity by consent", where different ethnic groups merge and adopt a common identity in specific contexts (1983:156). To some extent an identification as PI is politically instrumental (Morton 1998). It is my contention, however, that this PI identity is very much a youth phenomenon, and that on reaching maturity, this self-identity for some will change (see Part Two and Chapter Six).

Drawing from my own experience as a NZ-born Samoan, I can say that the commonality that NZ-born Samoans share with other NZ-born Pacific Islanders is their shared New Zealand socialisation experiences in terms of education and interaction with the system and wider community of New Zealanders. But that is where this commonality stops. What is not shared with the other Pacific Island peoples whether island-born or NZ-born are distinctively Samoan experiences of *'āiga*, church, *matāi* and *fa'alufega* systems, *gagana Samoa* (Samoan language) and associated values and expectations of *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo*, *feagaiga* and *usita'i*, shared with all other Samoans whether younger or older, born in Samoa, New Zealand or elsewhere. The differentiation in terms of culture, language, philosophies and respective histories far outweigh the one commonality of shared New Zealand experiences, and links NZ-borns to their *'āiga* in Samoa and elsewhere. Pan-ethnic identities, whether constructed by westerners or Pacific Islanders, are inevitable and

here to stay but this does not mean that people (or ethnic groups) caught within these pan-ethnic identities are homogeneous. In the case of NZ-born Pacific Islanders the only commonality lies in the shared socialisation experiences of their place of birth. How these are expressed depends on the ethnic identity of parents, family and community, and the degree to which this ethnic identity has been instilled in their children.

3

Samoaans in New Zealand: some statistics

Fairbairn (1961) has described the early trends in Samoan migration to New Zealand. Although Samoans have been migrating to New Zealand since the mid 1800s, the most significant movement commenced in the period immediately after the Second World War. It has been postulated that these migrants were disproportionately *afakasi* Samoans who had access to the *papālagi* way of life through contacts with merchant shipping, or the Armed Forces, i.e., Fijian army. Also their experiences of *papālagi* lifestyles (working at the Bank of Western Samoa, or the commercial enterprises of Morris Hedstrom and Burns Philp), and the presence and influence of the significant number of New Zealand expatriate civil servants seconded to Western Samoa, may have motivated these people to migrate (Macpherson: personal communication). Subsequent migrants in the 1970s, tended to be mainly full-blooded Samoans, and quite a different composition of people from the first wave of migrants.

From the perspective of the tropical Pacific, limited opportunities for wage employment in islands where populations were increasing rapidly meant that entry to New Zealand was economically attractive (Bedford 1984:118). In New Zealand, migrants could earn wages twenty, even thirty times as high as they could at home, and at the same time, they had access to more sophisticated medical services and greater educational opportunities. Moreover, the dramatic growth in the industrial and manufacturing sectors of the New Zealand economy, especially in the late 60s, led to an increased demand for labour, particularly in the area of low, unskilled labour in dirty, tedious jobs vacated by the local work force in an expanding post-war economy. The New Zealand Government

offered an increased number of temporary work permits to Pacific Islanders: company and union representatives travelled to islands to recruit labour.

Some American researchers (Lewthwaite, Mainzer and Holland, in Rolff 1978) have found that an additional motivation for emigration, especially for Samoans from American Samoa immigrating to the States, was to escape the repressiveness of the *matai* system. This has not been a pronounced factor for those Samoans who have emigrated to New Zealand, although escape from the social controls of the *'āiga* and *matai* systems may have been a covert motive for some.

New Zealand Government policy initially favoured young, single migrants whose presence, at least in the short term cost the state least. However, the Samoan population increased rapidly as those migrants established themselves and started their own families, resulting in the steady growth in the proportion of NZ-born and educated Samoans in New Zealand (Macpherson 1991:67).

As the largest non-Maori Polynesian ethnic minority in New Zealand, Samoans have generated considerable interest among social scientists and policy makers. In recent years, the number of Samoan immigrants to New Zealand has been reduced by the enforcement of immigration quotas which have been set at 1,100 per year (made by reciprocal arrangements between New Zealand and Australian governments and supported by the Western Samoan government). Similarly, another restriction applied to Samoan families is that they may not bring more than four children into the country with them, even though families emigrating from more preferred locales such as Australia may bring in an unlimited number of children. Yet another restrictive policy affecting the Samoan family is the requirement that elderly Samoans may not immigrate to New Zealand unless all their adult children reside here (Pitt and Macpherson 1974). Consider the following statistics on the Pacific Islands population in New Zealand taken from the 1991 census:

- * The number of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand total 167,073, or 5 % of the New Zealand resident population.
- * 66.6% of Pacific Islanders live in the Auckland region, with a further 15.6% in the Wellington region.
- * Almost 30% of Pacific Islanders live in the southern zone of the Auckland

urban area. A further 25% live in the central zone, with a total of 65.9% living in the Auckland urban area as a whole.

- * The unemployment rate for Pacific Islanders is 21%, double the national rate. More recent statistics say that 32% of the Pacific Island population are unemployed.
- * 53.3% of Pacific Islanders receive an income support payment other than GRI. This compared to 38% nationally.
- * Almost 38% of employed Pacific Islanders are involved in the manufacturing industry, more than double the national figure.
- * The average number of persons in Pacific Island households is 4.2 compared with a national figure of 2.8.
- * 51% of dwellings occupied by Pacific Island households are rented or leased, compared with a National figure of 23.1%.
- * Only 8.1% of Pacific Island households live in freehold dwellings, compared with a national figure of 34.2%.

Year	Total Popn	Inter-Censal inc(%)	Born in Samoa ¹	Inter-Censal inc(%)	Born Out of Samoa	Inter-Censal inc(%)	Propn (%) [2]
1936	362	-	279	-	83	-	22.9%
1945	716	97.8	592	112.2	124	49.4	17.3%
1951	NA	211.2*	1336	125.7	-	250.4*	-
1956	3740	211.2*	2995	124.2	745	250.4*	19.9
1961	6481	73.3	4450	48.6	2031	172.1	31.3%
1966	8663	33.7	7447	67.3	1216	-40.1	14.0%
1971	22198	156.2	12354	65.9	9844	709.5	44.4%
1976	27876	25.6	19711	59.6	8165	-17.0	29.3%
1981	42453	52.3	24141	22.5	18312	124.3	43.1%
1986	66254	56.0	33864	40.3	32390	76.9	48.9%
1991	85743	29.4	42702	26.1	43041	32.9	50.2%

Source: New Zealand Censuses of Population. (Table adapted from Macpherson 1991:68)

Table 3.1: New Zealand-Born Samoan Population Statistics 1936-1991 [1]

- [1] The figures are arrived at by deducting the Samoan-born from the total Samoan population in NZ.
- [2] Those born outside Samoa as a proportion of the total Samoan population. Those born outside Samoa and living in NZ are almost all born in NZ. This is supported by Krishnan et al. (1994:37), who state that by 1991, 49% of all persons of Samoan descent in NZ had been born there.
- * Estimate arrived at by calculating $[(1956-1945)/(1945 \times 100)]/2$.

The statistics on Samoans living in New Zealand are even more significant. The major trend which occurred during the post-war period was a shift in the composition of those migrating, away from those of mixed blood--*afakasi*--toward those who were full-

blooded Samoans. Immigration from Western Samoa peaked in the 1950s, when there was an over 500% increase, and has fluctuated since, as table 3.1 shows.

Currently the population of Samoans in New Zealand is more than half that of the combined Pacific Islands population in New Zealand. Only 3.3% of Samoans were aged 60 years or over, the lowest proportion for any Pacific Island group, and well below the national figure of 15.4% as the following statistics taken from the 1991 Census show.

- * There were 85,743 persons in New Zealand who identified as Samoan (making Samoans the largest non-indigenous minority ethnic population in NZ).
- * Samoans comprised more than half of the Pacific Island population resident in New Zealand (Samoans made up 51.3% of the total Pacific Island population in New Zealand, the next largest being Cook Islanders at 22.7%).
- * Over 50% of those who identified as Samoan claimed to be NZ-born Samoans.
- * Most Samoans in New Zealand are Presbyterians (i.e., PIPC). Approximately 73,701 or 85% of the Samoan population belong to Presbyterian churches. (This figure arrived at by dividing total number of Pacific Island Presbyterians by percentage of Samoans as per Pacific Island population, 1991 census.) Only a small percentage are members of the EFKS (some 4,149 or 4% of Samoan population, 1991 census. This figure is problematic. It is estimated that a far larger number of Samoans are EFKS adherents. Some EFKS members may have registered their religion as 'other' rather than "Samoan Congregational Church" in the 1991 census for example).

The literature on Samoan immigrants in New Zealand can be divided into two phases. The earlier literature (Pitt & Macpherson 1974, Trin 1977) tells us about the institutions and culturally preserved customs of a somewhat homogeneous Samoan community one which tried to maintain the *fa'asamoa* in their new environment. This is exemplified in Pitt & Macpherson.

The appeal of tradition, of *fa'asamoa* for the migrant Samoan is intimately related to the flexibility of the Samoan social structure. An individual felt security....amongst his kinsfolk; at the same time there was flexibility, a

permissiveness not so much moral as social. The migrant found that this fluidity of fa'asamoa contrasted starkly with what seemed the rigidity of New Zealand society. Many migrants idealised the village as an environment with fewer hard line and unbending rules, less tension and hostility. Tradition at least for the first generation of migrants became the focus of social life (1974:6).

This idealisation of Samoa, in the former phase, by the first generation of immigrants is central and is captured in poetry, fiction and film, for example in Albert Wendt's semi-autobiographical *Sons for the Return Home* (1973). Using this perspective, Pitt & Macpherson discuss how major institutions of Samoan life fare in New Zealand. They focus on five separate aspects of Samoan immigrant culture: the 'āiga (1974:21-28), the church (ibid.:50-62), status (ibid.:63-76), work (ibid.:77-98) and youth (ibid.:99-112). They talk about how 'āiga, church and village ties among migrants strongly influence other migrants choice of jobs; how the Samoan migrant community in New Zealand has become integrated with the host society in terms of a pluralist pattern, largely through reliance on its own resources and by means of the strong fa'aSamoa institutional framework of 'āiga and church transplanted in modified form from Western Samoa. They point to only a small-scale return migration--an important deterrent was that over 40 percent of the Samoan migrant community in New Zealand in 1971 was composed of second generation Samoans. From their interview data, the authors ascertained that NZ-born Samoans viewed themselves equally as Samoans and New Zealanders, and that the ethnic and national identities of these NZ-born Samoans were based on ties with New Zealand rather than on ties with Western Samoa. Many of their informants stated that their new ethnicity as Samoans was linked with the emerging subculture in New Zealand rather than with Western Samoa, and their national identity was linked with their place of birth and residence in New Zealand (see also Kallen 1982:59). Although some NZ-borns would indeed agree with this, it is not this simple. Also questionable is whether NZ-born Samoans' assertion in identifying more with their New Zealand subculture than with their Samoan culture, in Pitt and Macpherson's study in the '70s, is still indicative of NZ-borns self identities in the 90s. My research among New Zealand-born Samoans points out that context in terms of time and place are integral features of the changing orientation of these self-identities.

The more recent literature (Macpherson 1978, 1984, 1991; Ngan-Woo 1985) talks about the emergence of a diversity of adaptive styles which have, over the course of time, done away with the concept of one unified Samoan lifestyle in New Zealand (see also adaptive strategies of Samoans in USA in Rolff 1978, Samoans in Sydney in Va'a 1992). Difference in commitment to Samoan traditions is an important factor in what has by now become a certain degree of diversity in adaptive styles within the Samoan community (Ngan-Woo 1985).

What is problematic is Kallen's notion of New Zealand-born Samoans as 'hybrid' -- not fully Samoan nor fully New Zealander (1982:59). Macpherson (1991:82) points out that today there are interesting changes occurring in NZ-born Samoan attitudes to their language, values and social institutions. He states that these changes, and the factors which are producing them, are complex and cannot be understood solely as responses to assimilative pressure exerted by the dominant group.

To understand the changing orientation to the elements of Samoan ethnicity we have to focus on the ways in which Samoans assess their importance and relevance and adopt life styles which reflect their decisions. This requires an understanding of the personal and political factors which enter individual's and group's evaluations of the relevance of their cultural heritage... (ibid.).

This development is indicative of contemporary views of ethnicity and underpins much of my work, which differs significantly from earlier literature because it focuses on Samoan identity or *fa'aSamoa* as a persistent identity system, and how *fa'aSamoa* is articulated in the New Zealand context. My research shows that the NZ-born Samoan identity is much more complex than these earlier sociological studies show, primarily because these earlier studies did not attempt to examine in detail the experiential aspects of identity contained in the subjective experience of the *fa'aSamoa* or Samoan identity.

Newton Church: "the children of the LMS in the Pacific..."

A walk down the Ponsonby Road end of K'Rd (Karangahape Road) imparts to the casual observer the impression of the bustling, noisy, chaos of one of Auckland's inner-city's main streets. It is always clogged with traffic: yellow buses, cars, trucks, bicycles, pedestrians. K'Rd connects Ponsonby Road to Auckland's main street, Queen Street, but the tell-tale signs of old decaying buildings and billboards of half-nude females and reclining ladies of the night stretched above entrances to Strip bars and Sex shops indicate that this part of K'Rd is Auckland's sleazy red-light district. This part of town is known for its "special" services and hordes of admirers/clients of the *femmes fatales* who strut their stuff along Karangahape Road at days' end, every day of the week, every week of the year, year after year. But these are not the only frequenters of this part of K'Rd. K'Rd is also known for its sea of blue uniformed grammar school girls who flood into it, in and out of the yellow buses every morning during the week at 8 and 3.30 every afternoon. There is a third group of people who frequent and who are seen often along this street during the week. This group is more distinctive in the weekends, especially on Sundays--middle-aged and old women who most often wear white and hats, younger and elderly men in suits and ties, boys in Nike sports shoes and gear, some young women and girls abreast of trendy fashions, others in *pulerasi* or *pea* (lit. 'pair'; woman's two piece costume--neck to ankle-length). This group are the *ekālēsia* of Newton PIC which is in Edinburgh St, a street which branches off K'Rd, between the Pleasure Chest and the Pink Pussycat.

In the old days this part of town also consisted of a few shops: a dairy, a fish 'n chip shop, some second-hand clothing stores, a shoe-repair shop, a bakery, a doll-hospital. Now these have given way to a trendy mall, shop-owners are loathe to lease, on the top of which is one of Auckland's new landmarks, the 360 degree revolving restaurant. As a child I remember having fish 'n chips for tea almost every night because of all the choir practices, meetings and workshops we used to have every day of the week after school. I also remember walking home, or often waiting for my bus at the bus-stop just outside the Pink Pussycat. Oblivious to what the strip clubs represented I never ever stopped to think

of what I must have looked like--a young Samoan girl in frilly dress and shiny black shoes juxtaposed against a backdrop of white seductively beckoning nude temptress. I wondered why the Headmistress of the Grammar school forbade us to wait for our bus at *that* bus stop in our school uniforms! I am still bemused by seeing these images today at that very bus stop. Sometimes it is an old woman, man or elderly couple, always dressed in their Sunday best. Sometimes it is another young girl, K'Rd, despite its questionable reputation, is regarded as a mecca by Pacific Islands people and it is not difficult to understand why.

Another ritual which was to influence me tremendously was going to Church. Recollections of Sunday service at Newton PICC, before the new Church was built in 1962, are still as clear to me now, as they were then: the snowy white hair of our *pālāgi faife'au*, the Rev. Challis, the first ordained Minister of Newton Church, our Founder, fondly remembered today as 'Papa' Challis, and his petite bespectacled wife Rose who played the piano and organised the Sunday School; the loud, booming voice, like surf on a beach, of our own Samoan minister, the Rev. Louatea Sio; the beaming faces of the congregation--the beautiful hats of the women--the immaculate suits of the men--the girls in white and frilly and the boys all bowtied up--the proud, boisterous singing of the hymns--always the first hymn in English, then one in Niuean, then one in the Cook Island language, and the last hymn in Samoan--the English and Samoan hymns always sounding loud and confident--the middle two sounding feeble--the furrowed frowns on the faces indicating inability to fit the words into the tune. And again I found myself asking the same questions--Who are these people? Where do they come from? How are they related to me?--as I would inevitably doze off on the broad strong shoulder of my father, always during the sermon... (Arae 1992: 10)(see Plate III).

A comprehensive history of the Pacific Islanders Congregational Church 1943-1969 has already been written by the Rev. Dr U.F. Nokise (1978), in which aspects of the origin of Newton Church have been adequately covered. What my research has to offer is the recorded oral histories of people, and leaders of our Church, who were actually part of this process, and as such have invaluable insights to share. My work is therefore intended to complement Nokise's earlier historical account.

Newton PIC is not just any PIC. It is in fact the first Pacific Island ethnic church to be established in New Zealand, and is now the mother-church to over thirty branches. It began as the Pacific Islanders' Congregational Church (PICC), and became the biggest Congregational church in New Zealand. Then when the Congregational Union of New

Zealand (CUNZ) merged with the New Zealand Presbyterian Church (PCNZ) in the late 1960s, Newton followed suit, changed its name to Newton Pacific Islanders' Presbyterian Church (PIPC), although unofficially its members still refer to it as the PIC. One *papālagi* Presbyterian Minister is said to have remarked: "The three historical events of this generation in Auckland are the motorways, the Harbour Bridge, and the PICC!" (MBC Newton report 1966). Today the PIC is the largest Presbyterian church in New Zealand. The Newton Church *ekālesia* consists of five ethnic groups, the most numerous being the Samoan group, the others being the Cook Island, Niuean, Tokelauan and Tuvaluan groups. The English Speaking Group of Newton is presently lobbying for inclusion in the future restructuring proposals of Newton as the sixth ethnic group (see Chapter 7). Although there are no reliable official records (bar Baptismal and Death/Funeral records), Newton's membership is said to number approximately 10,000 communicants and adherents (Newton Church Secretary, based on Membership and Baptismal records, and financial information). Newton PIC is located at the centre of the Grey Lynn/Ponsonby inner-city area—not surprisingly, the heart of the first Pacific Island migrant community in New Zealand (Hiyama 1991) (See Plate IV).

The origin of Newton Church.

In this section, the myth of origin of the Newton Pacific Islanders Church will be explored, the different versions considered, and an explanation offered in the hope that historians, and indeed all researchers concerned with Pacific Island communities—traditional, contemporary and diasporic, will be encouraged to view myth and indeed oral traditions as an important means of organising and interpreting history rather than chronicling it, and to realise that cultural ideology will always remain embedded in historic information and should be considered along with, and not apart from, the historical process. As an important, central, significant, spiritual, cultural and secular focus for Pacific Islanders in New Zealand, it is not surprising that there are several versions of the origin of this institution.

For the Cook Islanders and Niueans the PIC began in 1943 at the Beresford Street Congregational Church; for some Pukapukans it began even earlier at Helensville where

families used to meet together for family services at each others houses; for some Samoans it never really began until the first Samoan Pastor was assigned or the Fono Tele in Samoa had given its seal of approval. In all these accounts it appears irrelevant that the PICC was formally established at an Assembly of the CUNZ in October 1947.

The oral and historical fragments which my research discovered raise interesting questions as to the nature of history in a study such as this. While the historical record will show that the PICC was established in 1947, this date may not be accepted wholeheartedly by all members of the PICC. As a novice historian I found this dilemma frustrating and perplexing. There was no need for these myths of origin to compete, until the 50th Anniversary (not yet acknowledged). Was it to be 1993, 1997, or the year 1999? As an anthropologist, however, I find this situation fascinating--the collision of two different genres of diachronic history--the one from recorded written documents, the other from oral traditions, raises questions for me, as to the validity of either, or both, to historical truth or cultural reality. As a Samoan, and an 'insider', I can say that this situation is neither frustrating nor a problem. That in fact it really is not a problem at all is because this myth is common knowledge to us all and that all versions have been and will be accommodated. As for when the 50th Anniversary will occur that of course will be up to the PIC to consensually decide--and it has not yet.

The Cook Island version.

The migration of Pacific Islanders to New Zealand has occurred in a series of waves. The Cook Islanders, together with the Niueans, deemed New Zealand citizens since 1901, were among the first to arrive on these shores in any great numbers. Before the 1940s they were mainly single, transient workers who on arrival at Auckland immediately set off for Tokoroa, the Waipukarau-Hastings area, Rotorua-Kaingaroa or Taumaranui to work on sheep farms, in quarries or saw-mills.

Having been christianised as recently as the 1830s, for these "children of the IMS in the Pacific" (MBC Convenor's report 1962) separation from land, kin and Church proved to be a traumatic experience. So much so that their strong need to worship together resulted in pockets of Cook Islanders in these rural areas holding their own house or home

services daily and especially on Sundays, and when possible, usually on their only day off (once a month), they would travel any way they could to the nearest town to take part in a Church service--usually in a *papālagi* Congregational church (Revatai transcript).

Those who remained in Auckland attended the Beresford St. Congregational Church. This Church was established in 1852 and was the second Congregational Church in Auckland, the first having been established in High Street in 1851 (Anon:4). As the Pacific Islands had been missionised by the LMS it was no surprise that these Islanders flocked to New Zealand Congregational churches, which for them represented the LMS in New Zealand. Beresford's first contact with Pacific Islanders interestingly enough was in 1885 when the 'Queen of Rarotonga attended the opening of their Devonport branch' (ibid:16). The church had been in correspondence with the people of Rarotonga as early as 1879.

In 1915, 35 Rarotongans and 150 Niucans who had come to New Zealand to train for active service were entertained by the church, and when Pacific Islanders began to migrate to New Zealand in larger numbers in the early 1940s, it was from Beresford Street that the move came to bring them into fellowship with the CUNZ. Thus in 1943, Mr George Edmonds, Secretary-Treasurer of Beresford Street Church, and the Rev. Welch its Minister, a former LMS missionary in Nauru, began the first services for Cook Islanders in Beresford St Church (Challis documents 1943).

Edmonds then began corresponding with the Rev. Robert Lye Challis, a LMS missionary in the Cook Islands, then resident in London, and together they actively sought permission from the CUNZ to appoint a Cook Island pastor from the Cook Islands to minister to the growing numbers of Cook Islanders and Niucans (See Plate V). At the same time, the Rev. Challis was being "wooed" by the CUNZ to come to New Zealand to minister and spearhead the work amongst the Pacific Islanders. When an article appeared in the *NZ Herald* in May 1943 stating that a Pastor Tariu Te'aia was coming to New Zealand to work among the Cook Islanders and Niueans at Beresford St Church, Cook Islanders who had been dispersed throughout rural North Island returned almost *en masse* to Auckland. Such was the need for fellowship with their own people and to be led in worship by their own Cook Island pastor (Revatai transcript).

Each Sunday, the Cook Islanders went to the *papālagi* service in the mornings and

in the evening at 7 they would hold their Cook Island service in their own language led by Pastor Tariu--not in the Church itself but in an adjacent hall (ibid.). It was not long before the Cook Islanders wanted their own church. With the support of Mr Edmonds, the Rev. Challis and Pastor Tariu, a request was put to the CUNZ in 1947 that they be allowed to form their own church. What was endorsed by the CUNZ, however, was not to be a Cook Islanders Congregational Church, but a Pacific Islanders Congregational Church, mainly because the CUNZ felt that "...the whole position with regard to all these folk has to be considered before the requirements of any one group are met..." (CH1947 3/10/47, CUNZ to Challis in London). The Auckland District Committee wasted no time in implementing the Assembly's decision and in conjunction with the Beresford Street Congregational Church, the PICC was formally begun in October 1947.

The Pukapukan version

The main ideology here is that the PIC originated in 1943 with the commencement of Cook Island services at Beresford Street Church. However, there are some who believe that it was the Pukapukans at Helensville who started the PIC (Ropati transcript).

Pukapuka, now part of the larger Cook Island group, was the last of the Cook Islands to be christianised by the LMS missionaries. According to my informant, who claims to be the third Pukapukan migrant to New Zealand, the very first Pukapukan man to grace these shores was called Manua Tutara, who arrived in the very early 1940s. He settled at Helensville and married a Maori woman (ibid.). Pukapukans who arrived subsequently therefore tended to settle at Helensville and worked in orchards, at pine tree nurseries, or at the butter factory at Woodhill. Others found work in farming and forestry areas of rural New Zealand with their fellow Cook Islanders. House services at Helensville apparently began before 1943 in the homes of three families, Manua Tutara's relations, where each Sunday a family would in turn host the others (ibid.). These services continued until a church was built above the garage of one of these homes. This church was opened in 1961 (MBC Convenors report 1962), and it was here that Pastor Tariu, the Rev. Challis or deacons would come and minister to the Pukapukan group (ibid.).

Today this church above the garage holds 200 people and is officially known as the

Helensville branch of the Newton PIC, even though its congregation consists entirely of Cook Islanders.

The Niuean version

This closely resembles the Cook Island version in setting the origin of the Newton Church at 1943, although I must admit sources to be very scant regarding the Niueans. As with the Cook Islanders, because Niueans were deemed New Zealand citizens since 1901, free entry meant that there was a steady flow of Niuean migrants to New Zealand, especially in the 1940s and later in the 60s and 70s when most Niueans migrated to New Zealand.

The move to the Newton premises in 1949 was a significant one. Mr Edmonds wrote to the Rev. Challis: "Now we have the services in a church it makes a tremendous difference to the atmosphere. I would not have thought such an improvement...possible had I not seen it for myself" (CH1948 12/1/48).

The Niueans on their arrival in Auckland almost invariably found themselves living in close proximity to Beresford Street Church (Talagi transcript). They lived in flats in Beresford Street itself, in Wellington, Pitt, Queen, Vincent and Howe Streets. Unlike the Cook Islanders however, they only intermittently attended church services—only the *papālagi* services on Sundays, and it is unclear as to whether they held house services. It was not until the Newton premises were made available for worship, in Edinburgh Street in 1948, that the first Niuean service was held. It was led by Rev. Challis a linguistic genius it seems, who while fluent in the Cook Island language promptly learned Niuean and Samoan, and was able to take these services with the help of Niuean deacons.

The Niueans were regarded ethnocentrically by *papālagi* clergy as "poor church attenders" and the "down-trodden peoples of the Pacific" (Correspondence 1949). Therefore they had to be especially attended to by their Niuean deacons. The first Niuean minister to be ordained to Newton Church was Rev. Elisi in 1963.

The Samoan version

In the 1940s there were relatively few Samoans in Auckland. In the midst of the larger number of Cook Islanders (and Niueans) worshipping at Beresford St in the early 1940s, in 1947 Samoan members numbered only ten. These Samoans would meet on Sundays for prayer meetings in an old prayer room--referred to as a cellar in the basement of the Beresford Street Church (Vandall transcript).

For two years, from 1947 to 1949, the Samoans struggled to establish themselves, trying to gain approval of the Fono Tele in Samoa. They requested that a Samoan-ordained pastor be sent to New Zealand, and at the same time lobbied with the CUNZ to provide a church building where they could worship. The Samoan group wished a pastor to be despatched to Auckland in much the same way as Pastor Tariu had been appointed, that is, a part-time minister who would have to work at a normal job to financially support himself and his family until such time as his congregation was able to support him. Twice the Samoan group appealed to the Fono Tele for a pastor--twice the Fono Tele declined claiming that the Samoan group needed to establish a church building first before a minister could be sent out (*ibid.*). This of course was the traditional procedure in Samoa when villages requested a pastor to minister to them. The Samoan group were doubly frustrated by continuous refusals by the CUNZ to provide them with a building for their services. Of significance is that of the three ethnic groups already mentioned, the Samoans were the only ones to ask support from an indigenous institution in their island home.

Finally the Samoan group succumbed to the Rev. Challis' request that Samoan services begin, led by Samoan deacons and himself. In August 1949 the first Samoan service was held at the Newton church at 3 in the afternoon (MBC Convenors report 1960). The Rev. Leuatea Sio was ordained in 1957, and was the first Pacific Island ordained minister and first New Zealand-trained Pacific Island minister to be appointed to Newton Church (See Plate VI).

Since those beginnings the Samoan membership of the PICC has mushroomed. Today they are the largest ethnic group within the PIC, and have been since the 1950s. Of the 64 Pacific Island ministers currently in service today, 47 of them are Samoans. Therefore, for most Samoans their involvement with the PIC begins in 1949 when Samoan

services began, and was cemented in 1957 when they received their first ordained Samoan Minister. However by the same token all informants acknowledged that "...the Cook Islanders were there first..." (Yandall transcript).

The Official version

According to the CUNZ the PIC was founded in 1947 to care for Pacific Islanders migrating to New Zealand from territories evangelised by the LMS. At that time it was reported that there were about 700 Islanders in Auckland and 500 in Wellington (CH 1944, 3/10/47 CUNZ to Challis). However, according to Nokise, the Assembly's decision did not establish the PIC as some Congregationalists would claim. What in fact happened was that this decision enabled the PIC to become, officially, another Congregational Church in New Zealand under the guidance of the CUNZ. Thus it could be argued that the Assembly's decision was merely the "icing on a cake already baked" (Nokise 1978:40). Nokise notes that a prominent feature of Assembly's decision was the way it focused on appointments and finance, without any acknowledgement of the unusual nature of the institution it was creating. The unity and integration of different ethnic groups was not an easy exercise on the practical level. Not surprisingly the PIC during its formative years encountered many difficulties.

It had to deal with three main groups of Pacific Islanders (the Tokelauans, in the 1960s-70s, combined with the Samoan group), who came from island churches already exercising a large measure of autonomy and who could not therefore be treated in the same ways. Needless to say, the move to establish a PIC initiated by Mr Edmonds and the Rev. Challis on behalf of the Cook Islands migrants and later endorsed by the CUNZ was an adventurous one. Challis's plea to the CUNZ to view the PIC as "special" and not to "...measure it with the yardstick of Congregationalism" (MBC Convenors report 1959) fell on deaf ears. However, the Rev. Challis's tireless, dogmatic pursuit of his idea of what the PIC represented meant that major structural changes were made in order for the PIC to exist harmoniously with its *papālagi* counterparts, while catering to the spiritual and pastoral needs of the three distinct ethnic groups. Nokise states that Rev Challis "had a tendency to enforce among leaders of the Church an idealistic view of integration based on

the notion that 'in Christ there is no Jew or Greek'" (1987:249). It is true that many of his sermons contained this theme; however, Challis's inadvertent assimilationist policy, according to Duncan (1990), has had adverse effects. His emphasis on European forms of worship, uncontaminated by indigenous forms, and his insistence on English being one's first language has contributed to a generation of NZ-born Pacific Islanders "speaking either good English with little knowledge of their native tongue, or, speaking neither good English nor good island dialects" (Duncan 1990:139). I contend that both Duncan and Nokise have over-simplified a very complex matter. They have over-estimated the assimilative thrust of the Rev. Challis's ministry, and under-estimated the resilience of the Samoan persistent identity system. Although the Rev. Challis did present to his Pacific Island congregation a view of the "other" *papālagi* side, at the same time, he supported and promoted the various ethnic groups and their indigenous ways of doing things. Although some criticise his attitudes to Pacific Islanders as paternalistic, they need to acknowledge that he was a fierce defender of Pacific Island people against the racist attacks of the public, police and media in the sixties and seventies.

The legacy the Rev. Challis left is a Pacific Islanders Church which presents a doggedly united front, despite murmurings of ethnic mobilisation and a movement of groups splitting from New Zealand structured churches to form churches based on indigenous forms (informant transcripts). This ideology of unity was also implicit during my interviews with informants who while giving information on their own ethnic groups spoke of the other groups within the Church with the utmost respect and admiration.

In conclusion, based on these versions and my "native" and "insider" status I would set the origin of the PIC, and the Newton Church, at 1947 for the following reasons. Even though 1943 was the year when the first group of Pacific Islanders held their first organised church service in their own language as part of a Congregational Church, 1993 has come and gone without a murmur. By 1947 when the CUNZ formally recognised the PIC, services for Cook Islanders and Niueans were already in full swing. By 1947, the Samoan group had already begun to organise their own group services in consultation with the Fono Tele in Samoa and the CUNZ. There is acknowledgement by almost all of my informants that the Cook Islanders were there first. There is consensus by the Niueans. It has been common knowledge that the Newton Church has had this staggered origin. During many

Sunday School Anniversaries, just before his sermon, the Rev. Chalfis would always remind the Congregation of the PIC's humble beginnings: that it was in 1943 that the Cook Islanders first met for services, that the Pukapukans were the first to start group services at Helensville, that the Niueans' first service was held in 1948, and that the first Samoan service was held in 1949 (MBC Convenors report 1960).

It is abundantly clear from the mere existence of these different versions that although the members of the PIC do not believe that their Church originated in 1947 by formal recognition of the CUNZ, setting the 50th Anniversary for 1997 is politically and ethnically neutral, and a convenient "way out". So what we have in this case is a myth of origin that has been perpetuated by Church leaders, and one that has been common knowledge to members of the Newton Church since its conception. Although in this origin myth several versions exist, in the final analysis, all versions have been accommodated, historical material has not threatened the myths. More importantly, cultural concerns, namely the centrality of the Church and the necessity for unity, far outweigh historical processes.

Now when will the 50th Anniversary of the PIC take place?--Although informed at a meeting of the Pacific Islanders Advisory Board held in 1991, that it was consensually decided that the 50th Anniversary was to have been celebrated in the year 1993. This did not eventuate, which leads me to suspect that the year 1947, the official starting point for PIC Newton, is to be the benchmark for the origin of Newton Church. A 50-year history of the PIC on a national scale is to be published in the near future.

Growth

Duncan (1990) describes the rapid growth of the Church in the 1970s. During the 1970s and 1980s branches were established throughout New Zealand (Nokiso lists twenty branches by 1969, including seven in the Auckland region--Newton, Otara, Avondale, Mangere, Te Atatu, Onehunga, Helensville, plus branches at Tokoroa, Rotorua, Hamilton, Hastings, Wanganui, Porirua, Petone, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin, Invercargill and Bluff 1978:11). As the number of Pacific Islanders increased they took an active role in church government and decision-making. "For many the church became the sustaining

focus of their religious and social life. Here they could indulge in their own cultural activities and catch up on news from home. The church community replaced the loss of the island village community..." (Duncan 1990:129). However, this did not necessarily imply equal growth. Branches grew up differently and at different times. Furthermore, different leadership styles also meant that each branch had a distinct style of decision making.

More emphasis was placed on the secular activities of the Church. The two identifiable areas were welfare work and issues concerning young people. In the early days of the Church's existence my primary informant, the Rev. Leuatea Sio, tells me that welfare and youth work took up almost two-thirds of his work. Welfare work was comprehensive as well as time-consuming. It included meeting new arrivals at the airport or wharves and arranging accommodation. Where difficulties arose because of communication problems it meant translating, interpreting and general court work, and arranging legal advice. As many migrants came with their families, Social Welfare forms needed to be filled and advice regarding benefits and pensions explained. The Church acted as a referral agency involved in completing passport renewals and applications and assisting with house loans/purchases and trainee schemes through the Department of Maori Affairs (now known as Te Puni Kōkiri). Ministers assisted in employment issues, acting as go-betweens for worker and management, and often had to talk to groups of managers and employers regarding attitudes and employee policies. They would be called on as often to act as liaison person with the Police and Justice departments, as to assist in teaching Sunday school and bible class lessons. Community outreach involved hospital visits and being part of community projects. Working with the young people and catering for their needs was one of the Rev. Sio's primary commitments, and was mirrored in the institutions available to youth. These consisted not only of Sunday school and Bible class, but also youth groups--such as Boys Brigade and Girls Life Brigade, and sports groups--such as table tennis, cricket and netball and basketball teams. Youth socials were also abundant in the early days to counteract the alienating urban New Zealand life in the first few decades of the Church's existence.

This work in the earlier days was recognised by the Government and a welfare grant was forthcoming for the period 1959 to 1976--600 pounds in 1959 was increased gradually to \$4,800 per annum. It was only a token amount, hardly enough to cover the time

and energy and resources that went into this work. This funding was stopped in 1976 on the completed merger with the Presbyterian Church. The work continues to this day but to a lesser extent. Even today, the PIC church is regarded by academics, ministers and lay people alike as a village, and in the 1960s and 1970s, this metaphor indeed reflected the need of its people at that time.

As the Polynesian populations of Auckland and Wellington began to increase, more and more people moved to the cities' outer suburbs. In Auckland, although the majority of Church members who followed this trend, or were forced to by Governmental housing policies, still came to Newton to worship, economic hardship, and in a lot of cases poor bus services, meant that some joined local *papāngi* parishes. Gradually the need for their own places to worship, and their own indigenous ministers, accelerated and exerted pressure on Newton Church to either acquire land to build new PIC churches, or to provide existing churches with Pacific Island ministers. Where this did not happen, *ekālēsia* members either joined other churches (for Samoans especially the EFKS). In some cases the numerical superiority of Pacific Islanders, reflected perhaps in their domination of office-bearing positions, resulted in *papāngi* members gradually diminishing and ultimately disappearing altogether, and in others the Pacific Islanders in time left to establish their own churches (Sio transcript).

One of my *tamā* described the exodus of the Samoan group from First Church in Dunedin:

...the decision was unanimously reached...to terminate their association with First Church to move onto another church building...where they can try to organise themselves as a worshipping body within the church, in their Samoan way of doing things....In spite of their efforts...[and the *pālagi* minister's], over the past years to amalgamate as a truly multi-racial fellowship, the group has not been able to truly feel at home or belonging to First church. This has been the cause of the drift of many...to other churches....There are a number of contributing factors...but perhaps the most unfortunate one is our failure to provide for them the full-time Pacific ministry which they constantly asked for over the years....

And in a letter to the Auckland Presbyterian Ministry Committee appealing for financial assistance for a Niuean minister for Mangere, the Samoan Secretary for the PIC

Advisory Committee wrote:

Please take into consideration the cultural fact that the Islanders look up to, and seek guidance, comfort and encouragement, only from their own ethnic group minister. Therefore the local, Parish boundaries really count for nothing in the minds of our people. Whenever a need arises, the priority is to call the minister from our own islands eg. the Rev. Mave being the only Cook Island minister in the whole of Auckland...is called upon from Helensville to Pukekohe to cater to the spiritual needs of the Cook Islanders.

Merger with Presbyterian church.

The Rev. Robert Lye Challis (Plate VII) headed the team of Pacific Island ministers up until his death in 1979. Perhaps more than any other individual, he influenced the way the PICC developed during the 1950s and 1960s. There is no question of his commitment and loyalty to Pacific Islands people and their spiritual development in the New Zealand situation. However, his inadvertent assimilationist policy caused resentment among many Pacific Island ministers and people. It came as no surprise therefore that the solution he offered, to save the wavering fortunes of the PICC when the *papālagi* component of the Congregational church of New Zealand took a downward turn in membership, was to join a much bigger and powerful European church--the Presbyterian church of New Zealand (PCNZ).

In 1969 the CUNZ united with the PCNZ. The PICC officially became Presbyterian and its name was changed to Pacific Islanders' Presbyterian Church (PIPC). While the churches were pressing towards integration, the assimilation of Samoan migrants was still a conceptual ideal (Challis 1970, also Nokise 1978), but already divisions were taking place. In 1963 a group of Samoans had broken away from Newton, because Newton was "not Samoan enough", and established the first branch of the EFKS in New Zealand (Nokise 1978:216-244). For these Samoans the EFKS provided a religious and cultural environment much closer to what they were used to, viz., the use of the Samoan language and the appointment of ministers from Samoa. To counter future schisms, Newton leaders formed

the *'autalavou* in 1969.

Hesitancy about the merger with PCNZ, especially for the Samoans who feared that the change of name from Congregational to Presbyterian would effectively sever their bonds with the mother church of Fono Tele in Samoa, pragmatically affected the length of time it took for the merger to happen. Although the merger was supposed to have happened in 1969, it was not until 1974 that the very last branch of the PICC reluctantly agreed to move (see Plate VIII).

As Newton PICC, under Congregational administration, the Church was represented at CUNZ Assemblies by the PIC Management Board, a group of Pacific Island ministers and elders representing all the various branches of PIC. The Management Board was free to deal with and administrate at a structural level, all the issues that its members and PICC congregations were concerned with in their very "Pacific Island" way (See Plate IX). They held regular conferences and used these as opportunities to socialise and catch up with the news from different parishes and their island homes, as well as dealing with serious matters and concerns--especially as forums for discussing the urgency in erecting new halls and churches for dealing with expanding congregations. When the merger with the PCNZ took place, the previously autonomous Management Board of the PICC was reduced to an advisory capacity. The rigid structure of the PCANZ and the "Book of Order" slowed down the growth of the Church and accelerated the exodus of many Samoans to EFKS and other institutions. This was not an imagined problem.

At the national Presbyterian Assembly in 1979, a decade after the supposed merger of PICC with PCANZ, the Rev. Leuatca Sio, as the convenor of the Pacific Islanders' Advisory Committee, vented his anger, disgust and frustration at the stifling *papa'lagi* machinery of PCANZ which he saw as stymying the growth of the PIC in New Zealand, in a hallmark speech to the Presbyterian clergy (Pres. Assembly News, November 1979:1). After stating that the "European" way of doing things was very slow, extremely over-regulated and archaic, he pointed out that during the last 32 years, the first 10 years of the PIC existence had seen the foundation of 6 new churches, the following decade witnessed a further growth of 19 new churches, but since the merger with PCNZ (the last 10 years) there had been only one new church. Yet, he noted, the number of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand had more than trebled in the last 10 years. In a hard-hitting, impassioned and

emotional address, he recalled how a prominent *papālagi* Presbyterian had told him that the Pacific Islanders represented "the joy" of faith while the Europeans had to bear the "burden" of responsibility. Sio, enraged by this comment responded:

Moderator, I was tempted to swear at that meeting but I didn't....Pacific Islanders are not illiterate, lazy savages waiting for paw-paws to fall into their mouths....We should learn from the...[Ratana Church]...how to bring back our Pacific Islanders and Maoris into fellowship....If you want the Pacific Islanders' part of our Church to stagnate, continue with the way you are at the moment. We are sick and tired of words, words, words....We are sick of antiquated regulations. We are sick of losing our brethren to the paganism of the New Zealand way of life....Go to hell all those who are not interested in our case (ibid:1).

There is no doubt that both the PICC and the PCNZ (as it was formerly known) had their respective reasons for agreeing to merge. Given the ecumenical mood of the period, such a move was probably in line with theological and liturgical world-wide trends. The call for church union was strong; the familiar cry of 'We are all one in Christ' was loud and clear. The merits of theological and sociological "cross-polynesianism" became powerful incentives to facilitate and accommodate dialogue (Nokise 1978). Both sides stood to gain, and both have. But despite a long period of some 21 years of so-called amalgamation, a complete merger has never really taken place, especially among the Samoan component of the Church, and the PIC remains strangely isolated from the PCANZ, despite appeals by some PIC leaders for more integration.

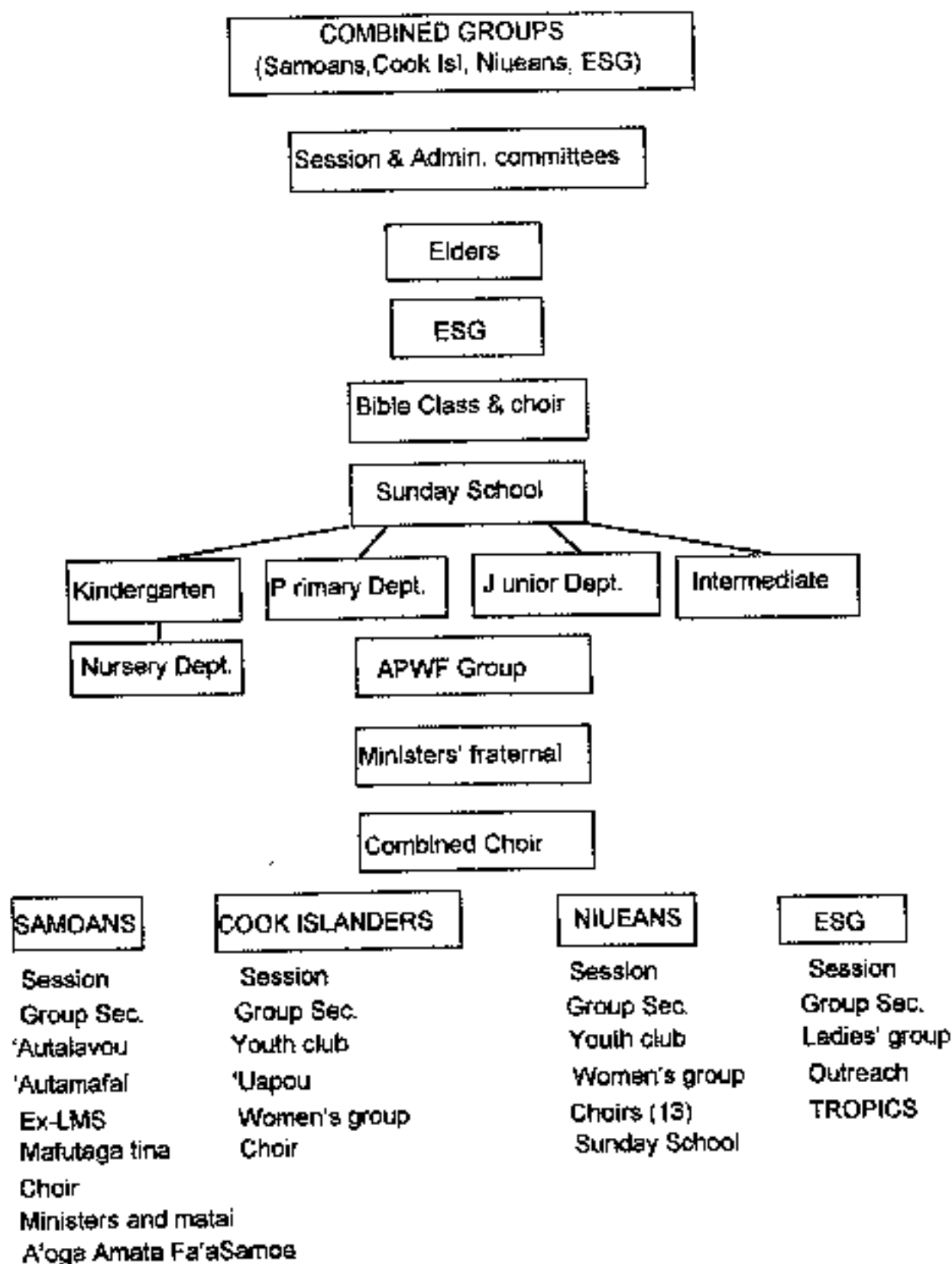
It would be true to say that the PCANZ has tried its best to accommodate the needs of Pacific Islanders since 1969. It has at times shown a willingness to alter its rules and regulations to enable Pacific Islanders to be part of its life and work. However, in spite of its best intentions, the PCANZ has not really understood what PIC leaders and people have been trying for many years to say, and the root of the matter lies in self-determination.

Newton Church today

Today, the PIC is still expanding (see Appendix 5), with even more branches being established at Glen Eden, Otahuhu, Mt Eden and Orakei. Members of the Newton Church are estimated to number in excess of 10,000. Over 50 percent are young people (10-40).

Sunday school children number 1,000-1,200, teachers over 100 and elders 300-350.

Figure 3.1: Organisation of ethnic groups within PIPC Newton



Church Organisation

The senior Minister (*toea'ina*) is the Head of the Church. He is assisted by a Session clerk/Secretary, a treasurer, all elders and lay-preachers, Sunday school leaders, and the English-speaking group. At Newton there has always been a Samoan minister, a Niuean minister, and a Cook Island minister. As yet there is no BSG minister. A minister's time is taken up with secular and pastoral duties, and he plays very important roles as key co-ordinator of information and sources of communication. The women's groups are usually headed by a minister's wife as president. Throughout the week there are regular meetings, not only of the various ethnic groups, but also combined meetings of the various sessions and administrative committees (e.g., finance and development), as well as Sunday school and Bible class leaders' meetings and commitments. For most Samoans of Newton Church their involvement centres on the '*autalavou*', which is part of the Samoan group of the Church, and has its own committee, with a president, treasurer and secretary. This group usually meets weekly on Fridays for bible study in Samoan, and has mid-week '*aulafese*' (choir). Additional meetings need to fit in with the schedules of the various other groups of the Church. An example is during summer when the '*autalavou*' is preparing for sports. Practices will be set every day after work--except on Fridays and Wednesdays. The main activities of the group are Bible study, culture nights, games or sports activities, cultural and sports competitions. Samoan is spoken the whole time. The '*autalavou*' numbers approximately two hundred members and is mostly made up of '*āga*' groups. Over half of its members are NZ-borns. Although officially designated as a youth group, ages of its members range from infants to over 60 year olds. The kinship aspect is very strong. This tight schedule does not include extra important occasions, such as combined choir practices, *fa'aulufalega*, *malaga*, anniversaries, competitions and festivals, which require additional meetings to be scheduled.

Duncan draws parallels between elders' roles in the church in New Zealand and those of members of the village council in Samoa (except that in New Zealand an elder may be any mature person without being a *matai*) and the combined session and the village *fono*.

She writes:

Some elders are ceremonial leaders. They make speeches of welcome and farewell. Some play a liturgical role. They are active in the church services, serving communion, lay-preaching, visiting the sick. Then there are those with a more secular role working in the community. They may be the choir managers, the church accountants, and lawyers. Some never attend the meetings but their opinions are canvassed by other elders and ministers (1990:135).

Duncan's 1990 publication gives a good account of Sunday Services, family devotions and prayers, the calendar of events and festivals, and special fundraising events in the PIC Glen Eden Parish, which is similar although not identical to Newton Church. There are constant opportunities for involvement offered to the congregation throughout the year, every year, and it is this unique combination of culture and christianity, and opportunities to express it, that make Pacific Islanders enthusiastic christians. The social organisation allows for individual development of many skills to a high degree of competence, but always the individual is realised within the community or '*āiga* context. "The Pacific Island migrants have brought to New Zealand their cultures which are inseparable from the church, the expressions of which are at the heart of their religious experience" (Duncan 1990:137). Fundraising events remain the most common and most popular way of raising money within PIC churches.

The Secretary of Newton PIC informed me that as well as the Church's own financial accounts, there are over a hundred other subsidiary accounts and funds under the Treasurer's care. When a new manse was required for the Rev. Sio in 1982, the Samoan group of Newton church raised \$96,000 in only six weeks. This was enough for the new house as well as chattels. Again, when the Invercargill branch ran up a debt of \$250,000 for the building of a church hall in 1979, a debt which it could not repay on its own, a national PIC appeal was instigated by the Newton mother-church in 1981, and within a year the debt was repaid plus all accrued interest. Funds are raised in this way not only for churches, halls and manses in New Zealand but also for projects back in Samoa, such as church and school buildings in the villages.

At the same time however, the Pacific Island form of worship and PIC pragmatics has proved to be a challenge to PCANZ and *papālagi* authorities. "The ministers and

theological students are aware of how a "coconut theology" which is still being developed...is...having to be adapted to the New Zealand situation. Some are experimenting with the order of service, or substituting taro and coconut milk for the bread and wine of the communion service" (ibid.:138).

But it is not merely with the elements or order of service that the PIC is experimenting in order to secure autonomy, which it perceives has been lost, in its quest for a Pacific Island version of PCANZ.

The English-Speaking Group (ESG)

The ESG was set up in early 1970s by Church leaders to meet the needs of NZ-born Pacific Islands children whose first language was English, to keep these young people who had left Bible class involved with the Church, and to accommodate the few *pālāgi* members and spouses. At this time, the usual ritual was that one was baptised into the Church, attended Sunday school, went to Bible class, usually joined Youth choir, Boys Brigade or Girls Life Brigade, became a Bible class leader or Sunday school teacher, joined one of the ethnic groups on reaching adulthood, became a member of the *ekālēsia*, then became an elder or lay-preacher or both. Graduates of Bible class whose first language was English and who did not want to be teachers or leaders, just seemed to fall by the wayside. The leaders of the Church at that time, the Rev. Challis and the Rev. Leuatea Sio, decided to form a body of English-speaking youth elders, which later became the ESG, to counter the problem of youth leaving the Church (See Chapter Five). Other writers have viewed its formation as the continuation of the assimilationist policies of some of the Church leaders (Nokise 1978, Duncan 1990).

The formation of the ESG coincided with the founding of the *'autalavou*. It was hoped that these two institutions would meet the needs of the two groups; the latter borrowed directly from Samoa would meet the needs of the Samoan-speaking and island-born members of the *ekālēsia*, and the former the needs of the NZ-born youth. Today the ESG represents the leadership group for the younger portion of Newton Church. They are responsible for the administration and running of the Sunday school and Bible class. Christian outreach is provided by the ESG's Tropics programme, where ESG missionaries

are sent overseas on missions to spread the Gospel and to share Pacific Island cultures with people from other countries, and through cultural performance groups (Ocean Waves and Island Breeze). Secular outreach has been achieved by the establishment of The Tagata Pasifika Resources Development Trust set up by the ESG with the Rev. Sio's blessing in 1988 to counter Pacific Island unemployment in Auckland. The ESG has also been foundational in the development of to date nine ministers who have gone on to serve shared Ministry of the PCANZ (for names see ESG Sub. to CUANZ, Appendix 7).

Theoretically the ESG has been in existence for some twenty years. Given that there are many more NZ-borns in the 1990s than there were in the 1970s one would expect the membership of this group to be larger. In fact members in the focus group for the purposes of this study number only some thirty members, with a core group of about ten elders, although this number has increased recently with the election of a dozen or so new ESG elders in 1995. On the surface it would seem that NZ-borns are just opting out of Church altogether and not coming back, but the situation is much more complex, and has important implications for the issues of *fa'aSamoa* and identity for members of the ESG (see Chapters Four and Five). The ESG eldership represents the leaders of the young people of Newton Church and consists of some members who have remained in the church, and others who have left the Church and returned. There are many more young people who have left and not returned. One reason given for this is because they see themselves as being marginalised by the push and pull factors of the NZ-borns loss of interest in the church and schooling where "the education system encourages critical thinking and individualism...concepts foreign to [traditional] Pacific Island societies" (Tiatia 1997:216). Tiatia states:

The church is not catering for youth need or finding points of compromise. To compensate for this lack of support, the youth are compelled to seek alternatives whether it be in the form of a charismatic experience in another church, or toward the plaguings of drug, alcohol or physical abuse, to name but a few (1997:217).

This generalisation is not borne out by this study (see Part Two) in which compromise has been implemented by Newton Church in the formation of the ESG, and by accepting charismatic practice by allowing the youth to run their own monthly youth

service. However, I am mindful that the participants in the Tiatia study were aged between 16-25, from different ethnic groups, and covered four denominations. The members of my focus group are members of the same Church and ethnic group, aged between 17-60 and thus cover a broader and more varied range of life and Church experiences from which more focused and substantive conclusions may be drawn. Furthermore, given that my focus group represents youth and older-aged NZ-borns, and that they represent younger and older people who during their youth have left the Church and then returned intermittently, reasons given for leaving in Chapters Four and Five are indicative of reasons provided in Tiatia's study, and provide a general overview of why many more youth are not part of the ESG and are "out there" at various points along their identity journeys. It can also be reasoned, for those who have left never to return, that their brief involvement with the Church in their early childhood has been sufficient for them to build a satisfying self identity away from the Church.

Today, the ESG is a semi-structured group of about forty predominantly NZ-born Samoans whose ages, gender and occupations varied as did their views on the Church, the *fa'aSamoa*, and identity. The ESG personal profiles provide demographical information for twenty-five members and elders of the ESG, who make up my focus group, and to whom I refer as "members" in Chapters Four and Five (see Appendix 8 where fictitious names are provided). There are six *matai* in the focus group (five NZ-born and one island-born, including one female *matai*). All the other members have either fathers, brothers or uncles who are *matai*, so that all members have experienced the *matai* system in the New Zealand context.

The ESG is not a contemporary cross-section of NZ-born Samoans. The different attitudes and experiences expressed by members (see Part Two) can be attributed to differing historical circumstances rather than to various phases of the identity journey. Although the ESG is a diverse group in terms of ages and experiences, there are elements in common which are shared. The experiences of the younger members resemble although are not identical to the experiences of the more mature members at the same age(s). In addition, for the latter, the experiences of younger members are mirrored in the attitudes and behaviour these members see in their own children. Moreover, although the ESG is a specific group of NZ-borns by nature of all being members of Newton Church, their

diverse experiences of being born in New Zealand and their experiences of the *fa'aSamoa* are considered as valid experiences of their identity journeys.

Future developments of Newton Church

In a proposal to the PCANZ General Secretary, titled "*Ua tofa i vai, ae ala i ai*" (Though the present is bad, better times are ahead), in November 1992, the Pacific Island Advisory Council stated that the PCANZ had failed to take into account the historical context of churches where PIC members were nurtured. The submission pointed out that the dependency mentality associated with colonial structures and processes reflected in a superior/inferior relationship was a prominent feature of the relationship between the PCANZ and the PIC, and that restructuring of the PCANZ was necessary to counterbalance this inequity. It warned that the present structure, if it was not changed, would continue to endorse and perpetuate this dependency mentality. And as long as this prevailed, questions would always be raised as to the credibility and authenticity of the type of theology upon which the faith of the church is based.

What the PIC Advisory Committee advocated was constitutional reform and it demanded restructuring of the PCANZ to meet the needs of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand in the form of a PIC Synod.

In the proposal which was presented to the PCANZ General Assembly in 1993, as the PIPC's 21st birthday present (21 years since the supposed merger), it requested that a multicultural commission be set up to revise the constitution of the PCANZ so that the principles of partnership, bicultural and multicultural development are expressed and emphasised, and to re-draft the constitution where necessary, and report to a future General Assembly.

In the final analysis what the the PIC was in fact requesting was that resources be shared equally among all ethnic groups of the PCANZ, and that the appropriate proportion of resources should be handed over in the spirit of true Christian faith in partnership. The PIC Advisory Committee went on to propose the following structure (figure 3.2) in which "the principles of partnership, bicultural, as well as multi-cultural development are upheld"

(ibid:8):

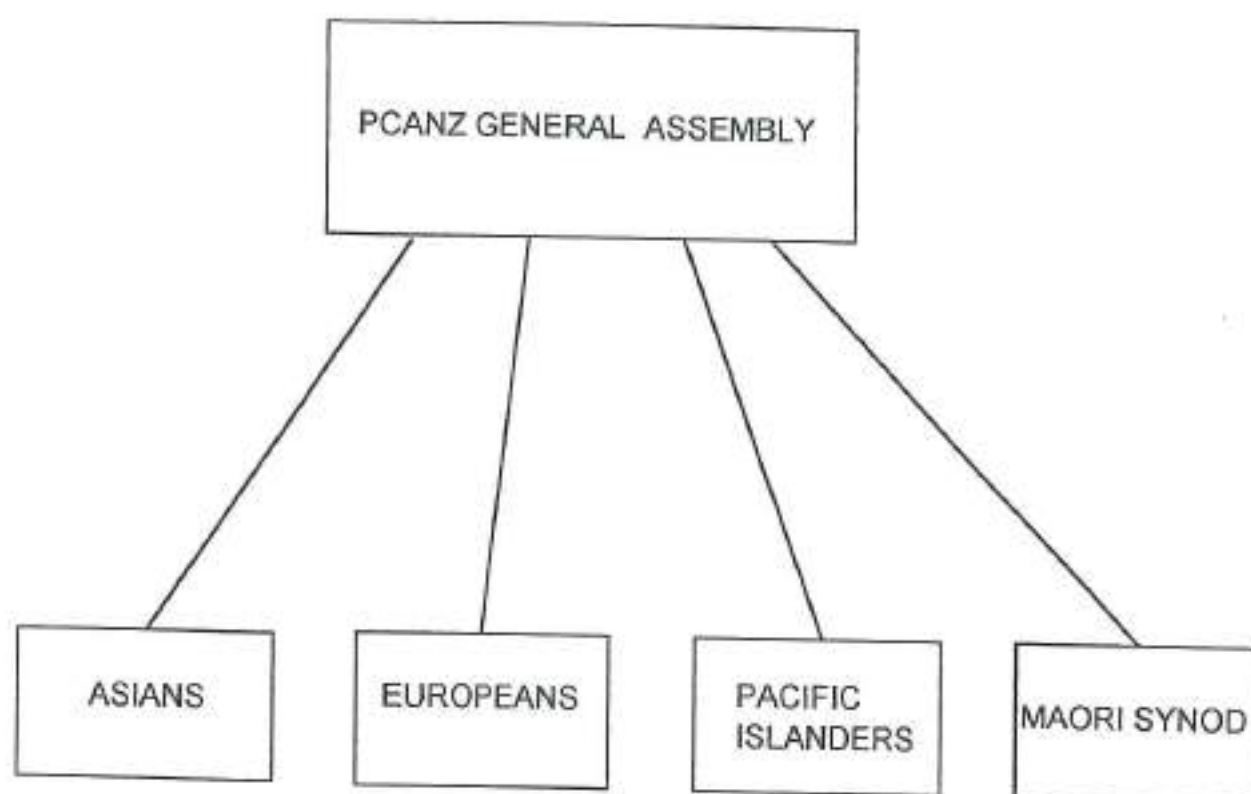
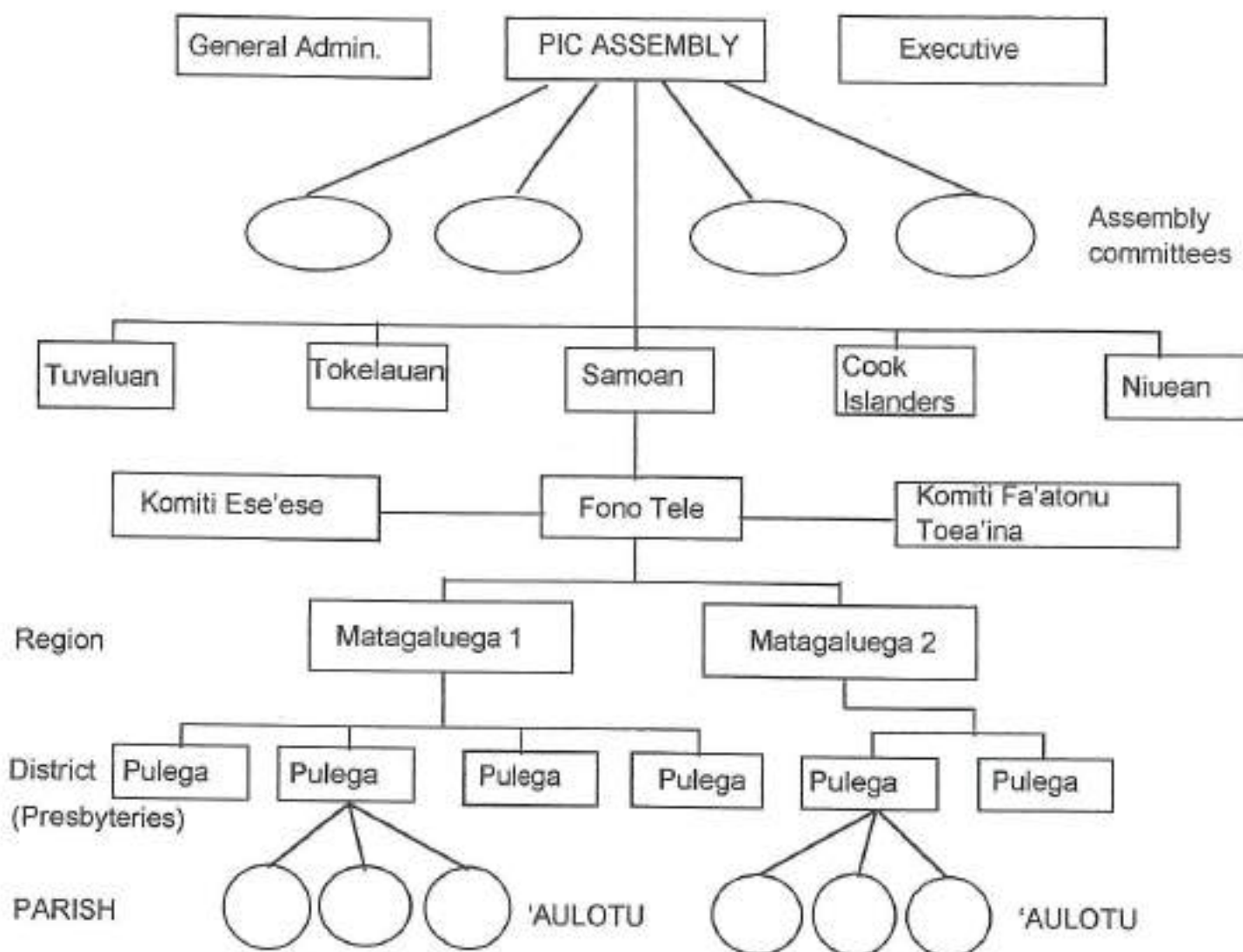


Figure 3.2: The 'new' structure in terms of ethnic groups proposed by PIC Committee.

According to this plan each group was to determine their own appropriate structure to facilitate cultural expression of their members' faith, each group was to exercise direct control of its ministry with an annual report to be submitted to the General Assembly, and the PIC was to be arranged according to different ethnic groups, i.e., five subgroups: Samoan, Cook Islander, Niuean, Tokelauan, Tuvaluan.

Figure 3.3 illustrates how the Pacific Islanders component of the PCANZ would be structured, and features the Samoan group model.



(Adapted from "Ua tofa i vai, 'ae ala i 'ai")

Figure 3.3: The Samoan group model based on Newton PIC.

At the regional level, *Matagaluega 1* represents Northland, North Shore, Auckland, South Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, and would have four *pulega*. *Matagaluega 2*: Wanganui, Manawatu, South Island, would have two *pulega*. Each *matagaluega* was to be under the pastoral oversight of the *Toea'ina* in relation to the spiritual welfare of the people. Each *aulotu* was to elect representatives to their respective *pulega* and maintain direct links to its *pulega* and *matagaluega*, in consultation at all times with the *aulotu* session.

In response to "*Ua tofa i vai 'ae ala i ai*", two further important submissions were received by the PCANZ General Assembly. The first was from St Paul's Trinity Pacific, Christchurch in February 1993, and the second was from the ESG of Newton PIC in November 1994.

The former submission expressed the overwhelming decision to reject the proposal in its original format in favour of more consultation and a national structure that would accommodate the issues and challenges which the church is facing now and in the future, and questioned the need to separate out the different ethnic groups.

The submission from the ESG of Newton Church, (see Appendix 7) supported the original proposal but insisted on the inclusion of the ESG as a sixth ethnic group stating that ESG must be recognised and acknowledged nationally, and given real positions of power and responsibility within the proposed Church structure (see Chapter 7). It stated that the twenty-year track record of Newton's ESG expressed in its current activities is evidence that it is a successful, dynamic, necessary part of the church and that the creative partnership between the ESG and other ethnic groups developed at Newton has served to meet the spiritual needs as well as to maintain the vitality of our Pacific Island cultures. It ends with the warning that:

It would be at the peril of the future of the PIC in Aotearoa...if the ESG is not included as a bona fide ethnic group in the proposed Synod structure not only for Newton PIC, but for other Parishes which share/recognise/anticipate this need (ESG Submission:8).

It is clear from the ESG's perspective that Newton Church must remain multicultural. But in order to do this it must also cater for the needs of NZ-born children of the *ekālētia*. The inclusion of the ESG as a sixth ethnic group of the PIC would not only recognise the contribution that this group is making to the administration and teaching areas of Sunday school and Bible class, but also provide the space for the youth to voice their concerns regarding the Church. ESG members are only too cognisant of the fact that the present structure of Newton Church based on the Rev. Challis's PIC model represented an inclusive multiculturalism, while the proposed PIC Synod model (without inclusion of the ESG, and based exclusively on the Samoan model) represents an exclusive

Church and christianity in New Zealand: reclaiming the *fa'aSamoa*

Fa'avae i le atua Samoa

Samoa is founded on God

While the Samoanising of christianity has taken place with relative ease in Samoa, indigenising church institutions in New Zealand, churches which are not transplanted indigenous models, but churches which are themselves part of the larger framework of New Zealand religious institutions, has been a more difficult task. Newton Church as a migrant church has had major battles with various New Zealand Church authorities during its fifty-year history, and will no doubt continue to do so. The resultant effect is that in the migrant community the position of the Church and the centrality of the *fa'aSamoa* and its ministers has been magnified. Its earlier secular concern with the welfare of its *ekālēsia* has also been magnified. Whereas the primary role of the church in the islands is to give people supposed spiritual guidance, in New Zealand the church has had to give not only spiritual guidance but also must and does provide practical guidance in a number of secular areas.

In the 1990s this is no longer the situation; there is another dynamic in operation. The Church's role as village meeting the cultural, social and welfare needs of its members remains. However the minister's role in welfare support etc. is mostly being undertaken by the children and grandchildren of the *ekālēsia* members. NZ-borns are now largely responsible for the welfare of their parents and *'āiga* in dealing with government institutions and interacting with the wider community of New Zealanders. They are the intermediaries between the two worlds, the bridge between *fa'aSamoa* and New Zealand life-styles. The PIC in the 1990s is not only the village, but the meeting place of two worlds--the two worlds of island and *pālagi*, parents and their NZ-born children--physically, spiritually and culturally.

The Church in its early years and through to the 1990s functioned as an agency of social control. The Church was also an arena for political life. Because of the relative absence of Samoans in the active political life of mainstream New Zealand and Samoan agency in determining their own preferences, the Church became the arena of their political activities. Examples of this were the enhancement of status, the handling of racist issues and the indigenising of a *papālagi* institution. Also, the Church was the main area of social life in which Samoans could aspire to become the leaders. It was in the arena of social life where ambitious individuals could achieve distinction and the symbols of status. But in addition the Church also had political meaning for the masses. The development of the Church was tied up with the Samoan 'āga, i.e., a large proportion of the churches in Samoa for example are 'family churches'. Outside of the 'āga, however, the Church represented the only other organised social existence for Samoans. In providing a structured social life in which Samoans could give expression to their deepest feelings, their culture, and at the same time achieve status and find a meaningful existence--PIC provided a refuge in an often hostile *papālagi* world.

For those who worked and suffered in a *papālagi* world, religion offered a catharsis for their pent-up emotions and frustrations. Moreover, it turned their minds from the sufferings and privations of this world to a world after death where the weary would find rest. The PIC with its own form of religious worship was a world which the *papālagi* could not invade but only regard with an "attitude of condescending amusement" (Challis 1973). The PIC could enjoy this freedom so long as it offered no threat to *papālagi* dominance in both economic and social relations. And on the whole, the PIC was not a threat to *papālagi* domination and helped Samoans to become accommodated to an indifferent status. The religion of Samoans continued to be "other worldly" in its outlook, dismissing the sufferings and injustices of this world as temporary and transient. The PIC remained a refuge despite Samoan acceptance of their disparagement and domination by *papālagi*. But all of this was part of God's plan and was regarded just as the physical environment was regarded. What mattered was the way the migrant was treated in the Church which gave its *ekālāsia* members an opportunity for self-expression and status.

In moving to New Zealand, Samoans were uprooted from their way of life in the

islands. However the church as village provided stability. Equal education opportunities for children brought occupational differentiation, which gave rise to a new system of social stratification or socio-economic class. The change in the Church became one of secularisation, i.e., the Church lost its other-worldly outlook and began to focus attention on Samoan's conditions in this world, and took an interest in community affairs.

The PIC as a barrier to assimilation

As Samoans increasingly enter the mainstream of New Zealand life, the traditional organisation of Samoan life is changing. Integration does not have the same effect on all parts of a Samoan community. The extent and nature of the participation of Samoans in the wider New Zealand society is determined first of all by their class position. Although working class Samoans in cities, including those engaged in domestic and personal services and those employed as unskilled labourers, have more contacts with New Zealand life, they still prefer to be more or less confined to the Samoan community (through their 'āiga and church networks). As Samoan workers acquire skills and become members of unions, take up public sector jobs and white collar work, they begin to enter the mainstream of New Zealand life. A second factor and of equal importance, which determines the nature and extent of the participation of Samoans in the wider New Zealand community, is their own institutional life. A beginning are those institutions which embody secular interests of Samoans--business enterprises which cater especially to the personal and other needs of Samoans, and thus supply services otherwise ignored by *papālagi* establishments. Then there are certain cultural institutions, the most important of course being the PIC Church (and EFKS) which embodies the cultural traditions of Samoans to a far greater extent than any other institution. It is the institutions which embody the secular interests of Samoans that are being undermined more rapidly than those representing their cultural interests. When one comes to the PIC Church one encounters the most important institutional barrier to integration and assimilation of Samoans. Samoans *en masse* continue to attend the PIC and other Samoan churches, and the PIC as an institution continues to function as an important element in the social and cultural life of Samoans.

In the 1990s, the Church's role as a refuge and strength, the source of spiritual

guidance, has been diluted. The PIC as a barrier to the integration of Samoans into mainstream New Zealand life should not be underestimated. For Samoans of Newton PIC, especially NZ-borns, the Church has provided one way, albeit a major way, to reclaim the *fa'aSamoa* and a Samoan identity.

The new Samoan 'middle-class'

The migration and urbanisation of Samoans on a large scale has brought about a transformation of the Samoan Church and changed the outlook of Samoans upon the world and their place in the world. There has been a secularisation of outlook and PIC has not failed to reflect this change in outlook. The originally established PIC placed less emphasis upon salvation after death and directed their activities increasingly to the economic, social and political problems of Pacific Islanders--both new arrivals and the increasing NZ-born generation. Along with this was the emergence of a new Samoan middle-class, reflected in the successful educational outcomes and *papālagi* middle-class occupations and Samoan life-styles of the ESG of Newton Church, the children and grandchildren of the original Samoan migrants.

The outward appearance and standards of behaviour of the Samoan middle-class approximate most nearly the norms of the white New Zealand society, although many of these people do not perceive themselves in class terms at all. Nonetheless a new middle-class in the Samoan community is distinguished by occupation and is composed almost entirely of those persons who derive their incomes from white-collar work and as professional men and women. This middle-class is a new phenomenon in the Samoan migrant population because it has a different economic base and a different social heritage from the relatively small middle-class which had emerged from the Pacific Island migrant population in the earlier part of the century. Despite this perceived middle-class aspect, the persistence of a Samoan identity maintained by church and *'āga* has ensured that this 'middle-class' still retains the *fa'aSamoa* values and life-styles. This study shows that this middle-class aspect can be articulated for NZ-borns as more "freedom of choice"--an increased range of choice e.g., credit ratings, extensive networks which range far beyond *'āga* which captures information systems, different economies, different life-styles,

different identities--most of which were unavailable to their parents and grandparents. The experience of all these varieties of choices are articulated during the identity journeys of this group of NZ-borns, and expressed as NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* and/or secured *fa'aSamoa* (see Part Two).

The important role of religion and the PIC Church in the social organisation of Samoans has largely been influenced by the retention of the *fa'aSamoa* and Samoan lifeways--embodied in the expressions of the *vā fealoaloa'i* and the *vā tapuia*--in the face of restricted participation of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand society. And as a consequence the PIC has left its imprint on practically every aspect of Samoan life.



Plate I (above) : Rituals of distribution, Sama'i, Falelatai; 80 Kg flour, 80 Kg sugar, 80 Kg rice, 100 31b tins of pisupo, 8 tins of masi 4 large sacks of onions, misc. amounts of lollies, coffee, biscuits, and an assortment of clothing beginning to be distributed in eight equal piles. Cash also to be distributed.

Plate II (below): Sama'i village 'komiki', consisting of aunties and cousins



Plate III: "...girls all white and frilly..boys in suits and ties...". Members of the Bible Class in the 1960s on the steps of Church.



Plate IV: Newton PICC in the sixties

This photo taken from Edinburgh St. The original wooden Newton Congregational Church building is on the left (taken over by PICC in 1949, and used as church building 1949-1962, and as a hall from 1962-1979). In 1979 this building was demolished and replaced by a two-hall complex (Elisi and Fisher Halls), at a cost of \$600,000. To the left of this wooden building (not in photo) was the original Minister's manse, which later was renovated to become the two-storey administrative and Sunday School rooms complex called 'Challis House'. To the right of the photo is the 'new' concrete Newton PICC Church building, erected in 1962, as it appears today (See Appendix 6).

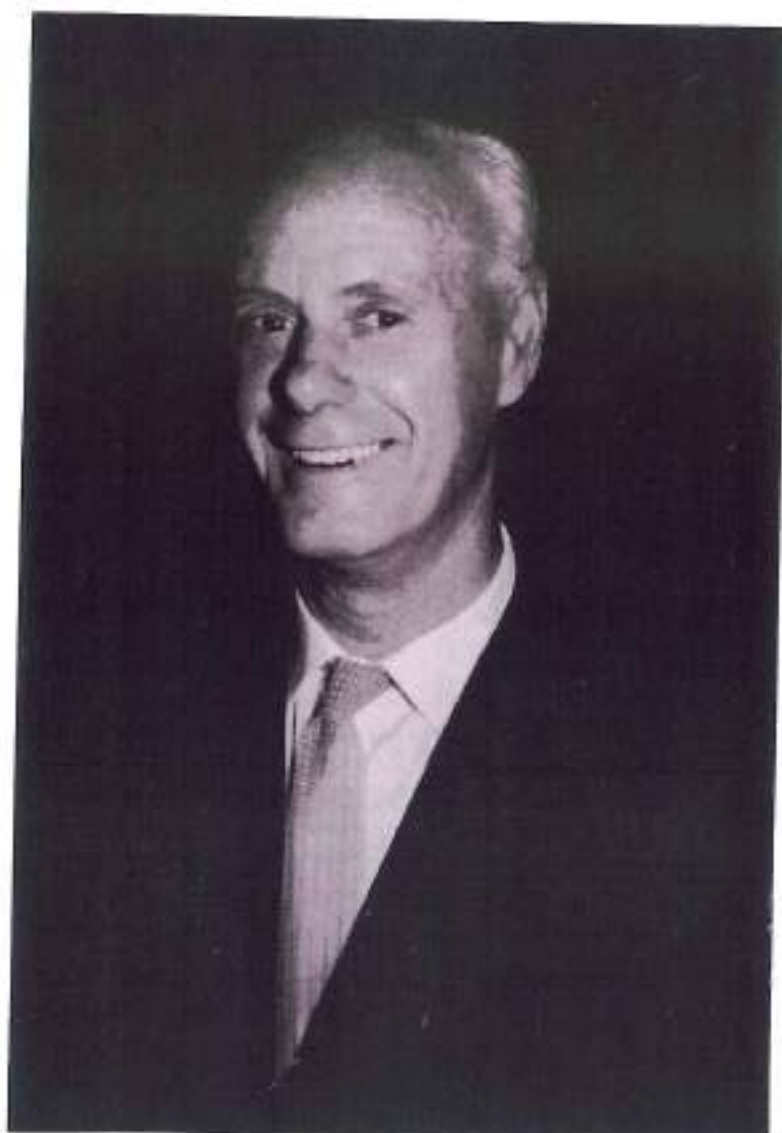


Plate V:

Robert Lye Challis 1903-1980 M.B.E, J.P., B.A., Dip.Soc.Sc. Born in London to parents of English working class background. Left school at 13 and worked in Foundry. Ordained as LMS missionary in 1933 for Missionary service in the Cook Islands. Came to Auckland in 1943 to minister to Pacific Islanders then worshipping at Beresford Congregational Church. When Newton PIC established in 1943, he became the Senior minister, assisted by the Rev. Tariu Te'aia. He retired in 1973, after 40 years ministry, and passed away in 1980. Fondly remembered by Newton PIC as 'Papa Challis'.



Plate VI:

Rev. Leuatea Iusitini Sio J.P. In 1994 received 'Tuifau' Title from Western Samoa. Only three people outside Samoa have been awarded this title. Born in Sapanaua, Western Samoa in 1925 to parents who were village ministers. Educated at Malifa, then Maluaifou, Leulumoega. He migrated to NZ in 1950 for a better education. Although having ambitions to be a teacher, accepted the call in 1956 to become a Minister, attended St Johns Theological College, went to University part-time. Was ordained as Minister, Newton PIC in 1957, the same year he was married. Became Senior Minister for Newton in 1973. Retired in 1993, after 36 years ministry. Affectionately called "Uncle Bob" by ESG and young people of Newton (several versions exist as to how he came to be called this).



Plate VII (above): Members of the Congregational Theological College, View Rd. Mt. Eden, Auckland in the 1960s. (Rev. Challis - middle row, extreme right).

Plate VIII (below): Rev. Sio (middle) with members of PICC congregation.



Plate IX: CUNZ 83rd General Assembly

Held at the Newton PICC, Auckland 11-13 October, 1966. This was one of the last CUNZ General Assemblies held before merge with PCNZ in 1969-70. This assembly includes: members of the PIC MBC 1966; PIC ministers at the time, as well as future ministers: Revs Challis (dec'd), Sio, Elisi Sionitali (dec'd), Vaomu Lima (dec'd), Ned Ripley, Lagi Sipeli, Lucky Mave (dec'd), Ta Upu Pere, Setu Solomona (dec'd), Setu Masina, Pehalo Talagi, Malaefou Korua, and their wives; Elders and administrative office-holders of Newton PICC and their wives; ministers and wives of other CUNZ Parishes; members of Newton ekalesia. Absent ministers at the time include: Laga'aua Talagi, Kenape Palatoe'ese, Pepe Nokise. NB. Present PICC ministers include: Rev Dr. Tafatolu Filemoni (Newton), Waita Tofilau, Le'ite Setefano, Aotofaga Lemuelu, Bill Cuthers

PART TWO

ENGLISH-SPEAKING GROUP NARRATIVES

Cornell states that the construction of an ethnic identity can be defined as a narrative:

...a story that takes the form--more or less--of 'we (or they) are the people who...'. It has a subject (us or them or an implicitly representative I); it has action (the things we or they do, did, think, experience); and it generally has attached to it a value of some sort (it makes us feel good or bad about ourselves or others)... Thus the narrative is an account of who we are, expressed in the idiom of events: our identity consists...in what we (or they) have done, or in what others have done to us. The result is an event-centred conception of the collective self...feelings of pride, self-righteousness, guilt, self-confidence, fear and other emotions.... The narrative is the vehicle for arousing such feelings, and for the sense of shared emotional and historical experience which link individual group members to each other (1995:1).

For NZ-born Samoans, the problem of identity is the problem of arriving at a life story that makes sense, which provides unity, stability and purpose, within a sociohistorical matrix that embodies two much larger stories--those of the dominant society of New Zealanders and those of island-born Samoans. How NZ-born members identify themselves is a distillation of socialisation processes about who they should be passed on to them in the stories of parents, elders and New Zealanders, and their personal experiences growing up in New Zealand through their contacts with *'āiga* in New Zealand and in Samoa, Newton Church and mainstream society. The confusion and conflict of identities which these members experience at various times in their lives shows on the one hand that it cannot be assumed that one will automatically identify with the national identity of one's birthplace, if the ethnic identity of one's parents is not of that place. On the other hand, neither can it be assumed that one will automatically adopt the ethnic identity of one's parents in a migrant situation (assuming that both parents are of the same ethnic origin). The positioning of these NZ-borns focus on their ability to "balance" the ethnic identities inherited from their parents with their identities of birthplace. Nevertheless, their current identities, conveyed in their narratives, are expressed as either NZ-born Samoan or Samoan

only, and the persistence of a Samoan identity despite being born in New Zealand is evidence that a persistent Samoan identity system exists for all of them (Spicer 1971:795-800).

The complex process of understanding how they have reached this identity, whether achieved or in train, is not understood or comprehended except by those who share the experience. Some members have developed an identity they are most comfortable with and an understanding of the identity journey, while others are still at the initial stages of the journey, or somewhere along the path. Wherever they are positioned, most find it difficult to communicate their perceptions of this journey to other Samoans unless they too are NZ-born. They view it as a complex process of change which was imposed upon them but poorly understood by parents, elders, island-born Samoans and New Zealanders alike. During our interviews and in conversations and group discussions with other NZ-born members they discovered a "confluence of understandings" (Sallens 1983:88). As they gained insights through discussions about their experiences, they found many similarities, but as individuals they felt that they could not translate these understandings fully to their parents, families, island-borns and other outsiders. The conflict, challenges and understandings which members have shared with me in their narratives are presented in this second part of the thesis (my use of the term member(s) in this context explicitly refers to those NZ-borns in the ESG who were voluntary participants, and does not refer to all members of the ESG).

Following from Dureau (1994) I have also chosen not to relate focus group experiences as individual life histories for the following reasons: first, life history focuses on real individuals and tells particularised stories and therefore difficulties arise in how lives of individual men and women are made to represent an entire social category; second, individuation of histories derive from the nature of the concept of "a life" and the extent to which "a life" is universally meaningful (Crapanzano 1984 cited in Abu-Lughod, 1993:30). Instead I have chosen to focus on the polyphony of voices: young and old, male and female, *matai* and non-*matai*. I examine common patterns and themes in their stories, and try to explain the diverse views. The meaning of life experiences thus converges in the sameness of particular experiences which stand out, and which are articulated by diverse individuals who have in common that they are first and second generation NZ-born

Samoans who live in the inner-city suburbs of Auckland, and who are members of the same Church. Partial accounts from the men and women of my focus group are therefore scattered throughout. This has the advantage of conveying the diversity of experiences and perspectives and qualifying my generalisations. I do not let the voices speak for themselves as others have done (Abu-Lughod 1993). Rather, I make a conscious effort to conclusively analyse the narrative material. My authorial interventions are many, and the life histories are subordinated to the project of historicising the lifecycle and clarifying the historical changes to NZ-born's *weltanschauung*. Simultaneously, a temporal perspective demonstrates the accumulative character of socio-cultural changes and how such changes have different significance through time.

My subjective analysis of these experiences is also included and at times informed by insights provided by Spicer--opposition, persistent identity systems, and De Vos' conflict methodology.

Part Two is divided into two chapters. Chapter Four is divided into two sections. The first deals with the "identity journey" narratives and the second with "secured identities". Chapter Five is an analysis of narratives concerning inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, inter-generational and cultural conflict in the context of Newton Church, and illuminates how Newton Church is involved in the identity journeys of this group of NZ-borns.

CHAPTER FOUR

"A CONFLUENCE OF UNDERSTANDINGS"

The Identity Journey

I am - A Samoan...but not a Samoan
 To my 'āga in Samoa, I am a *pālāgi*
I am - A New Zealander...but not a New Zealander
 To New Zealanders, I am a bloody coconut, at worst,
 or a Pacific Islander, at best
I am - To my Samoan parents...their child

The identity verse encapsulates the paradox of a NZ-born identity and represents perspectives, experiences and recurring ideas which emerge from ESG narratives concerning self-identity. Although the verse lacks the dimensions provided by tonal variations, pause, gesture and emotion with which it was expressed to me, it does present powerful ideas which are shared by the group. Expressed in this verse, which represents the identity journey and the core shared experience of the group, is the idea that a NZ-born Samoan identity experience is encountered as a series of emotional challenges to one's identity as a "Samoan" and as a "New Zealander" during one's life. The challenges consist of being made aware that one is not "Samoan enough" or "*fiapālāgi*" in Samoan spaces, and also that one is "not a New Zealander" or a "coconut" or "FOB" (fresh off the boat) in the overt and covert racial taunts and actions of *pālāgi* people in the wider community. The journey represents the perpetual fluctuating movement from challenge to challenge over time, and from *pālāgi* space to Samoan space and vice versa. Thus there are no stages, phases or process to the identity journey--only a beginning, followed by a "roller-coaster ride" which for some end in a secured self-identity, and for others a perpetual state of identity confusion. For some members, crises occur at points of challenge or choice; for others, choice or commitment is gradual or cumulative. Considered symbolically, these points of challenge or choice may be imperceptible or highly dramatic. These points are not only related to alternatives between two modes of behaviour, they are also related to the levels of inclusiveness to which an individual member refers their behaviour. Members

learn to identify with three expanding circles or levels of inclusiveness: the first level is at the individual level; the next expands outwardly with the *'āga*; the third reaches further out into other face-to-face relationships in the community--in this context, Church, and wider New Zealand society. The emotional investment in each of these widening circles varies in strength. Ultimately, individual identity expands to encompass a NZ-born identity.

The journey begins when one's Samoan identity is challenged by island-born members of *'āga* or Church community and when one's identity as a New Zealander is challenged by *papālagi*--people of the dominant society. Some ESG members experience these challenges concurrently, others individually and some not at all. But for all, the "roller-coaster ride" represents a period of identity confusion, emotional insecurity and lack of control, where not being perceived as Samoan (the first two lines of the verse), nor New Zealander (the third to fifth lines of the verse) trigger social and cultural behaviour and attitudes which oppose those which went before the identity journey began. The journey ends with a seeming resolution of this conflict when a "final understanding" or a "secured identity" is reached as one develops coping strategies during the identity journey (reinforced by the last line of the verse). The verse as a whole thus implies that only after dealing with and working through each challenge (though not in unilinear sequence), can one reach a "final understanding"--that only after dealing with perceptions of who you are supposed to be, how you are perceived by others, and reaching an understanding of how these perceptions came to be, can one finally achieve a level of consciousness which allows one to define an identity for oneself--in this case, a secured identity, a NZ-born Samoan identity.

One mature member of the group who has experienced this identity journey believes she has reached the end of her journey. She explains how she has experienced various stages of identity confusion in her life identifying herself at times as a "New Zealander", as "a Maori from up north", as "multicultural". She now firmly identifies herself as Samoan and is confident that this self-identity will not change in the future, regardless of context.

Each challenge is complex and interconnected to all the other challenges and at the same time represents a gradual progression to the end of the journey where the paradoxes of a NZ-born Samoan identity is seemingly resolved. The narrative data reveals some

characteristic experiences associated with each challenge and it is apparent that until NZ-borns negotiate all these challenges, the crisis of identity confusion or unawareness will persist, whether or not NZ-borns acknowledge this crisis or not. However, for those who have successfully negotiated all challenges and have arrived at a final understanding, a secured identity is reached where they can and do perceive and operate Samoan socio-cultural patterns within and beyond Samoan communities and establish themselves as accepted individuals and contributing members in both social groups—their Samoan *'āiga*, Church, communities and New Zealand mainstream society. Moreover the secured identity remains fixed regardless of further challenges that may be experienced. That is to say, having a secured identity means that when a NZ-born is subsequently challenged, they are able to reconcile the oppositional forces behind the challenge(s), and because they have developed coping strategies to deal with them, they are able to remain firm in their conviction that they are NZ-born Samoan, or Samoan.

Most members of the ESG who claim or identify with this position of success are mature members (30s to over 40) indicating the length of time and cumulative experiences needed to complete this journey. This is not to say that *all* members in this age group have secured identities, but rather that members who expressed a secured identity tended to fall within this particular age group. There is no specific secured identity member profile that can be identified by age, class or gender. The limited number, make-up and the specific experiences of NZ-borns in my focus group precluded such characterisation. However, it can be stated from the outset that my focus group (see ESG personal profiles, Appendix Eight) represents a "middle-class" (only in the sense of individual professions and income—their parents and other members of *'āiga* are labourers and/or factory-workers and/or unemployed). Themes relating to age, class and gender permeate the narratives and are interwoven with other thematic analyses in the context of the identity journey experiences. It can be stated at this point, however, that the most glaring differences lie in the views, opinions and explanations of the younger (non-secured identity) as opposed to maturer (secured identity) members, which is reflective of the differences in the "levels of awareness" experienced by members. This differentiation provides the focus of the analysis. However, views which contrast markedly between *matai/non-matai* and male/female will be highlighted and explored also, when these differ as a consequence of

the way families are organised in the *fa'aSamoa*.

The identity journey is now analysed using perspectives gleaned from the ESG NZ-borns' oral narratives and arranged in the order of challenges and resolution presented by the identity verse. Conventions used in the narrative sections are as follows: in order to ensure anonymity, names and place-names have been replaced by [...]; editing out of words within sentences is represented by ... and more than one sentence ; text contained within [] are my explanations of missed out words or clarifications of previous text; reported speech within the texts is represented by using a capital letter at the beginning of the sentence within the narrative text sentence. For purposes of the thesis I have been reluctantly ruthless in editing out extraneous narrative material in order to attain a thesis of manageable proportions. The vast amount of partially eliminated data still exists and will be used in other subsequent analyses.

1

"I AM A SAMOAN....BUT NOT A SAMOAN"

The journey usually begins when a person is confronted with this challenge to their perceived Samoan identity. This challenge may occur at any time during one's life, regardless of age and regardless of whether in Samoa or New Zealand. Why do many NZ-borns feel challenged this way? Many aspects of a Samoan identity experience which feature in members' accounts reflect their Samoan socialisation experiences while growing up in New Zealand. In the above statement it is implied that although NZ-borns may have Samoan parents, they may not be regarded as a 'good' Samoan or even 'Samoan' by island-borns, elders, *'āiga* and others. How then do members perceive their own Samoan identity, and how is this identity denied by other Samoans?

What does *fa'aSamoa* mean?

Undoubtedly a Samoan identity necessitates the understanding of the *fa'aSamoa*. The *fa'aSamoa* by all accounts is a crucial and overriding, though ill-defined, concept. In

Chapter Two the problematics of defining the *fa'aSamoa* was outlined. In particular I detailed how indigenous explanations for the *fa'aSamoa* in the literature seemed to fall into two categories--circumstantialist explanations, i.e., *fa'aSamoa* is what Samoan people *do* (Meleiseā 1987, Tuimaleali'ifano 1992, Fa'ataa 1988), and ideological explanations, i.e., *why* Samoan people do what they do, which focus on the attitudes and values of Samoan people (Tupuola Efi cited in Field 1984, Senara 1987). Of paramount importance in the former explanations are the institutions of the *fa'aSamoa*—*tautala fa'aSamoa*, the 'āga, matai systems, *fa'alupega* and *fa'alavelave*. However, in the latter explanations the subtleties of *fa'aSamoa* focus on behavioral notions and emotional underpinnings of *alofa*, *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo*, *usita'i* and *feagaiga*. The amalgamation of both circumstantialist and culturalist perspectives incorporates indigenous understandings of the *fa'aSamoa* and together with Samoan identity as relational arrangements embodied by *vā fealoaloa'i* and *vā tapuia* (Tamasese, Peteru & Waldegrave 1997) provides a comprehensive definition of *fa'aSamoa* which I will hereafter refer to as 'parental *fa'aSamoa*' for it is this understanding of the *fa'aSamoa* which is crucial for parents, island-born elders and Church, and the authoritarian homeland influences.

In the New Zealand context of this study, it is apparent that members have not only diverse understandings of what parental *fa'aSamoa* is, but also that it is a very elusive and vague concept especially for younger members:

Well, when I was a child growing up, I thought it [the *fa'aSamoa*] was just a lot of bother....So time-consuming, so much money.

People talk about 'ie koga being bad but I don't...maybe it's because I don't understand it...I don't know what's wrong with it. I think it's when people abuse the customs and then it becomes bad. But I see the *fa'aSamoa* as good, I see it being really good.

All members talk about parental *fa'aSamoa* as something which indeed exists. When members converse with each other and with other NZ-borns it is taken for granted that its meaning is understood by those involved. Generally, members' notions of parental *fa'aSamoa* focus on 'āga, the Church and *tautala fa'aSamoa*. Other notions describe discipline as being very much a part of parental *fa'aSamoa*, as is the "giving of money".

Interaction with 'āiga (through *fa'alavelave*) is mainly with kin in New Zealand, and it is members' parents who are personally acquainted with 'āiga in Samoa, in terms of their personal acquaintance with 'āiga members by their more frequent *fa'alavelave* trips to Samoa. Members contribute indirectly to their 'āiga in Samoa through assisting parents with remittances etc.

The following narrative exemplifies the problem of identification of 'āiga by members. While not overtly a problem, it can have serious consequences for members when asked to contribute to *fa'alavelave* concerning 'āiga they do not know. In these situations, they rely heavily on their parents', grandparents' and close 'āiga members' advice on 'āiga connections.

But even today, when people come and say they're 'āiga, they're still a puzzle....don't know who's who. It just seems such a big massive blank, and it still is...right? I mean people come from Samoa today and say, Oh we're your 'āiga, and you say, Well where the hell do you fit? type of thing....You don't know. So when it comes to the question of 'āiga, who do we remember?

For this member, a *matai* and businessman, 'āiga identification becomes a point of contention, especially when "people just turn up at your door asking for something and they say they're 'āiga...and you've never seen them before...". Usually in these situations the matter is clarified by long ensuing conversations which focus on establishing 'āiga connections. But in most of the accounts perceptions of parental *fa'aSamoa* were profoundly ones of "giving", being "proud" of being Samoan, the equating of parental *fa'aSamoa* with christianity and Newton Church, despite the tremendous stresses and strains and negative aspects that accompany this identity, and the comparatively "liberal" attitudes of parents in enforcing parental *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand. The liberal home environment is used here as Macpherson's second and third characteristics of his model of home environments in which Samoan immigrant (read NZ-borns) live (1984). In the first type of home, Samoan values and institutions are promoted; in the second, children's exposure to and involvement in these values and institutions is deliberately limited; and in the third they are neither deliberately promoted nor avoided. This study shows that the matter is more complex than this model implies and due to the varied nature of members families and situations I am wary of categorising them so particularly.

While members talk about and understand Samoan institutions of 'āiga, fa'alavelave and matai and use these terms freely, less frequent, and even rare, is their use of terms such as tautua, fa'aaloalo and feagaiga to describe the behavioural aspects and emotional underpinnings of parental fa'aSamoa. Instead, members continuously talk about "respect", "serving" and "giving"—giving of money, of time, of respect and of service—to parents, older members of 'āiga, and to the Church—ministers, elders and Church community. That is to say, members' notions of "serving", "respect" and "giving" are conscious expressions of the unconscious parental fa'aSamoa underpinnings of tautua, fa'aaloalo and feagaiga, for by serving and giving in this context, they are showing service, respect, and acknowledgement of their special relationship with parents, 'āiga, ministers, elders and Church community. This understanding of parental fa'aSamoa as merely "giving money" and "having to serve", I will hereafter refer to as 'NZ-born fa'aSamoa', for this represents the crucial impact of "christian" and New Zealand socialisation influences on NZ-borns.

This consciousness is realised and understood by older members with secured identities who have developed strategies for coping with both parental and NZ-born fa'aSamoa. I will hereafter refer to this third heuristically-constructed genre of fa'aSamoa as 'secured fa'aSamoa'. For members with secured identities, the understanding of a secured fa'aSamoa is the culmination of a rationalisation of both the positive and negative aspects of parental and NZ-born fa'aSamoa. Most NZ-borns generally, and younger members of the ESG specifically, are still involved in the conflictual evaluation of the positives and negatives of the constant demands of serving, respecting and giving placed on them by parental fa'aSamoa.

Giving, giving, giving! Even if you don't have it you still have to give something. That's what we grew up with, my parents were always giving to the church constantly.

Fa'aSamoa is...having that sense of giving, rather than want to give. We've somehow picked up on this thing of what you can give, because of the expectation.

All members maintain that a Samoan identity or the adherence to parental fa'aSamoa is the ability to tautala fa'aSamoa, involvement in the Church and 'āiga, in

terms of support, time and financial giving, and doing well at school, in terms of a University education.

Go to Church, be a good Samoan, and that meant to try your best at education, and looking after family, and go to family functions, plus that we've got to look after them when they're old.

An examination of members' stories reveal their perceptions of how well or not so well they feel they have lived up to these expectations of being Samoan. When asked to define *fa'aSamoa*, as expected the themes which emerge from NZ-borns' narratives also centre around '*āga*, *tautala fa'aSamoa*, *matai*, *fa'alavelave*, discipline and Church. But an added dimension are the notions of "giving", "respect" and "serving". As one NZ-born correctly states "...it's not just one thing, it's all those things together...they're tied together...".

While it has been parents, grandparents and elders who have tried to enforce behavioural aspects of parental *fa'aSamoa*, members, depending on how far they are along their identity journey, have tended to take these either at face value or have transformed these necessary behaviours into value statements embodied in the concepts of "giving", "respect", and "serving".

Younger members tended to perceive parental *fa'aSamoa* more in terms of what they have to do:

My understanding of it is in the way of oratory and the fine mats and that....I see it as habits, traditional things...the way you walk...how you dress when you're serving cups of tea, how you serve the cup of tea...letting elders eat first, the young ones serving and eating last...not answering back, no matter how bad the situation is...the giving of money when you don't know what it's for, or who the person is...but I suppose I've always seen it as a way of life...*fa'aSamoa*...When I was growing up all these things were enforced....you know all the things about not walking in front of them without bending down...all those little respectful things.

...you had to bend down and had to serve so and so on one tray and then come and serve so and so...all that kind of thing, etiquette I suppose.

...you know we were exposed to a lot of the *fa'aSamoa* when mum and dad were alive going to all these family dos, going to [do] the mats...and doing the whole bit.

More mature members, however, now recognise these behavioural aspects as important factors in maintaining kinship links with *'āga*, the associated importance of *fa'aloalo*, *tautua*, *feagaiga*, and the reciprocal obligations these entail.

From my NZ-born perspective it's one of servanthood...it's one of serving people...it's one of support...it's one of families...it's one of using our resources, our talents, into being able to mobilise our families for better life-styles and also sharing what it is they've got.

Well, I would still like to be *fa'aloalo*...how Samoans are really respectful especially in the whole area of elders.

Both younger and older women of the group tended to emphasise the behavioural and emotional aspects of serving and respect more than the men, whose explanations focused on the institutional frameworks of *fa'aSamoa*. This can be explained by the social organisation of the Samoan family where it is the young girls who are expected to serve and respect parents, older siblings, especially brothers, and older members of *'āga*, regardless of age and regardless whether they are single or married. In concrete terms this is reflected by girls having to "do all the housework, help mum with the cooking, iron my brothers' shirts and fix their beds every morning". The women of the group therefore have a deeper understanding of what it means to serve and to give of oneself, while men tended to emphasise giving and serving in terms of the financial aspects of NZ-born *fa'aSamoa*.

Members have diverse understandings about the financial giving aspect of parental *fa'aSamoa*, from being critical of it--seeing it as a corrupt practice--to the other extreme where giving is seen as *si'i alofa*. Invariably the older members were more critical of parental *fa'aSamoa*, especially in terms of how they saw some people as abusing it and in some cases exploiting Samoan tradition and customs.

Well *fa'aSamoa*, if you let it control you is corrupt. If you're smart enough to control it, it's brilliant. What I mean by that is it becomes corrupt where you let your pride in trying to be somebody destroy you, and what that means is that if you want to be a big shot in everything that's going on, and be seen giving money...they're going to milk you left, right and centre. Every little thing they're going to invite you to...and in that way you may be seen within the community as a nice guy, a great guy, and everything else. But internally, you're rotting, because you haven't got anything...financially you're poor, financially you're owing people money 'cause you're trying to build this image up, and that's what I mean by

corruption and rot. But if you're smart, you've got to play it right, and that is that you should be respected for what you are and who you are, without having to buy it, and that once you give, you realise that you are giving for specific purposes.

Younger members, on the other hand, although critical of having to give continuously, talk about the more positive aspects of giving.

I know if I was working I know they'd [parents] expect me to contribute to *fa'alavelave*, but at the same time I know I'd want to help because I think that's a good thing as well. I think it's the *si'i alofa* or carrying love, literally, that's how I see it. It's like carrying love to somebody else, whether it be in the form of monetary love, it's only monetary because we live in that sort of world...or it could be in other ways.

But just over the last couple of years I've just been able to see the heart behind it all. Like I went to a funeral just last week, just the way they gave *'ie koga*, money and stuff. I was thinking just their way and manner of just giving is really neat. It's so generous and giving in love and things like that, it really blew me away. I had to stop and just say, Oh thank you God for making me Samoan. It's a really neat part of the culture, just seeing that...how they really help each other....Giving money is just how Samoan people show their love and support for each other...looking out for each other, looking out for the family....to have that giving spirit that they [our parents] had.

They [my parents] were always saying, We have to go to this *fa'alavelave* and give a *si'i*, give a help....Sometimes you feel as if you have to find something to help out if there is a *fa'alavelave* in your family and extended family because the Samoans think that you bank in your *'āga* and when hard times come it's your turn. You withdraw your savings.

The differences between the view of older members as opposed to younger members can be explained by the *range* and *scope* of giving. Younger members who are still either at University, unemployed, still living at home and dependent on their parents, just embarking on career paths, or children of more liberal-minded parents are not expected to contribute in a big way towards *'āga* and Church *fa'alavelave* contributions, hence their view that giving is an act of love. Older members who themselves may be heads of their own households, have large stable incomes, established careers, and who are called upon by their parents and *'āga* to contribute financially more often, and who find the need to actively delineate *'āga* connections in terms of priority are more inclined to view giving in

a negative light, as a "corrupt" practice in some contexts, because of the range, scope and frequency of the giving.

Those who were born in Samoa have slightly different views of *fa'aSamoa*. They see *fa'aSamoa* as a given and the necessity to define or evaluate it as a development outside of Samoa. That is, to them it seems a way of life--one that is taken for granted but which is resurrected and exaggerated in New Zealand and beyond Samoa's shores. Some NZ-borns express the idea that the *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand is an adaptation of *fa'aSamoa* in Samoa, and that New Zealand parental *fa'aSamoa*, although moulded by parents and grandparents' childhood memories and their experiences while growing up in Samoa, has been further influenced by the *pālagi* lifeways.

They [my parents] were brought up in the *f'aSamoa* but they also looked at the western ways and they adapted their lifestyles, just like we did when we came along in our generation. We picked up the stuff which was suitable for us so we still have the traditional *fa'aSamoa* upbringing but we were also exposed to the *fa'apālagi*.... You see, there is a *fa'aSamoa* in Auckland, that is just as valid, and as a matter of fact a lot of influence in this *fa'aSamoa* we've developed here is influencing our culture back home. It is a healthy development, because as you know culture cannot stagnate, it has to move. It has to adapt to the times, otherwise it will die.

To me it's [*fa'aSamoa* is] something that's always developing. It has its roots in Samoa, but then it's come here. It's been adapted to the New Zealand situation.... The other thing is, because our parents came here and settled here, the kind of *fa'aSamoa*... that they produced here was an adaptation of the REAL culture back home, and then they... that's what we grew up on. We grew up on this adaptation thing... of course it was all this look down [as an act of deference when being disciplined]... and I did it too.. we always listened to our parents.

These last two narratives highlight members' perspectives of culture as not being static but something which changes and adapts over time and space. Certainly from the perspectives outlined in the narratives, members articulate that parental *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand is exaggerated or different from the *fa'aSamoa* practised in Samoa. Although the majority of members have not reached the same level of understanding, some members feel that this is because as NZ-borns they are continually having to struggle with defending or justifying being Samoan in New Zealand (as a subordinate group) to a greater extent than their counterparts in Samoa who do not have to articulate being Samoan--they are "living

it" as the dominant group.

I now continue to examine the inherent attributes that NZ-borns perceive as being Samoan--language or *tautala fa'aSamoa*, 'āga, the *matai* system, Church and discipline. In this way members' perceptions of parental *fa'aSamoa* can be examined from the perspectives of the perceived most important aspects--language, the family--'āga, the extended family structural considerations--*matai*, the community--Church, and the measures taken to enforce parental *fa'aSamoa* by parents, 'āga and Church--discipline.

"We did everything *fa'aSamoa* except speaking Samoan"

A second recurrent theme pervades the narratives: the level of competence at which members can operate in the Samoan language or *tautala fa'aSamoa* is perceived as the crucial constraint on their exploration of being Samoan. This "hard-core" problem of language is primary when members are asked to talk about their experiences as a NZ-born. When asked to consider the relative importance of language, Samoan beliefs, and the practice of *fa'aSamoa*, from the first to the last discussion and in numerous incidental conversations, it was apparent that for most members *tautala fa'aSamoa* is the most crucial factor. This is because all members are aware that *tautala fa'aSamoa* is highly regarded by island-born Samoans and Samoan communities to the extent that one is considered not Samoan if one cannot speak the language. As one member asks, "What about *feeling* Samoan?" Members express concern with the social and cultural pressures on them to *tautala fa'aSamoa*, and the insidious practice by some island-born Samoans who use language only to determine who is and who is not a Samoan.

The point here is that members who do not *tautala fa'aSamoa* fluently do not consider *tautala fa'aSamoa* as the single most important determinant of being Samoan. This is because they all speak some Samoan and can understand Samoan in varying degrees (from complete to a lesser comprehension), and because they feel that they would be able to pick up the language easily by either rigorous methods, by having a stint in Samoa, or by having to if their jobs necessitated it. I hereafter refer to this significant linguistic "condition" of many NZ-borns as "*tautala* NZ-born". In addition, they feel that they have been raised by 'āga and Church in a very *fa'aSamoan* way, and have socialised parental

fa'aSamoa beliefs, values, attitudes and ways of doing and thinking about things.

The children and grandchildren of early migrant Samoans in Auckland went to school in the 1950s and 1960s. At the time, many educators, some ministers and numerous Samoan parents were encouraging other Samoan parents to speak to their children in English to help them at school.

We weren't encouraged to speak Samoan, we spoke in English at home. My parents spoke to us in Samoan, but we would have to reply in English, even if relatives spoke to us. They wouldn't encourage us to reply back in Samoan....I can't even say why we were brought up like that. I think my dad just never really wanted us to speak Samoan, I think he felt that we were in New Zealand and should speak English.

In those days, they didn't know about bilingualism and all that. It was a very *pālagi* school, and the Headmaster said to my father when he took [...] there for the first time, Don't speak Samoan at home 'cause it's going to hold your children back. So all of us were brought up speaking English, and sometimes my mum would speak broken English at home, but that's how we'd communicate...and the odd Samoan, like commands. So we were all brought up in English and we never learnt Samoan.

In the more liberal 1980s and 1990s, some educators, ministers and Samoan parents now encourage the retention of indigenous languages. One of the reasons for this is so that the depth of communication of adults to the children and through the family can keep family relationships intact. This study shows, however, that a more urgent reason is the perception of Samoan parents and elders that their children and grandchildren cannot speak Samoan. Hence the support of the establishment of numerous *ā'oga 'amata* (Samoan language nests) across New Zealand.

What is interesting is that the "two world ideology" where NZ-borns are imperfect hybrids of *fa'apālagi* and *fa'aSamoa*, fuelled by elders and island-born Samoans (documented by Pitt & Macpherson 1974), is prevalent in New Zealand society at large and in the self-perceptions of many NZ-borns themselves who see themselves as inadequate because they cannot communicate to their *ā'oga* and elders in Samoan. This is then translated by *ā'oga* and elders as a preference to be *fiapālagi* (portrayed in the work of Wendt and in various plays such as "Fresh off the Boat" and "Tatau" and various television short films in the "Tangata, Tagata" series) and highlights the tendency of some elders and

island-born Samoans to equate the lack of speaking Samoan with not being Samoan.

In their narratives members express their frustration and anger at being judged thus. They feel because they *understand* Samoan (in varying degrees) and because they *understand the fa'aSamoa* and its practices, they should not be judged not Samoan just because they cannot converse fluently in the Samoan language. Their narratives show that this accusation needs to be examined in the light of their experiences, in particular their ability or non-ability to *tautala fa'aSamoa*, and the impact this has on their self-identities.

Approximately two thirds of my focus group considered themselves *tautala* NZ-born, and a third considered themselves fluent speakers of Samoan. The former group point out that although exposed to Samoan in varying degrees during childhood, they converse in or speak mainly English. However, they equally stress that they can *tautala* NZ-born, and it is this point which sets NZ-borns apart from other groups who neither speak *nor understand* their own language.

There were definite things like, when I tried to...speak Samoan...there was a lot of laughing going on, and like I didn't feel too easy about that so I just decided I would just try and speak English a lot.

In conversations with their parents or *'āga*, many recall instances where they would automatically respond in English to questions and comments spoken in Samoan, or when their parents spoke Samoan to them and they'd answer back in English. They also make references to other ways of communicating, viz., speaking pidgin-Samoan or English with a "freshie accent". What is significant about these statements is members' insistence that it was not by choice that they could not speak Samoan, but by circumstance. Several members point out that their Samoan parents assumed that the priority for their children was to speak English during their involvement with the education system, and that on the completion of their education somehow the children would *know Samoan*, and that English was to take second place. This was not the case. Members' knowledge of Samoan had been reduced to *tautala* NZ-born.

We started school at five. None of us could speak a word of English, and at the time my parents thought that...we should learn English 'cause like that's what we had to know in order to survive the school system. But by the time we got to

secondary school they were telling us that we should start speaking Samoan, and a lot of that was quite hard, because like we'd be at the table, and no-one was allowed to speak unless they spoke in Samoan...and I couldn't do it. And every time we got it wrong...my father would just yell and shout at us. Like there was this expectation that we KNOW Samoan...that is...BE Samoan. Mum and Dad spoke Samoan to us and we'd answer back in English. Even now, my father's saying that he's changed his way of thinking again, in the sense that maybe it is important that those who are NZ-born be quite fluent in English in order to get through...in order to survive in this society. You have to have that kind of knowledge, though I am of the opinion that you also have to be fluent in our own language...like it misses out a lot of...depth...I think we've taken [the Samoan language] for granted, NZ-born kids, you know...because we can understand it.

NZ-borns directly associate these episodes with frustrations and embarrassment in communicating with their parents, *'āga* and elders. Members often comment that they regret not being able to speak Samoan. This regret is exacerbated by the knowledge that their parents will soon pass on.

When my father was alive, it was like none of us kids took advantage of the fact that he knew his *fa'aSamoa* inside out, and he was the best teacher that anyone could have, 'cause he just knew everything. Now that he's gone we're very sorry in a way that they didn't push us...to learn Samoan language and learn Samoan customs.

Well five years ago when the old man died, it was like that's the thing that I miss the most, his speaking in Samoan to me all the time.

However, these same members are adamant that they will acquire the language sooner or later. They express the desire to "pick it up" by either rigorous learning or going back to Samoa, and articulate a strong desire to speak Samoan at some future stage. This applied to all members of the group who could not *tautala fa'aSamoa*. When asked why, these members stated that learning the language was the "last piece in the puzzle", that it would round them off and make them "complete". For male members the possibility of becoming a future *matai* is a real one. While reticent in their younger years while their father and uncles are still alive, the perceived need to *tautala fa'aSamoa* escalates when called on to become a *matai* or if fathers and uncles pass on.

It's within me to sit down and study and master it and everything else, and for some reason my brain is telling me-Don't! And I have a funny feeling in my mind, that

tells me once dad's gone, it's all going to happen...it's just going to happen.

A few members are more political about their inability to *tautala fa'aSamoa*:

Well I can't really speak on language as a non-speaker. I think that language is very important...language is the key. But we shouldn't have to go through what Maoridom has gone through with their own thing of where...if anyone spoke Maori then you automatically gave them the position. Then you found that their politics stunk and they had no commitment to the people. Then you discover that they only did the language 'cause they knew they'd get the jobs....But I notice that amongst our own NZ-born lot that we cut each other off. Exactly on a smaller level than Maoridom. And you go, Silly idiot, and put it into that whole power thing.

I don't speak my mother tongue, and...I've always thought about it but I keep saying to myself, the day I learn my mother tongue is the day that I'll learn it because I want to use it for the right reasons and not to use it for power, so that's why I haven't touched my mother tongue.

These two narratives represent the views of younger, untitled men, who have not as yet been called on to become *matai*. Even in these more political views one gets the feeling that learning to *tautala fa'aSamoa* is not an impossibility but an immanent future prospect.

Those members who can speak Samoan fluently have acquired the language through various circumstances. Some were either forced to speak Samoan in the home, or could only speak Samoan owing to their parents inability to speak English.

We had to speak Samoan a lot and I think that's why my brothers can really understand it and speak it. But even today, like we have family meetings once a month and when we speak English, my mother gets mad...you know...she says, Can't you speak Samoan? So the language in the home now is still Samoan, but when mum and dad are out we never speak it. We always speak English to each other.

Well, unless they [my kids] are stuck with a Samoan word, then they use English, but I encourage them to speak Samoan until their front door. The front door is the boundary!

A lot of the ones who have picked up the language...it wasn't because of any goodness of theirs. It's because their parents couldn't speak English.

For some, it was the personal drive to learn Samoan.

My sister can speak it much better than I can. She picked it up I suppose from my mum...she's maybe one of the four of us whose made a big attempt or has the desire to learn it. She's had a few trips to Samoa, so she can keep quite a conversation going.

Others learnt Samoan, not because of some romantic notion of wanting to *be Samoan*, per se, but for practical reasons to do with speaking Samoan because their jobs called for it.

It was at [...]s office that I learnt to speak Samoan. Because I had to, to the clients. So I really believe that everything is meant to be, 'cause I really didn't get paid much, but I got heaps of experience, and I had to learn Samoan.

...and since I've been with the choirs at church and the *'autalavou*, I've picked up most of my Samoan from there, and also going through other choirs, the *lotu Samoa* choirs, they've been around over the last eight or ten years, and one particular minister's wife said to me when I first started out, You're not to speak English here, you have to speak in Samoan. So I had no choice, if I wanted to communicate with choirs I had to speak in Samoan. So I did.

Another and significant instance of NZ-borns picking up Samoan, has been through Church involvement:

All my sisters can speak Samoan except for me....They've picked it up from being in the Church [*'autalavou*]. See I left the Church at quite a young age, but I've missed out on that.

It's taken me about eight to ten years to learn. But I actually learnt more outside at the other Samoan church choirs...more than I did at Newton 'cause...there I was forced to, I had to speak it [Samoan], 'cause that's all they spoke....Before I left here to take these other choirs, at different denominations, I was speaking English to the choirs, and a lot of the time I wasn't getting through, and then five years down the track when I returned, Hello...*'pālagi* boy is speaking Samoan! They just sort of sat there and all of a sudden, I was finally communicating.

My Dad used to say if you really want to learn it go to Samoa and live there for four months and you'll be right...and Mr [...], he always used to say just read your Samoan Bible and come to Samoan service and you'll pick it up.....

The last narrative is indicative of advice given by parents to their NZ-born children in order to *tautala fa'aSamoa*. However most members realise that it is unrealistic to go to Samoa except for holidays because of the financial, time and job constraints. None of the

members had learnt Samoan through reading their Samoan Bibles, nor could they commit time to attending Samoan services regularly as well as their other ESG and Bible class, Sunday school and Church commitments.

Clearly this issue of language was more important to those members who had children--all stated that it was their desire that their children *tautala fa'aSamoa*. Many of those with children send them to *ā'oga 'amata*, and most single members expressed desires to send their children to *ā'oga 'amata* when they indeed have their own children regardless of the ethnicity of their spouses--to bring them up in parental *fa'aSamoa*.

We have preschool at the back which will take care of that, a language nest basically. With some regret I wish we had the same exposure when we were at that stage. I guess it's on the emphasis, your parents are behind you to do that, we've got kids now who are quite fluent in Samoan, things are developing even in the *'autalavou* and the Samoan group are encouraging the young ones. I think it's a good sign.

Another significant observation is that while most mature members with secured identities are fluent speakers of Samoan, the inability to *tautala fa'aSamoa* is not an inhibiting factor for other mature non-speakers of Samoan in attaining a secured identity. This is probably because these particular members are fluent *tautala* NZ-born and are confident that it is only a matter of time before they acquire the ability to become relatively fluent Samoan speakers. This attitude is also directly attributable to these members having confidence in understanding and practising other aspects of secured *fa'aSamoa*. At the same time, however, younger members who speak Samoan fluently are at similar developing stages in the identity journey as their *tautala* NZ-born cohorts.

"Without family...we are nothing"

Fa'aSamoa, the bottom line is FAMILY. *Fa'aSamoa* is family and family is immediate and extended, and total, and that's what *fa'aSamoa* is all about. It's giving...it's your respect, it's your responsibility...and it all comes back to the family, and that family grows. It grows from immediate, to extended, to the village, to the nation, to the Pacific....Where does our heart lie? Our heart lies first of all in your immediate family, then your extended family, then your village, then your nation.

Fa'aSamoa to me at the moment is the...most basic definition is the family orientation...the way that the family is...the kinship and genealogy...that's the way I understand it to be...and that's how I learn my *fa'aSamoa*. It's through my family...my extended as well...when they have special events, and showing my face there...just linking up with my cousins.

Most NZ-borns who have reached a secured identity understand that the most central feature of secured *fa'aSamoa* or being Samoan, other than *tautala fa'aSamoa*, is '*āga*. Samoans use parental *fa'aSamoa* to identify principles and practices of social organisation which usually establish co-operative arrays of stable relationships, and these relationships are embedded in the concept of '*āga*. There is no question that Samoan people who identify as Samoan are '*āga*-orientated. Every Samoan is born into several '*āga*--their mother's '*āga* and their father's '*āga*, and the associated '*āga* of both parent(s). All forms of societal relationships (including the *matai* and *fa'alupega* systems) within and outside of the '*āga* are governed by the structures of the '*āga*. In this way, every person who is older than ego is given *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*. For example, an employer, a pastor and a teacher are regarded with the same respect as a father or mother by an employee, a church-goer and student respectively. Because of the stratified nature of '*āga* then, the young are expected to show respect to their elders and to *usita'i*. The giving and receiving of *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo* and *alofa* then become the crucial elements of Samoan social relations.

Structurally, the inter-generational flow of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* is governed by the principle of seniority vs juniority, and flows vertically upward, and horizontally in only one direction. At the same time however, for those members with secured identities, there is an implicit understanding of a return flow vertically downward and horizontally in the opposite direction to the young, of love, protection, honour, a name to be proud of and an expectation of the defense by the '*āga* if and when warranted. This is what *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* recognises and earns for the children. However, this return flow is not consciously understood by younger members who tend to focus on the upward flow of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* and their seemingly inequitable position as younger or youngest '*āga* members.

Vertically upward then, *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* is given (not received) by ego to all those of ego's parents' generation and beyond, and horizontally the principle of

primogeniture operates whereby *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* is given (not received) by ego to ego's older siblings and those of the same age-set. One may very well ask the question: What about ego? The answer is simply that ego, if the youngest member of a family and especially if a female, will be giving *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* to *everybody else* in her 'āga older than her, and will not be receiving any *tautua* or *fa'aaloalo* at all. She is theoretically however subject to *feagaiga* from her brothers and mother's brothers and their 'āga, a special relationship which means that she will be practically, morally and spiritually supported by the latter (Schoeffel 1995:86). But to young people this often does not translate as equitable social relations. Often when a child questions a parent regarding this obvious imbalance in social relations, the child will be told, *Pauā*..., a Samoan expression meaning "because..." or that one is not required to explain why, and implying that the child has no right to expect an explanation. However, for NZ-born children it is more than likely that this response from a parent or elder will not be enough to satisfy their dissatisfaction or curiosity. Sua'ali'i-Sauni's (1996, 1997) exposition of the concept of *pauā* is crucial in understanding the principle of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*. When a child is told *pauā*, it is implied that the child will grow older, and on maturity, will eventually be at the receiving upward end of vertical and horizontal *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*, and will have a greater understanding of these seemingly inequitable social relations.

By understanding parental *fa'aSamoa*, young people will be bonded not only to their individual and collective past, present and future, but also to their 'āga, and ultimately to Samoa. On the one hand, this present study shows that the young have immense problems in dealing with *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* at their young 'receiving no *tautua* or *fa'aaloalo*' stages, and in the prerequisite to *usita'i* blindly, and see this as the overriding negative aspect of parental *fa'aSamoa*. On the other hand, older members, themselves fathers (in-law), mothers (in-law), uncles and aunties, have a greater appreciation and understanding of these concepts because they are now recipients of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* from their children, their children's spouses, nieces, nephews and families of in-laws.

Most NZ-borns' households were two or three generational including father, mother and grandparents, or husband/wife and parents and children or extended families, and numbered between four and nine. A few families consisted of just the nuclear family. Still

others were atypical in that they were parentless or one-parent households where parents were either separated or divorced or who had passed on, and in some situations the eldest girl or boy had become the head of their household.

All members when talking about 'āga mentioned "boarders". These boarders consisted of two types. The first were 'āga members who came to New Zealand and initially stayed with the primary host--head of household/'āga--who was responsible for supporting them, providing a home and job for them. Most typically in the 1960s/1970s the pattern was for young girls of the village to be sent to New Zealand. In return for food, shelter and a job, these girls reciprocated by being obedient, working and contributing to household and *fa'alavelave* expenses, keeping house, doing *fe'au* (household chores), helping with child-rearing and childcare, and being full and active members of the primary host 'āga. Letters and wages flowed easily and often back to Samoa. In cases where these girls found would-be husbands, marriage only ensued where permission was granted by the primary host 'āga in conjunction with the girl's 'āga in Samoa. If permission was not forthcoming, or if the girl became pregnant, the girl would more often than not run away in disgrace, or remain with the host 'āga until a suitable suitor was eventually approved of. Where marriage took place, and the girl and her husband moved to their own house, a secondary host 'āga would be established and the process would be repeated--the girl's parents, grandparents or siblings would be brought over as circumstances would allow, thereby creating secondary and tertiary host situations. For male 'āga members who came to New Zealand, the pattern was less rigid. More often than not, it did not take too long for these young men to save enough money to move out, marry and establish a secondary host 'āga. Moreover while they were with their host 'āga, it was not unusual for them to temporarily adopt work mates or friends who had work or accommodation difficulties. This practice was known as *fa'a'āga* (Macpherson personal communication). These were the second type of boarders. They became temporary members of the 'āga also.

That's basically the legacy of all those in the first wave, I can't imagine or remember there was ever a day when there was not someone ['āga or boarder] in the house when I was growing up. The thing that used to grieve me was the fact that these people went on to do a lot better than we did, we're still down there at old [street]....

I mean our life is an open door policy...our house is an open door for our relations here, and it works both ways. There's always young kids, young relatives. They know there's always room in the garage--we've got a double garage and there's always room to bunk in at the back. So when they come from South Auckland to town and there are no buses back home at night, so you wake up Sunday morning and you've got all these cousins and whatever...and...I think I'm fortunate...we've always been a safe house for all our young people.

When asked what impact the experience of boarders had on them, members had diverse responses. Older members (children of primary host households) recalled that this experience had occurred in their childhoods. Memories of having "untold" cousins, uncles, aunties come and stay for some bring back uncomfortable memories of cramped living conditions, when they had to sleep on the floor or on couches, or squeeze into one bed with several siblings, of communication problems, of the lack of privacy. They recalled taking their 'āiga members on "sight-seeing trips"--to the zoo, museum, and One-tree hill. Others enjoyed having "heaps" of people around all the time, and the luxury of not having to do *fe'au* because their younger boarders had to do them. A few younger members did not recall these experiences at all (children of secondary host households, or young marrieds setting up their own households). One mature member comments that it was the constant flow of boarders and the multi-ethnic nature of Newton Church that made him a good human resource person, and comfortable with difference at an early age. He states: "I picked up good people skills which has made me an effective communicator and mediator."

A related theme, when members spoke about 'āiga, was that of *fa'alavelave*. All members are very familiar with *fa'alavelave* to do with their personal 'āiga as well as the 'āiga of Newton Church *ekālēsia*. These usually occur as part of life cycle events, but also include any other happenings which involve 'āiga from Samoa and in New Zealand, as well as everything going on at Newton Church. These involve financial and time commitments and become stressful if difficulties are experienced in either finding the resources in terms of finance and time, or even the inclination, to cope with *fa'alavelave*.

Members' stories illustrate the way that 'āiga operates as a help and support system for Samoan people in New Zealand, at home, and everywhere else. The *fa'aSamoa* encourages and obliges 'āiga to become a cohesive though not static body, and *fa'alavelave* operate to ensure that 'āiga meet together often, with continuously open and different 'āiga-lines of communication to and from New Zealand, the homeland and

abroad. More importantly for the mature members, themselves in established careers and stable relationships within their own families as well as their extended families, the importance of *'āga* as the cornerstone of parental *fa'aSamoa* has been more often experienced and understood. For the younger members, who are either single, financially unstable, still working on their career paths, or young marrieds on the brink of establishing themselves, the full realisation of this importance, though recognised, is still being negotiated.

We send money back to Samoa as well when there's a *fa'alavelave* back home, and usually bigger money than what you spend in New Zealand, 'cause in New Zealand you've got other *'āga* that have money, so you pool your resources together and do it. But when they ask particularly *matai* from Samoa...you know...we need money for this and this. You have to give it.

...The really big thing about Dad that turns me is this man, who spent a lot of his life away from Samoa. And his whole life is this love that is so deep for Samoa. He was in Fiji for a lot of his life, then he was here, but yet his deep, deep love for family and everything. When Samoa [*'āga*] say anything [in terms of financial giving for *fa'alavelave*], he jumps.

I mean this year we've had three so far in three months....That doesn't include the little things....Well he'll [Dad will] go off to the meeting and say, Oh look these guys have said such and such, and he would have already figured out in his head what they could have done it on, and then put in a little bit more, and say I think so and so, and we'll all say, yes and no, depending on who the person is that it's for...I mean if it's someone really close, you don't mind ay...you find it....But if it's my father's cousin's cousin's wife, we say, No we won't do this. So it works for us....Sometimes they try politicking like they'll go through my mum, knowing that she's really strong in that thing. When they don't go through my brother, we all get together and say, Look he's the *matai* now we're all here to support him. A lot of the things are for my father's family, but he's dead, and my mum feels she must give, and we say it's not her family...it is her family as such, but it's not for her to keep propping them up.

Some members' parents and grandparents are very liberal about getting their children to participate in *fa'alavelave*. When asked what factors determined whether more or less pressure was applied to contribute to *fa'alavelave*, responses varied. Some members stated that their parents "didn't want to bother us kids" realising that their children had financial commitments also. Other members felt that this aspect of *fa'aSamoa* for their

parents had become diluted in the New Zealand situation. These experiences however did not deter these same members from wanting to be able to do something to help their parents, especially when they could see that sometimes their parents were struggling to meet *fa'alavelave* commitments.

We had a different set up with that....Well my parents have never believed to take our money from us and it's like my parents have always done their *fa'alavelave* themselves. If we as children have got money that we can help them with, we do. If they ask us, they ask us, if they don't, they don't. But we're always told that there are things on. If there's a death or something they would say so and so has died, such and such an amount is needed. But they wouldn't say, Well you do this and you do that, and it would more or less be left to our common sense to give and if I have it I'll give it. I'll say to mum one day, Well look I'll do your whole share this time, 'cause I didn't help last time...so we're not made to.

The organisation of '*āga* is a complex matter. According to members this involves the *matai* or head of the household representing the '*āga at *fa'alavelave*, ensuring that everyone is notified, that financial and cultural obligations in terms of *si'i* are met by the '*āga and that reciprocal finances and cultural goods are redistributed to contributing '*āga at the end of the *fa'alavelave* process. Some members talk about a strategy which a lot of NZ-born Samoan '*āga in New Zealand, especially from Newton PIC, have devised--the *mafutaga* or regular monthly family meetings. This new arrangement, unique to the New Zealand situation, is the transformation of *mafutaga*, an assemblage, communion or fellowship of people of not necessarily '*āga members, to exclusively '*āga members usually in the nuclear three-generational family sense--that is, parents, children, grandparents and sometimes other closely-related extended family members. Meetings are held monthly where *to'ona'i* (a large meal) and news are shared, the family brought up to date about past, current and future happenings, and where sums of money or *lāfoga* are collected and banked for the use of the head of the household to assist in *fa'alavelave*, both in New Zealand and in Samoa. Members state that this money is mainly used for *fa'alavelave* to do with '*āga or Church. Sometimes it is used to pay large expensive one-off bills incurred by the head of the household, e.g., the annual rates or insurance bill if the head of the household is a pensioner.*******

Members say that this strategy relieves the financial burden of *fa'alavelave*,

providing a kitty of accumulating funds which can be freely drawn from for the head of the household or *matai* as agreed by the 'āga, and makes their NZ-born children aware of kin and 'āga obligations. Moreover, it enables families to get together on a social basis rather than on a *fa'alavelave* basis--something quite difficult to do in the busy urban setting of Auckland. This strategy relieves pressure on some more liberal-thinking parents and grandparents who have not enforced parental *fa'aSamoa* on their children and who would rather not involve their children in this financial aspect of parental *fa'aSamoa*, preferring to foot the bill themselves, even when their own income is minimal. The *mafutaga* therefore allows these children of more liberal Samoan parents to feel that they are being "good kids" and good Samoans by providing the vehicle through which they can contribute to *fa'alavelave* thereby reinforcing 'āga ties. In being part of *mafutaga* they hope they are being good role models for their own NZ-born children, and the NZ-born children of their brothers, sisters and cousins.

I suppose it gives us a kind of a figurehead as far as our family things are concerned and we know that if we've got something to say that he will go to the family meeting and say it to the extended family, and it's also...I suppose it bonds you more together as a family too...as an 'āga, 'cause you know you're part of that group.

Family meetings...*fa'alavelave*...and I suppose in one way it was good, 'cause that was when we started meeting his side of the family, the ones that were here in New Zealand. But probably if he didn't have family we wouldn't know any better, as to who they were.

" ...to become a *matai*..."

Another associated theme in members' considerations of being Samoan and one which impinges directly on the concept of 'āga is the *matai* system. There are six *matai* in the focus group--five NZ-born and one island-born, including one female *matai* (see ESG profiles, Appendix Eight). All the other members have either fathers, brothers or uncles who are *matai*, so that all members have experienced the *matai* system in the New Zealand context. Titles are both *ali'i* and *tulāfale* titles and originate from villages in American Samoa, Upolu and Savai'i.

The *matai* titles members discussed cover the whole spectrum of titles: land-based/non-land-based titles, single/split titles, New Zealand-sited *saofa'i*/Samoa-sited *saofa'i*, and all express diverse though similar reasons for taking on titles (see Meleiseā 1987c for full discussion of range, types and significance of titles in Samoa). But all have eventuated from requests made from 'āga in Samoa and not merely decisions taken by New Zealand-based 'āga alone. Members talk about how decisions were made by 'āga to confer *matai* titles on them or other family members.

[In] 1985, the family asked him [his father] to accept the *matai* title, but because he was not a blood son there was a bit of debating because the blood children thought that the eldest of them should have got the title, but because my father was the eldest of all the children my step-grandfather wanted my father to have it because he was like a son to him, so my dad went back to Samoa for a *saofa'i* and everything.

There were three...titles, they were all dead [vacant] titles from people in our family of days gone by. These were never resurrected, their use had never been discussed. This particular year they had a family thing in [...] about titles, mainly that this was the time to issue more titles for our village and so the [title] came up and one of the cousins rang from Samoa and said this title is up, who did my mother think should get it? My mother suggested the eldest son of one of her brothers, or someone from [...] or some-one else from her immediate siblings. She didn't volunteer me. Then the family rang back and said they had so and so but they hadn't picked anyone from *her* immediate family and they asked for me, well, whether I would accept it, because I was the eldest.

I carry the title [...] from [...]. It was an unusual move I thought by the family to actually [give it to me]...I have a second cousin in Samoa who had a very deep love for my Dad, and at the time that my father died, he was quite saddened by it actually, but they grew up as boys. He was a lot younger and often consulted with my Dad for advice and in their later years still did so...he was like an older brother. Once Dad died, he took his title to the grave with him. He had a title from [...]. He only ever spoke of titles once before and that was the connection he had back in Savai'i. He offered that to one of my older brothers....So anyway once he had died they were looking for other *matai* in the family at the time anyway, so this cousin of mine nominated me to come to Samoa and receive the [...] title.

An older, island-born member who is a *matai* insists that *matai* should all be Samoa-based and reflected on the differences in the *matai* role and status in New Zealand as opposed to Samoa.

I never believe in a person living in New Zealand and having a *matai* title. It's my

belief if a person wants to get a title he should go back and live in Samoa to be fair to the 'āiga so that he's actually there to take charge of the village. In New Zealand your 'āiga is doing your *onotaga*. That is, if a village meets and every *matai* is asked to donate a *kalo* or \$10 and then your 'āiga back home is doing that on your behalf...that way people don't talk behind your back.

On the one hand, this view does not take into account that there are many more Samoans living abroad who wish to become *matai*, hence their acceptance of titles. On the other hand, there is the understandable insistent desire by *matai* and 'āiga in Samoa to confer titles on oldest senior males of the 'āiga whether in Samoa or New Zealand, and also the desire to tap larger financial resources abroad by nominating and appointing overseas Samoans, including NZ-borns, as *matai*. Typical financial requests for assistance from Samoan 'āiga range from anything between \$2,000 and \$10,000 per year (this does not include other financial obligations to 'āiga and Church in New Zealand).

Well, normal things like helping like when they have a court case in Mulinu'u to do with titles and land, then they write to help to pay with court costs and what have you....That's one way, or if someone passed away or is getting married and they can't find money to make their *taulaga*, that's another way, school fees and all those things, building a house, white Sunday....Those are the normal things that your family back home would sometimes ask for [or for] somebody's fare to come to New Zealand.

When considering financial obligations it must be remembered that these are not enforced on *matai* as individuals. *Matai* can and do request members of 'āiga to contribute to the agreed upon amount which will eventually be sent to Samoa or presented in New Zealand at *fa'alavelave*. Members of the focus group who are *matai* as well as members who are not, are well aware of the obligations and commitments this status involves.

Members' responses to being asked or their recollections of their fathers or uncles being asked to take on a *matai* title vary. Regardless as to whether the offer to become a *matai* is accepted or declined, it is evident that for most this process is quite a stressful one. The pattern which emerges is one where there is initial opposition to the idea, followed by deep soul-searching, where factors for and against are contemplated. Almost invariably though, when they, their fathers or their uncles are asked to take on a *matai* title, members say that the decision is usually affirmative, regardless of how long it took to make the

decision, especially when pressure is applied by the father (or '*āga*), or by the father's untimely death, or the feeling that the title should remain in the family. Another significant point is that every ESG member who has been asked to become a *matai* knows and is aware of what being a *matai* means spiritually, culturally, socially and financially. In other words the *matai* role and status is a part of the cultural, social and economic milieu of both male and female NZ-born life experiences despite being raised in New Zealand.

My '*āga* wanted me to have the title but I didn't want to myself....The reason why...[lies in] how they choose a *matai* back home. These are the qualities, first, he has to be a very kind person, one that has a heart to love, secondly a person that is able, because a *matai* [should be] what they call *lima malosi*...a *matai* should be *loto alofa* and *lima malosi*. Those are the things. A *matai* should be a person that loves his family, extended family...and an able person who can afford to dish out as the need arises.

This narrative is significant in its focus on the emotional aspects of taking on a *matai* title. The requirement that one loves his family or is *loto alofa* is crucial to this exposition. It reflects the view of the oldest *matai* in the group, and is typical of the older *matai* who see the financial obligations and commitments as part of the greater picture. This same view of the *alofa* aspect and wanting to *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* '*āga* is also portrayed by the only female *matai* of the group, who notes the elevation in status she has achieved by accepting a *matai* title.

People listened to me more because I was a *matai*. I became an elder and then a *matai*. I think that if I didn't have my *matai*, that people wouldn't listen to me. I feel that I get a lot of respect because of it. Like I have joined the Samoan Women's Fellowship, I joined that to help me with my language and I get a lot of respect from the mothers there because I am a *matai*, yet if I wasn't I believe that I'd be treated like the other girls my age and they're just ignored really. Not so much ignored in the literal sense...but in the Samoan [sense].

It is interesting that the views of the older male *matai* and much younger female *matai* converge in this way. An explanation of this can be given in terms of the older male attaining this understanding of emotional underpinnings of *matai* responsibilities and centrality of '*āga* through experience and over time, with the female *matai* attaining the same through her Samoan '*āga* socialisation experiences as a female. This can be

supported by juxtaposing the views of younger male *matai*. Younger male *matai* speak in terms of financial commitments and the organisation and well-being of 'āiga. When speaking about financial obligations the initial response is associated with negative aspects--the idea that it is a burden. This then implies that younger male *matai* are yet to learn or experience the full impact of the significance of 'āiga and associated emotions of *loto alofa*, *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*.

I think financially it's a burden sometimes, I mean the *matai* system itself, I think a lot of times it's just for money more than anything. Back in the old days...money wasn't an issue being a *matai*. Now I feel that being a *matai*...it's felt that you should give the most, more than everybody else because you have a title....Money-wise, I'm obligated to give my share to what goes on in Samoa even though I won't get to see it or if I don't get to live in the homes that are built...like since the cyclone there are a few homes in [...] that have been built and they belong to a lot of our chiefs, so we, as the chiefs from that village are obligated to put in two or three odd hundred dollars which I've done over the last couple of years.

I hummed and haaed. I was hesitant because I didn't speak Samoan, and felt I shouldn't accept it because it would mean me sitting around talking yahoo and....

It's changed over time, again....I used to be very sarcastic, and sling off about all those things. Even when I took the title...I took the title only for one reason, and that was for Dad, right? I didn't want it, I wasn't interested in it. [But] I took it....

I had to ask my brother...Well what am I supposed to say? You know when they have the *kava* and whatnot, I was a nervous wreck....It was at my aunty's house...and that whole couple of weeks, I was just very...I cried, I drank myself silly, I couldn't find anybody my own age who had a title that could understand what I was going through and even my wife, my mother and my brothers I couldn't relate this thing to. You know I was quite depressed for a couple of weeks after this happened. I didn't know what had hit me, and I knew that the old man's title was a big title....

Only one member having been asked to become a *matai*, declined after a long period of deliberation.

I'll tell you....In my final year at the college, my father rang me if I would become a *matai*....He said that some people had come from Samoa looking for a member of the family to become a *matai*, and did I want to be a *matai*? I said, Well just give me three days to think about it, and I'll give you my answer...I thought for me it means giving up the ministry, and staying with ordinary jobs...and I thought too

about the effect on my wife and children...that kind of thing...and what would Samoa have to offer me, and what could I offer Samoa. I thought I've already been to Samoa and seen how things are, and I thought, No. There's no reason why I should become a *matai*, and so I rang my father and said...[no].

Although younger male *matai* do focus on their added financial obligations, there is also evidence that some are willing to explore the other cultural dimensions of this Samoan institution. Some see it as a way of forcing themselves to reclaim their Samoan identity, while others see it as a natural progression, in order to keep the title in the family. Many other factors are taken into account as the following narratives show. In the one case stated above where the offer was declined, the title went to his younger brother, and thus remained in his *'āga*.

Then I thought maybe this is one way of pushing me to know about *fa'aSamoa*, instead of sitting back making excuses.

So I found that the reasons I took it on was I wanted to identify with my Samoan side of things, and I thought that well this is really going to pull me into line with things like that....It'll make me sit up and listen to a lot of other things. I'd be in a position of responsibility in the family, I'd be sort of forcing myself to come into an understanding of the *fa'aSamoa*, and I thought, Well it's going to cost me a lot of money and I looked at all the negatives, but I thought, Well you know, it's really a small price to pay for what I really want from that....So for those reasons, for wanting to keep a hold on my culture, for wanting to include my mum, and for actually wanting to inspire my own generation to become involved, to shake off all the negatives about *fa'aSamoa*....

It came about because I've been nagged for a long time to become a *matai* and finally I succumbed in a sense that we needed to have someone from our part of the family to take this title otherwise it would go away from us, so I said yes. So coercion, in a sense, but I look upon it as divine guidance...like the *matai* is bestowed by God in our philosophy of *fa'aSamoa*, so when you feel the call, I said Yes. Up to that stage [I] didn't feel the call at all but when the time is right, when you feel right, you say yes.

NZ-born *matai* in my focus group became animated when they talked of their *saofa'i* experiences. Most of the *saofa'i* were held in Samoa, and their experiences of these not only delineate the ritualistic elements of the process but also provide insight as to what their perceptions of what this ritual meant for them, and how enjoyable the experience was

for them.

I had to be quick with my decision, so I said Yeah okay. That would of been about 1987. So, I went to Samoa. It was scary, because although I had been to Samoa, I'd never been back for something like this. It was a lot of money and a lot of work. My mother went a week before I left to prepare things and then I got there the night before my *saofa'i* I was just ready to go. But the family had to prepare pigs, cabin bread biscuits and bread, butter, as my gift to the village after it was all done. For the actual *saofa'i* itself all I wanted to know was whether I was meant to speak because if I was, somebody had to tell me what to say. I remember an old uncle of mine saying I had to speak and drink the *kava*....He said, All you do is when they bring the *kava* bowl to you, tip a little bit out, say your little spiel and then drink. He forgot to tell me the last bit, to drink a little bit and tip the rest at the back, so I sat there and drank the whole thing didn't I...[laughs]. That was the funny part cause everybody laughed. All I said in my speech was, Thanks to God for bringing us all together today...God bless the village and myself for the title. It was just the same as what everybody [else] said. When I got there, they were all sitting around and I was introduced to everybody, sat down and then they had long speeches, very long speeches, and then I just waited for my time. And then one of the chiefs who was bestowing the title on me spoke and then they did the *kava* ceremony and I think I was the second one to drink. There was me and my other cousin, the cousin who got another title. But it was more or less for mine. Then after they did that, then that's when we gave the gifts of the pigs, the biscuits and the bread, and then after that was done it was just a cup of tea and chitchat and then it was just get up and meet everybody again and then we left. I think it took about four or five hours actually. It was really, really interesting 'cause I've never ever sat through one, only once before, years ago, at one of the back villages for another uncle's title, but [then] I really didn't understand, 'cause I wasn't involved.

I really enjoyed it, I really liked being a part of it. I wasn't the only one getting a title that day, so I was easily hidden. But I loved the whole process...watching it come together...watching the talk...even though it was killing my legs...another thing that makes me a *pālāgi* [laughs]....So I sat painfully there for about a week, crossing my legs, listening to the discussion, watching it come together. I just loved it so much. I had no problems with it. I don't know what anybody else felt like, but I was getting a title by the family, I was being identified by the family, so I had no major problems whatsoever.

The recurring theme of being unable to *tautala fa'aSamoa* resurfaces in the *matai* context to a magnified extent. The main shortcomings of younger NZ-born *matai*, in their view was their inability not only to speak ordinary Samoan but also formal Samoan, the language of *matai*. This fact, though not an impediment to the conferment of a title by *'āiga* in Samoa and New Zealand, nor the acceptance of one, is daunting nevertheless.

Some *matai* state that their 'āga accepts the speaking of English during various *fono*, other *matai* state that their 'āga most definitely do not. For one member a typical response is to become a deliberately uncommunicative observer.

But at the same time, I always have this thing of being ashamed and embarrassed that I don't KNOW what to do...the easy answer is to give it away. I even do it in my office now, if I hear people downstairs, I know they're going to talk to me in my office, I hide upstairs 'cause I don't know how to ask them once they stay. When I go to functions now, I will try and get there ahead of people so that I don't have to be greeted... 'cause I don't know how to answer them, 'cause if I arrive there and there are twenty or so people the first thing they're going to say to me is, *Afiō mai lau afloga*, and all this...and I just don't know what to say...and I have this freeze out situation. And that bothers me, it bothers me a hell of a lot.

This narrative, by a male NZ-born *matai*, is poignantly indicative of the language barrier and consequent feelings of embarrassment that some members endure. It is a double-edged barrier, especially if one is a *matai*, because one is expected to *tautala fa'aSamoa* at two levels--colloquial Samoan and formal Samoan (the language of *matai*). Although fluent in colloquial Samoan this member obviously feels less than adequately up to the task.

Younger NZ-born *matai* feel deeply embarrassed that they cannot speak Samoan fluently at the present time but feel that it is their prerogative to speak English. Underpinning this is the persisting desire to pick up the language and to be able to fully converse in both levels of Samoan at some future stage.

There are two others that carry the same title as me. One is the same age as me but born and raised in Samoa, the other's a lot older. The three of us work together with the other *matai* in the group....The interesting thing is that when I first took on the title quite often the family would come and ask me to take a *si'i* to a funeral or something like that....But I can't speak proper Samoan or anything close...and they said, Do it in English. So I'd go to these places...these family homes, introduce myself, go with my family, and speak to them in English. Now I felt that I was really insulting the people 'cause I couldn't speak, so I was always making apologies, and nowadays I don't apologise, I see it as my part, my being involved in the culture and whether they want it or not. I speak to them politely, do all the courtesies, throw in a few Samoan courtesies that I know and it seems to be well received....

Whenever I enter anything, Samoan-wise, it goes straight to the top, because you're

recognised. The name [...] is a high title in [...]. For me, I'm embarrassed, and I hide, and I shirk....It's because I can't speak that particular language [formal Samoan] properly, I don't know how to address them, I don't know how to thank them....

Members are very critical of other *matai* who they think are abusing the system, and who they see as using their status to elevate their position among peers.

We [the 'āga] are very critical of the use of the *matai* title at the moment. We are concerned from our perspective that the European model of leadership has been transferred into our collective communal style and so therefore certain *matai* are really working for a pakeha perspective of privatisation of power and doing what they want when it's supposed to be a communal collective model....And that they are supposed to be the servants who enact the will of the families, not the other way round, and that's what is happening. And we see that as the clash and in actual fact what's happened is that some of our *matai* are doing it [becoming *matai*] for themselves. They are corrupting the process, abusing the process...I think what's happening is because we are in a capitalist system, it has actually made it a very exploitative process, so I think some of our *matai* are uneducated for 20th century context.

Most of the *matai* in my focus group preferred to be humble about the fact, and to go about their business as a *matai* as and when required.

But I'm not like other *matai*...see you know...like how our parents have *matai* things and they always try and get into situations where their *matai* titles are shown, 'cause that's another issue with *matai*....A lot of *matai* go to places 'cause they want to be shown...or to show off their titles....I'm not that way, I go where I'm supposed to be going....

We were never wanting to be 'up there'. We were humble in everything that we did...but that humbleness and our strength and our success also attract people, and they respect that...'cause they hate people who are successful and try to be like, Look at me, I'm so and so....One doesn't have to do that.

But I like to be called [...]. I feel closer to people when they call me [...], but when they use [my] *matai* names, I don't like people to think I'm better than them, I like to see people at the same level and talk the same language.

"New-wave *matai*" is a 1990s phenomenon and a term applied by members of the group to refer to *matai* who pick and choose which *fa'alavelave* to support or commit to. Often it is not a stubborn refusal to meet one's *matai* obligations, but rather a case of not

being able to afford to contribute to every single *fa'alavelave* in a uniformly consistent manner.

Well, this is the 90s, and we have "new wave" *matai*. My brother has to deal with the older *matai* that are still on the thing of, Let's put on the big show!...you know...but he tends to bring it back down to earth and say that all of us are not like the first wave that went through. We're all still struggling really hard for our houses, whereas a lot of them shared when they first got here, and a lot of this generation are all going out from home and moving into their own houses, and they're trying to pay off mortgages and things. So while you're part of the whole, you've got to take care of yourself first, so that you can give something back, rather than grow up giving your all...and ending up with nothing....When it gets really bad, when they make all these big demands then [...] will just go in and say, This is from our family and that's it.

In my case, because I've got a *matai* title, my only concern as far as the family is concerned, as far as my title is concerned, is in the case of death in the family, that's the time when I believe that we ALL contribute, we ALL play our part. But when it comes to a wedding, a birthday...all I say is if they want to play bigshot...go do it...I'm not doing it. I don't believe the family should do it 'cause I don't believe in it...right? So that's where I'm a bit separate from that. You've got to really know what you're doing. You feel within yourself what you feel you should and should not do. For example when the church is giving money, for church functions, I know they all look at me to be able to come up with two, three, four or five thousand dollars...I'm not stupid...I won't do it...I will say two hundred or one hundred dollars and that's it...because I'm not trying to buy their respect. If they don't respect me for what I am, that's their problem.

Even though I took the title and everything else, it was totally still meaningless to me, and to be honest, today, it's still meaningless to me as far as trying to be anybody with it....But most people play on their titles...I don't. I just ignore it....My thinking about it is that if I'm in Samoa, then use it, if I'm here, I just go along with everything else.

The danger of this phenomenon is that *'āga*, especially in Samoa, will not look favourably on this practice, and there is a danger that *'āga* links may become weakened. However most members have devised strategies for coping with these incessant demands and have tempered amounts given to *'āga* to coincide with affordability, degree of *'āga*-kin relationship and magnitude of *fa'alavelave*, so that these links are not severed completely.

Invariably when talking about *matai*, discussions and conversations turned to the

notion of ministers as *matai*, where in some contexts ministers of the Church are accorded the same status in terms of *feagaiga*, *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo* and monetary contributions as *matai*. In contemporary Samoa it is appropriate for pastors or ministers to be placed in the same conceptual category as *ali'i* (embodiment of sacred and mystical powers) as opposed to *tulāfale* (embodiment of secular power), since as agents of God they are imbued with the same order of ritual powers (Schoeffel 1995:102). This phenomenon is not described or covered in much detail anywhere in the literature on Samoa, except in the Masters theses of Samoan students enrolled at Knox College, Dunedin, or Theological College in Suva (Fa'ataa 1988, Leilua 1988, Senara 1987, Setu 1988 among others; cf. Schoeffel 1995 and Goldsmith 1989). Members' narratives on this topic are insightful. Members whose parents or grandparents were *fai'fe'au* in Samoa have vivid recollections of the special treatment afforded them by their villages.

[In] the village, the *fai'fe'au* is number one. I go to any *'āga* in the village, and eat anything I want, you know...I think *fai'fe'au* is more respected than a *matai*, because...every Saturday, from every family in the village we always received our food that we need, and on Sunday that's the day every village did a *umu* for the *fai'fe'au*. Man I tell you food after food, always bring a fish, chicken, or piece of pork, or meat. If not then *luau* or *fā'ai*, every Sunday! Then my grandfather used to do another *umu* to heat up the leftovers. He always say to me, I don't want to waste this, because this is the sweat of the village. They give it because we are different. We are here for the church and for the will of God, so we must thank God that we got something to eat, don't waste it, we just keep boil it, boil it next day, 'cause we get fresh food every day. But my grandparents never want to waste it. If we waste it, we give it to the pigs. In Samoa, the head of the village, the *matai* are different. But the *fai'fe'au* is different, higher. Not because of the rank, but because of the work he does, because of the Word of God, regardless of religion....It doesn't matter, you're still the *fai'fe'au*....Every village I go to, always the best.

NZ-born members who have less experience of this phenomenon in the context of Samoa nevertheless have firm ideas and opinions about this relationship based on their perceptions of *matai* in the New Zealand context and their observations of ministers of Newton Church. Members with secured identities were able to reconcile the historical development of the role of ministers within Newton Church with the role and status of *matai* as one of social control, and talk about this development as one which helped to

maintain identity, and a way of indigenising christianity in New Zealand.

I think it has been an important part in the development of our community here in New Zealand because the church has always been the focal point for our community and so in a sense...[*fai* 'au] become substitute...*matai* so I guess in the early days it was an important part of us maintaining our identity, it helped to give us strength in the early days....

In PIC I believe that has happened, but...differently, because in the *matai* system, you will go and look after your *matai* and he makes decisions for your family and everything, but a minister can never be a *matai*, so I suppose he does have his godly *matai* title which sets him almost above a *matai*, and ever since I was young, Rev. [...] in this church has been the be all and end all. I mean if he says something, everyone rallies around, and any voice of dissent is quietened in the back or something, and you have to actually approach [him] privately and bring him around before the meeting, or you're doomed.

Their [ministers'] roles are very similar to our village ones back home....But the context or the dressing, the way it looks is very different, very western, but the parallels are definitely rooted back home in the village. And I don't think they're equal to *matais*. Are they *matais*?....To me it's an acknowledgement of our people, it's an acknowledgement of our culture heritage and our history, it's an acknowledgement of the journey of Pacific Island people to...indigenise the process that we've got second-hand from *pālagi* from England who also got it third-hand from Jewish people that went across, that went east to west. Now we in the 1990s, the PIC...are now requiring us to have our theologies developed as well. And to me I see as really positive because it helps, it will address cultural issues.

It is perhaps not merely a coincidence that all six of the *matai* in my focus group were aged from 35 to 59 and thus fall within the age-set of the group who consider themselves as having secured identities. This is because, regardless of whether these *matai* identified themselves as Samoan or NZ-born, all had established families, careers and recognition within the Newton Church structure; all had deliberated carefully and at length on the implications of taking on a *matai* title and with the advice from 'āiga had concluded that they were ready to accept this responsibility in the New Zealand context. Needless to say, other members in this age-group who express having secured identities also were not *matai*. That is to say obtaining a *matai* title is not necessarily a prerequisite in attaining a secured identity for others. Undoubtedly though, those members with secured identities are more aware of the historical and political implications of the *matai* system in the New Zealand context and show an understanding of the processes of christianisation and its

impact on this system.

"It was a must to go to Church"

All members recognise going to church as another crucial aspect of being Samoan. The church (especially Newton Church) is perceived as another embodiment of parental *fa'aSamoa*, especially in New Zealand. In this section members' perceptions of Newton Church--the commitment involved, its structural and cultural institutions, the influence of the charismatic movement--and its role in the negotiation of identity for NZ-borns will be introduced. This theme in the context of opposition and conflict will be explored and developed further in the next chapter.

The Church is the key institution, apart from *'āiga* groups, which gathers Samoan people together. Every Samoan in their lifetime will attend Church, not only because many of the ritual life cycle events are performed there, but also because the Church is the only institution outside one's own *'āiga* where parental *fa'aSamoa* is promulgated and encouraged, and where people find support and an outlet for their strong *fa'aSamoa* beliefs and practice. Undoubtedly, for most the Church is regarded as home. Members state that it is a place which keeps them connected and grounded to the reality of being a Samoan in the New Zealand situation and literally bonds members to the people of the *ekālēsla* as kin and *'āiga*, theoretically regardless of ethnicity. Most have been members of the Church since birth, despite having time out periods (See Chapter Five). Also actual members of their *'āiga*, especially older members, are avid Church goers, so that some members have no choice but to be at least passive members of the Church community. Without a doubt though for many, certainly for young children in the Sunday school and young people in bible class and their teachers and leaders, more time is spent at Church than at home. It is not unusual for Edinburgh Street to be jam-packed with cars during any week-day evening--parents, older brothers and sisters, aunties and uncles who are waiting to pick up their children, brothers and sisters, nephews or nieces from some practice or workshop or other activity going on at Church.

I was born there virtually, that's my home, and I've got to thank dad a lot for that...

I grew up in this church, I lived here, everything was here from Monday to Sunday, I've come back, and my hours are really cut down, I think it only works out to about three hours per week, yet my children's life, that's different, my children are here for Sunday School, the Youth Choir, they're here for all the practices, the competitions, exams, so for my children their hourly commitment is far higher than mine.

You had to go! My parents would support all the church things but they weren't really into the *fa'aSamoa* stuff, but they did it anyway.

For older members the feeling of resentment at being forced by their parents to attend Church when younger, changes on maturity and on reflection to one of gratitude.

Church was pretty much important. It was a must to go to church when we were younger, but I didn't think it was much of a must because I actually enjoyed going.

The younger members who are still negotiating the significance and importance of Church talk about a "time out" period, where they have "left" church for various reasons only to return at some later point. This aspect will be examined in more detail in the next chapter.

Some members see the financial and time commitment to Church as excessive. The financial obligation to Church by the *ekālēsia* involves committing income to the Church for various donations: regular amounts (Sunday service weekly offerings) and other irregular amounts at different times over the church year (*malaga*, *fa'aulufalega*, PCANZ budget contributions, retirement gifts, birthday, baptismal, funeral, marriage, celebratory gifts). In addition to these donations are the various fund-raising events held during the year. Amounts which individuals donate per year range from \$50 to \$5,000 and beyond, and together total hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. As well as the huge financial commitment by Church members, the time commitment to Church is also viewed as excessive. Time spent at Church for most members range from five hours to up to fifteen hours weekly, depending on teaching, leadership or administration responsibilities. Most of the members' experiences reflected the immense dedication of their finances and time in commitments to Church.

At the peak, say when I was fifteen or so I must have spent quite a few hours, 'cause Monday...finish work...Leaders meeting, after that prayer meeting. I'd get home around 10 pm....We used to have other meetings during the week as well....We had to come for lesson prep[aration], that was another three hours, and then if you had practices for anniversaries that were coming up. Sometimes you were there every day of the week for Sunday school, exams...competitions...choir.

Even when members have spent their "time out" at other churches they are still accepted as bona fide members of Newton church community, that is, once a member of Newton PIC, always a member. One's place is always left vacant.

I've taught in every department except the primary department. I was involved in the Bible Class from 1973 right up until I left in 1980. One of the things I learnt while I was away was you don't lose your elder's status....

Older members associate Church with the '*autalavou* (see Chapter Three). NZ-borns are made to feel welcome, however it is difficult for members without '*āga* or extended families in the '*autalavou* to feel part of it.

A friend of mine tried to join but told me that if you had an aunt or relation in it it's really good, but if you're just on your own it's harder.

I think that if you're on your own and you can't speak up for yourself then it's harder, but I think if I joined I would be able to fit in because I won't feel intimidated, I can speak my mind, regardless of whether its in English or Samoan.

Again members see the '*autalavou* as yet another of the many groups whose members are expected to give financially when called upon to do so by elders, Church leaders and group sessions.

All my friends are in the Samoan group, the '*autalavou*, and that's automatically Samoan. It's the younger version of the Samoan group...and so actually, that's what I am now. I'm more or less in the Samoan group, the '*autalavou*, and the ESG. When the Samoan group usually have a lot of fundraising, and so you got to be in....you've got to be committed....PLUS you don't just give yourself and your time, you give your money...so you got to be committed, wholly...not just partly committed....And so therefore, if you don't get hit by the '*autalavou*, you get hit by the church. It depends how many times you get hit. Like say, if they get an invitation to a *fa'aulufalega*...they have to meet to decide....If they don't, some of

them will go under the church, if they do, they go, PLUS the church...that is...they got to give twice...sometimes three times...it's amazing you know.

Some members of the ESG who are aware of the situation in Samoa critically assessed the similarities and differences with the structure and function of the *'autalavou* in Samoa as opposed to the *'autalavou* at Newton, and pointed out that in Samoa the *'autalavou* indeed consisted of young people (although this was not representative of most EFKS churches in Samoa) rather than a mixture of old and young as in Newton Church. The marked age mix of Newton's *'autalavou* was attributable to the adaptation of the indigenous notion of *'autalavou* to the *papālagi* structure of PCANZ combined with the multi-ethnic make-up of Newton Church. That is, enabling older people to join *'autalavou* acts as a survival mechanism in that it consolidates the Samoan group and provides an opportunity to consolidate parental *fa'aSamoa*, allowing older Samoan people more chances to be part of the Church, allowing *'āiga* to participate in Church activities as a family, and at the same time allowing the old to watch over the young to ensure that the young are doing their "duty" and that they have suitable role models.

I guess it's my upbringing, because dad doesn't believe in *'autalavou*...His church [in Samoa] never had an *'autalavou*, it was only when we went to American Samoa that we were involved, but our *'autalavou* [here] is different. With us there are no older people it's just a youth and we run it, no *matai*, the oldest one in it would be about 42 but we don't have parents, that's why for me it's different. The way I look at it for our *'autalavou*, you just let the youth do what they want to do, but over here the older people run it.

I was involved as a church member way back in 1959. I was in the *'autalavou* in the beginning. In those days I was at school here, but when I came back in 1978...I was looking at the *'autalavou* as the young people's thing as what it means...and its support as an older person from outside the *'autalavou*....It should be left to the younger people. The *'autalavou* is known as young parents, somewhere around thirty, and young married people. But last when I went to *'autalavou*, you still have people like [...] who was in his 60s. In a way it's good that they feel young enough to join the *'autalavou* in that sense.

Those members who were also part of the *'autalavou*, and older members, who recognised the positive aspects of belonging to the *'autalavou* in terms of it being the site for participating in Samoan culture and language, pointed to the Church in this context

promoting Samoan identity (see also Duncan 1990, Pitt & Macpherson 1974).

I want her [my daughter] to know more about *fa'aSamoa*. We're trying to teach what we have in us, for her...it's pretty hard. She does understand Samoan, she can speak a bit, she understands well. She knows two languages. The '*autalavou* helps her....[She's] been part of the '*autalavou* since she was little. She grew up with the '*autalavou*.

And something that is important in my life is knowing my culture 'cause that's where most of my knowledge of Samoan language, Samoan culture comes from, from the '*autalavou*, and from my parents...at '*autalavou* they have ceremonies like *ava*, and if I don't understand anything, I'd be sitting next to mum and I'd say what are they doing now? Whats happening? If mum didn't know...sometimes she didn't know, she didn't really understand, then she'd ask dad...or if they didn't know, all the people in '*autalavou*, they'd explain. They're really helpful. If you really want to know, they'll tell you.

Younger members who have tried going to '*autalavou* to learn more about parental *fa'aSamoa* soon realise that it is harder than first expected. They soon learn that it is family-based and community-based, and not an individual thing to do. However it is obvious that those members of the ESG who are also members of the '*autalavou* see the latter as a more committed and active group.

My perception of the '*autalavou* was a lot of positive stuff...real work...a committed group. It didn't matter how little they had if there's...something that's really lacking in the ESG sometimes...determination to get a job or task done, there's a few people in the ESG who have got no patience. They want to pass it off to everyone else and then the other ones don't get the full support. Whereas in the Samoan group, there's a few people who have the initiative to use it and they've got the vision...give it to the Samoan group. They are all behind it...they don't go on about, Oh sorry I haven't got this and that...[for example] *fa'akele lou pili aa!*...things like that. The '*autalavou* just give. And I know our younger ones complain about that but that's why so many of our projects have been so successful...is because our parents have put those things aside, and have gone full thrust for the overall project. That's the positive aspect, being committed to a group...so far as you're willing to die...in order for that project to live. I felt really comfortable there...them smiling and asking *O ai le teine lea?* I'd be latching on to other English-speaking girls but who could speak Samoan fluently too, NZ-borns. They're women that I really hold them up there for myself...they've been really able to successfully keep their language, their parents have been really good teaching them language, but they're also able to participate in the English system.

"Discipline is good..."

They [grandparents] taught me especially church things....when you go to church you got to behave yourself....It's how you walk, how you talk, how you behave yourself...because discipline is the most important thing in the *fa'aSamoa*. You've got to have discipline, no matter who you are talking to...like you are talking to a lady, or talking to a girl...you've got to discipline.

Yet another theme which members associate with parental *fa'aSamoa* and which is directly connected to concepts of *'āga* and the *matai* system is that of discipline. A recent study on Polynesian attitudes to discipline has pointed out that most island-born Polynesian parents believe that their methods of socialising their children are the means of instilling their culture into the child and that without the application of these methods the child will not belong to its culture (Meleiseā, Schoeffel et al. 1996:142).

Most members defined a good child in the same way that their parents did, describing the behaviour desired of them by their parents in terms of *usita'i*, *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*. Many also described the lack of freedom, especially for girls, and the need to be chaperoned everywhere as the greatest source of resentment. One member reflected on how as a child she was not allowed to speak at the dinner table, and how she was not allowed to leave any food on her plate, when she had finished. She recalled vividly how she didn't like pumpkin anymore because once, when she had tried to leave the table with some pumpkin still on her plate, her father had forced her to eat it all up. She promptly did so, left the table, went outside and spewed it all up.

When I look back on it [the incident above], I don't feel bitter about it...I mean dad worked really hard to put food on the table to feed all six of us...and I guess he thought we were being ungrateful, and disrespectful....At the time, I really resented that about my father, but as I grew older I understood why he did that. It wasn't to do with food, it was to do with respect....It was the *fa'aSamoa*.

This same member has learned not to take things for granted. She disciplines her own children in the same way maintaining that if a child is respectful towards their parents, they should listen to their parents, and appreciate the time and effort it took to put food on the table. The crucial factor does not become food but the desired reaction of the child to the parent in terms of *usita'i*, *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*.

All said that they had been smacked or given hidings for disobedience and other reasons such as getting smart or *fiapoko* (being cheeky), but all significantly talked about the lack of communication they experienced, especially with their fathers (girls more so than boys). Members continually talked about their mother as being the disciplinarian of their family who would verbally reprimand them and mete out physical punishment. The father would only become involved in very serious cases, or when the mother could not handle it, seemingly as a last resort. The father's involvement in most cases was a reaction of physical punishment only, with very little if any verbal reprimand. Younger members were more indignant than older members about being disciplined in this way. But all members seemed to acknowledge that this type of disciplining, where there is only one-way communication--situations where the child can never react, can never answer back--was directly attributable to parental *fa'aSamoa* and the principles of *usita'i* and *fa'aaloalo* on their part. The father's involvement (usually in terms of physical punishment) as a last resort factor is also indicative of the cultural institution of the *matai* system. Bearing in mind that most members' fathers were *matai*, his last minute involvement and subsequent extreme action in some cases, when the mother has exhausted all other avenues in disciplining the child, reflects the action meted out by *matai* in more serious discipline cases by *matai* in villages in Samoa (See Meleiseā 1987b:214-220).

Members' recollections of their experiences of Samoan discipline varied from extremely physically violent experiences to those in which physical punishment was rare, and this has impacted on how members reflected on this aspect of parental *fa'aSamoa*, and how they intended to discipline their own children in NZ-born *fa'aSamoa*. Also salient is the not unusual notion of not only parents, but also '*āiga* of the same age-set and older, being able to mete out punishment if and when warranted.

My mum and dad weren't the only ones bringing us up. My aunts, my mum's sisters, my dad's nephews, and that discipline was like...if they wanted to discipline us they wouldn't wait for my parents to get home. They would do it then and there and we pretty much knew that whatever adult around would discipline us. And if they gave us a task that it was pretty much like our parents telling us what to do, and I understood that much.

For younger members Samoan discipline is regarded as extremely violent, and often

members expressed confusion as to why they were punished in this way.

I remember when we were young, we had to learn that song to sing before you eat, and if we didn't know how to sing it, we weren't allowed to eat. So there were seven kids on the table, and the second eldest...used to know it by heart, so he would sing it and he would eat. And all of us were sitting there and we couldn't eat!...I still respect it to a certain point 'cause I've been back to Samoa and everything, and because I think just in the last two years I've been able to talk to mum about it... 'cause we've become really good friends now.

But she [mum] used to beat us, constantly....And if we were late home, five minutes, she'd be outside with a mop and she would give us a hiding in front of our friends. We would get hidings with the plug, the hose, you name it. She was a really violent woman. As for dad he used to cry when we used to get hidings, and that's how I feel sometimes...that our dad had failed us 'cause he wasn't a protector for us children. And mum would say something and that's how it went. He was like a peace-maker but he didn't really stand up for us and things like that. So we used to get really bad hidings, and it was just two years ago...and I said to mum, Do you remember how you used to give us real bad hidings? And she used to say, Yea, and I said, Did you used to get hidings like that? And she used to tell me stories of how her father would beat her, the whole family. And her father would have a plank of wood. He would call them once, not twice, once. And if they didn't move, that [plank] was on their heads. And so I said to her, Well maybe that's why you hit us so bad...because she knew no better....First she used to hit us with the hose, and if she missed, you were dead! She would get up and whip you. I'd still like to pass on the discipline that the Samoans do but to a certain point. Like I'd never hit my children here upwards [motions to waist up], but I'd spank their bottom, 'cause I remember mum used to pull my hair and hit my head...anything...and what I remember was mum used to use her hands a lot, and I wouldn't use my hands, I think I'd use a stick to hit my children.

This narrative is typical of some of the disciplinary measures (although not as extreme) exerted on females of the group. The pressure on females rather than males to behave properly and to *usita'i* again reflects the family socialisation patterns of parental *fa'aSamoa* in that there is more pressure on females to conform to strict Samoan behaviour codes.

Other members offered more varied comments: some saw their parents as being quite liberal in not being violent when meting out punishment; others felt the "not speaking unless spoken to" syndrome where kids were "seen and not heard" was frustrating and impeded their development personally and educationally. A few thought that this type of discipline was good because the Bible said so.

Upbringing was very strict, not much communication between [parents and] children. That's how I see other people being brought up in the *fa'aSamoa*, where the kids are seen and not heard sort of thing. I think dad's told me on more than one occasion that that's how he was brought up. That's probably it in a nutshell.

But there wasn't a real forcing upon us as compared to other children, where they were disciplined, 'cause dad was really into multiculturalism. Knowing your culture and knowing the language. But somehow he didn't seem to bash us over the head with it. There was more of an exposure type thing, and then I'm always thankful that even as I was growing up as a woman and having relationships with men. I wasn't sort of hit over the head if I had a boyfriend or anything like that. It was like still that openness. My mother was having a hard time, my dad was open to that and yet I compare it to other kids who are locked away in the room or given a hiding. There was none of this beating that comes sometimes with a Samoan upbringing. I don't know if its part of culture or part of what they were exposed to in the past...with beatings. So we were exposed to most aspects of *fa'aSamoa* except the strict discipline and the language.

Most members have reconciled these violent behaviours or extreme methods of punishment by their parents or older members of *'āga* as having a beneficial effect on them. That is to say on hindsight these members understood "why parents were like that", were grateful for being brought up the "right way", secure in the fact that they had "turned out okay".

I don't believe I have ever heard of a PI person who has been brought up by strict...discipline growing up hating their parents. No. They love them to their graves....They don't dump them in rest homes, only if they can't physically cope with medical conditions. Why? Because discipline dealt out, however painful it is, is pure love. It is a love for a child to have a better future. And we all grow up knowing why.

Moreover, these same members expressed the desire to discipline their children in similar ways (though not using some of the extreme measures they endured), unhappy with the more liberal attitudes of *pālāgi* society and schools towards punishment and discipline of children in the '90s.

...and the kids who are being saved are the ones whose parents are strong enough to say, You go to the Samoan service! You go to the *'aukalavou*! You go to *'aufaipese*, otherwise you get a hiding. And those kids are the strength of our church...the ones who are not there, are the weakness.

Even though we got bashed around...they bashed us...they called us this and that...for good reasons. And so that's why I disagree with all this European [liberal form of] discipline. But that was it. We were brought up with that and that was our main strive. [It] was for nothing but pride of parents.

As for the other aspects of *fa'aSamoa*, I teach them that, like saying the *lotu* before going to bed, singing the *lotu* before eating...like I think part of *fa'aSamoa* is more discipline than they're inclined to get in the European society. So although it might be called abuse, I'm not scared to give my child a slap on the leg and say, Don't do this. I'm not going to go out and get a cord or anything and beat her up, but I will give her the odd slap on the bum or legs and say, Don't DO that.

These members were aware of the double standards placed on them as Samoans living in New Zealand. On the one hand, they were the recipients of Samoan discipline in the home, on the other, outside the home--in the schools and in the community--they were exposed to the liberal attitudes of mainstream society which give legal rights to children under the legal rhetoric of "abuse", and "harrassment".

Today, if a PI child gets cheeky and smart in the home and the parents try and discipline them, they are threatened that they will be reported to the Police or Social Welfare. End result. We have no control over them and they run riot causing problems in the community such as theft, tagging...and the PI communities are held responsible for not bringing up their children properly....We have lost our right to discipline our children, and our communities are paying the price.

On the whole all members, young and old, *matai* and non-*matai*, male and female viewed their experiences of Samoan discipline, whether liberal or extreme as positive. Even though female members felt that they had been disciplined to a far greater extent than their male counterparts, they had come to realise that it was part of parental *fa'aSamoa* and therefore unavoidable. Whether their reaction during childhood was to conform or rebel against some of the forms of discipline they experienced, it seemed to become more acceptable and more understandable as these women grew older. Moreover Samoan discipline and the necessity for the old to discipline the young, and for the young to *usita'i* blindly, is an integral feature of parent/child relationship in Samoan family socialisation processes and impinges on all other aspects of parental *fa'aSamoa*.

In summary, this section has dealt with members' experiences and perceptions of being Samoan—the problematics of the meaning of *fa'aSamoa* have been discussed. Parents', elders' and island-born Samoan perceptions of being a good Samoan in terms of *tautala fa'aSamoa*, *'āiga*, *matai* system, Church and discipline have been explored from the members' points of view, and I have identified the members' focus on *value* aspects embodied in notions of NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* as giving, respect and serving as a transformation of parents', elders' and island-born Samoans' focus on *behavioural* aspects of parental *fa'aSamoa*, embodied in concepts of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*. Moreover, for every aspect I have also commented on the themes, patterns and differing views of older members who claim to have secured identities, and those younger members who are still negotiating their way. Similarly, I have explored differences in views of *matai* and non-*matai*, male and female, and offered explanations for these differing perceptions. I have identified three genre of *fa'aSamoa*—parental *fa'aSamoa*, NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* and secured *fa'aSamoa*, in order to clarify differing perceptions for members and their parents. All members have knowledge of and are aware of how they are expected to behave as a good Samoan. Although many are still dealing with these expectations, and still negotiating their way, all members feel that they have adopted to a greater or lesser extent, the persona of a Samoan person in the New Zealand context. In the next section we will see how this persona has, is and continues to be severely challenged.

2

"TO MY 'ĀIGA IN SAMOA - I AM A PĀLAGI"

Originally the term *papālagi* or *pālagi* (colloquial use) meant alien, foreign or foreigner (Pratt:1893), and was used to describe Europeans or whites. The Samoan gloss of *pālagi* as 'sky-burster' (Wendt 1965; Meleiseā 1987) referred to the coming of the white man to Samoa's shores. Rolff gives a more extreme contemporary gloss of *pālagi* as the intrinsically negative connotations of older Samoans in her study defining *pālagi* as white people who are untrustworthy, anti-social, socially insensitive, uncaring and lacking in love, physically awkward, unmusical and atheistic (1978:126). Over the last fifty years or

so, however, *pālāgi* has become the term used by island-born Samoans to also refer to Samoans born and raised beyond Samoa's shores.

Thus although I consider myself a Samoan, my 'āga in Samoa often call me or refer to me as *pālāgi*. When I asked people about this they explained that I spoke English, lived as *pālāgi* do, and came from a country (New Zealand) unknown to them. Moreover, they explained that *pālāgi* was a term applied to a person who does things differently to them and applied to a person who does not help or participate in village activities. In this study, it became apparent to me that being called *pālāgi* expressed firstly an attitude more of indifference rather than of derision, and secondly that while it could be construed as having negative connotations that it is merely an acknowledgement of difference—of birthplace and of socialisation experiences. That is, being called *pālāgi* is not a definitive denial of Samoan-ness.

This same experience has caused mixed reaction among members of my focus group. Reactions range from feelings of shame, guilt, low self-esteem, to feelings of indifference, anger, amusement and even superiority.

In this section I examine members' reactions to being called *pālāgi* by 'āga in Samoa and New Zealand, and by island-born elders and leaders of Newton Church. I show how their self-identities as NZ-born or Samoan are challenged during their visits to Samoa, and by elders and leaders of their Church community, and examine the coping strategies which NZ-borns use to deal with this challenge.

The threshold between this challenge and the previous one is the consciousness that members can neither understand nor be understood by the Samoan people with whom they must associate continuously. This consciousness may arise at any time between infancy and maturity, but there are three times to which the majority ascribe their own experience of this challenge: their first trip to Samoa, dealing with 'āga in New Zealand who are recent island arrivals, and encounters with Church elders and ministers. The time for an individual relates directly to extraneous circumstances but also suggests that without a precipitating factor many members defer the crossing of this threshold until it is no longer possible to ignore the implications of what they are experiencing. The manner in which members consistently elaborate the details associated with this challenge, whether they are recalling recent events or events which occurred 15 to 20 years ago, suggests that a high level of re-

experiencing, especially visualisation, is reached during conversations. This tends to confirm the significance of this threshold for them.

Members who recalled that this consciousness arose before they went to Samoa were invariably influenced by their images of Samoa created by parents and grandparents from memories of their own childhoods, and members' experiences of growing up in Newton Church. These images, coupled with the actual experiences of members on visiting or living in Samoa, were exacerbated by how they were perceived as *pālāgi* by their *'āiga*, elders and other island-born Samoans.

When members were asked what their images of Samoa were before their first visit, most responses were in accordance with what their parents had told them. Not surprisingly the influence of the Church was very evident.

I had this big image of Samoa being this massive big Holy Land, this very churchy, not spiritual, but very staunch church country. And the minute the aeroplane landed it just went out the door. The reality was of...from the very first day, a lot of...promiscuous people walking around. Even at the airport. You'll be lucky when you get there I tell you. But just just walking down the streets and having...girls whispering out, or just calling out...and I thought Heck! Whats going on? It was just a real set-back, thinking that our homeland was a real holy land and that...it was quite the opposite.

I came to appreciate it more and more in terms of what we do. The churches I think was one of the real imprints. Just actually SEEING the churches and just thinking, Wow all these churches all the way down this main road to the airport!! All the way into town. That really got my focus.

Parents (especially mother's) influence was also very evident (see next section also), and it is interesting to note that most of the images that were created reflected parental *fa'aSamoa*, rather than any kind of description of physical characteristics of the islands of Samoa. They described the hard life that they experienced, what they had to do without, distances they had to walk by foot, and the behaviour expected from good Samoan children. They also stressed the importance of *'āiga*.

I remember a lot of the times they'd tell us how hard it was, and for instance if we were round the dinner table, and we'd leave half our meal uneaten, they'd always

say, In Samoa we didn't get very much to eat. So usually they told us how hard it was growing up and that they didn't really have much materialistically. They told us a lot about family, and just that Samoa is very much a family-orientated society, and they do everything in communities, '*āgas*. That was really what opened my eyes, and I thought, that's neat, 'cause here in New Zealand we do that but we're more individuals. They shared that there was a lot of love between people, a lot of generosity shown, and *fa'aSamoa* was very important.

I'd always hear from my dad [was raised by father only] when I did something wrong that, That wasn't the way that a Samoan child would do things, and that in Samoa that's not what they do, children normally do this...and then start explaining what they do. So I always thought that Samoan children were always perfect, that they really do listen to their parents, and I thought it was something that I should definitely get a hold of, and be able to handle.

Well I kind of had it that they had no houses...you know...that they just had these huts, 'cause they'd say how really poor they were. And I used to think that a lot of them ran around naked 'cause we used to send over boxes and boxes of clothes, like every year. And I used to think of them as being really really poor. That all they'd have was they'd live in this hut and all they had was their plantation and their pigs... 'cause that's how mum and dad said it, and I think maybe when they were there that's how it was probably, I don't know....

Visits to Samoa were regular in some instances, frequent in others, and every member in the focus group had been to Samoa more than once. What was very evident was that these NZ-borns were extremely well-travelled, and this provides empirical evidence to Bertram and Watter's notion of transnational corporations of kin (1987). Although the frequency varied the reasons were almost always to do with going back for *fa'alavelave*, a holiday, or parents sending them over to familiarise them, first hand, with Samoa. Some remember vividly arriving at Faleolo International Airport and the drive to Apia.

I remember stepping out of the plane, and you couldn't breathe properly. It was a damp sort of a feeling, 'cause it was Christmas. It was raining, and so it felt like I was in a stuffy room, a stuffy wet room. We arrived in the early hours of the morning, and we got onto the back of a pickup truck....We went to my uncle's house and I was tired and so I rested for a while. But I remember the hard vinyl flooring and the concrete walls. I just remember it was cool riding on the back of a pickup...and the palm trees.

The first time I went over I was in the 5th form....I thought, Oh my goodness it IS Samoa! I saw all these coconut trees and I kept thinking it was going to be like New

Zealand. You just automatically have houses and it was still like what mum and dad said 'cause there were still huts in those days....But when I got to our house, we had a proper house.

Younger members talked about how they thought Samoa was like "paradise" and, on discovering how "primitive" life in Samoa was, described their disappointment in what they experienced.

I stayed in town, Apia most of the time. I went to Savai'i for a day...hated it there, it was too primitive, too quiet for my liking. I'm quite a city person. I like action and lots of people. But it was very, very peaceful on Savai'i. There was just nothing to do. Nice scenery and that, but I couldn't relax, there were too many flies and it was too hot.

I felt sorry for the young girls that served us. But that was part of the culture. We were visitors and they were the ones doing the washing and the cups of tea, and they didn't seem to have much of a future there....Their lifestyle is very different, it's very hot over there and you have to adjust to the heat. Where my parents come from it was a hard life, showers outside, very primitive.

We went to [...], and they were cutting this big pork at the back. And I said, Oh gross! And it wasn't cooked properly. And they brought it into us to eat. I was thinking...yuk!...I didn't want to be there, and everything like from the food upwards just didn't seem to agree with me. I couldn't eat anything. The closest thing I could eat a lot of was the corned beef 'cause it came from the tin and *kalo* but even that I couldn't eat. And the fresh bread was fresh so I could eat that. But I missed things like the butter that went on the bread and when they made things, they went out of their way to make things like *keke pua'a* for us, and I couldn't eat it. I ate a little bit, but it didn't taste like the *keke pua'a* that I knew and had tasted here. All the things were just really unfamiliar to me and I remember thinking that it was just not what I had expected. And the attention you got from everyone made you feel like you were a star or something.

Associated with these views of comparative poverty and primitiveness, were perceived heightened disciplinary measures enforced on younger female members, especially in the case of parents' view of proper behaviour by and towards young women in Samoa. Fathers would ensure that their daughters were properly chaperoned by older aunties when going to town and always told their daughters that Samoa had changed for the worse in terms of violence in the clubs and that they must not *kafaovale* (do no work, be idle). In turn, the daughters; who were amused by the extra attention they received from boys who flocked around NZ-born girls, felt that their freedom had been severely restricted

and resented the fact that these stringent measures were not enforced in New Zealand to the same extent. These strict measures were not imposed on younger male members who were given free reign in how, when and with whom they went to town or clubbing. The following narrative describes how disciplinary measures in this context were intensified when the young woman involved was in Samoa. In the first case the member recalls the transformation of her father's attitude towards her going out from one of relative freedom in New Zealand to severe restriction in Samoa, and in the second the theme of the parents' need to have their daughters constantly chaperoned while in Samoa is reinforced.

At that age boys were the most important thing I suppose. But dad was really strict on us...like there wasn't much I could enjoy of the place, unless I went away from my dad, and went with my aunties, and then he was just...he wasn't my dad. I didn't know him when we went there, he was really strict. And with our second visit he did the same thing. My dad treats me like I'm a mature adult here [in New Zealand], 'cause he knows that he's given me a lot of responsibilities and that he's given me leeway to make certain choices. But I felt when we went to Samoa...I didn't have any more choices. It was, do as he says and that was it. I just didn't understand why the rules had been changed and...that was part of the reason why I didn't like Samoa...I couldn't enjoy it, and I had to be around him all the time. If he wasn't going to be with me, then he'd leave one of my aunts with strict instructions that I wasn't to go anywhere...and I just couldn't handle it.

It was [a cousin's] 21st birthday and they said we could go wherever she wanted to go so we tried to get her to take us to Mount Vaea 'cause we wanted to go where all the younger ones hung out....but I remember going to the toilet. I was supposed to go with my cousin, but she didn't want to go so I just ended up going on my own. So when I sat down, my dad asked me where I had been, To the toilet. Well he just hit the roof, told me that I wasn't to go anywhere without my cousins, and that if I was stupid enough to do anything like that again, that I would get it. I just couldn't understand what he was getting at...until later when I came back home, and I started thinking about it.

Lasting impressions however centred on the powerful memories of '*āga*--the people who looked after and hosted them and showed them *fa'aSamoa*.

The impressions were just people just loving us. I remember my 6th birthday there. It was Sunday and we went to church. And I remember coming back, and my grandad was holding my hand back to the *fale* and they had done this BIG spread, a pig and everything and it was really good. They really spoiled us...and really good hospitality. So I have good memories of Samoa.

Most members recalled that this threshold of consciousness was most acute during the crucial first visit to Samoa where they became aware that they were being perceived as different, as a *pālagi*, by their *'āga*. They remember becoming aware of their inability to understand or be understood by anyone other than other NZ-borns. For these members hearing comments like "*'o le pālagi le mea lea*", or having them stare at their feet and then say, "You've got red feet, you're a *pālagi*!", exacerbated their dilemma.

I think they probably saw me more as a *pālagi* more than anything else, 'cause I couldn't do anything they could. I couldn't speak, I couldn't do their daily chores as well as they could. I couldn't identify with them in a lot of ways. And I think they felt that. They were proud of me for being from here [New Zealand] and that, and they wouldn't let me near the *fe'au* and that, as much as I wanted to do it, but I think they felt that this guy was a New Zealander. Especially when you go to a place outside of family and you start talking and you try to speak Samoan and you don't realise that you've got a heavy kiwi accent attached to your Samoan. And they look at your feet and they think, Oh yea, he's from New Zealand, 'cause you've got lighter coloured feet than the rest of your body. They look at your feet and they know that you're a stranger anyway, but they say, You're a *pālagi*, you've got red feet. The rest of you is dark but where you've had your shoes and socks on. They know that you wear them every day.

They say *fiapālagi*, that starts from clothing. How they're dressed. In the case of young people they wear tight [jeans]...and the way they walk. They really advertise that they are from New Zealand. When I go to Samoa I just wear a *'ie solosolo*. But they look at your feet. See that's how they know. I try to wear a *'ie solosolo* and singlet but they look at your feet and they see you are clean shaven...and these are the things.

Some members talked about perceived discriminatory practices of Samoan government officials, and Samoan public at large, in favour of *pālagi*. The strong one-way bias of gerontocratic principles and parental *fa'aSamoa* in terms of the young/old dichotomy was mirrored in attitudes and actions of Samoan bureaucracy as the following narrative discloses. In this case, a NZ-born teacher with qualifications and teaching experience from New Zealand feels exploited by the Samoan Principal. Despite obtaining good results because of the NZ-born teacher's out-of-school activities (extra coaching classes) in getting some boys to pass school examinations, this member's efforts in suggesting curricular and pedagogical changes and asking for the same pay as similarly

qualified *pālāgi* teachers were continuously thwarted by the Samoan Principal and his colleagues.

I wasn't really a bumptious person, but when I saw the terms I thought I can't just let this go by...I thought why should I earn less than a *pālāgi*, with the same qualifications? So they didn't quite give me the same wages, but their argument was in a way, valid, because they said, These guys were contracted from overseas...you've come here! And I said, Well, so I've saved you the airfare...and I said, I've come back to help my own people. My father was an old boy of that school, and I had to negotiate my own pay which was still lower than what *pālāgis* were getting, but more than what they originally offered me. And I taught there a year. It was a real eye opener for me but, like with teaching, I, like a lot of other people walked away disillusioned with teaching in Samoa, because you could see that the system didn't work in favour of the children. It worked in favour of the hierarchy. People were getting well known off the back of that school, but the school was passing only one or two for School Cert. in the whole school...now that's ridiculous, and I knew that there were ways they could improve it. Like I had classes after school for my students, who were the bright ones, the ones that I knew were bright. And in my class, we managed to get two of them through, which was 100% increase on the year before. I could see they had the skills to pass, and the will...the brains. That was in my spare time, you know, and I did that for the kids, and then I thought, and every time I talked to the hierarchy about some improvements we could make, you know they just seemed to think, Well here's a guy from New Zealand, he doesn't understand things here...and to me...that just said to me, your advice is not appreciated. And so I couldn't see the point in continuing there, especially when I had offers from better schools, like I knew another guy who was a friend of mine in Dunedin, who was teaching at Samoa College. And he said to me, Why are you wasting your time at that school? I said, Well, I don't know. Maybe to me it was kind of a romantic thought of helping out these people who really needed my help. But he thought I was mad teaching there, and there was an uphill battle all the way....They were suffering from the colonial mentality, the colonial mentality of *pālāgi* being superior. Whereas we [NZ-borns] haven't been brought up in AWE of the *pālāgi*...and there were still people like that in the system. So I was quite disillusioned in helping out Samoa, and I thought the only way I could help Samoa out is to help pay off their overseas debt! [laughs] Otherwise it would forever be a drain on my resources, and for every other Samoan.

This narrative mirrored the experience of several other members also (although not all experiences with the Samoan education system), and is significant because on the one hand it highlighted perceived island-born indifference to remunerative significance of NZ-born *pālāgi* qualifications in Samoa (*pālāgi* with same qualifications or less seen to be paid more) and the almost stubborn attitude of those in authority refusing to accept let alone

implement innovative ideas to change the status quo, despite successful outcomes. On the other hand, it reflects NZ-born romanticism in thinking that whatever they suggested was right and should have been implemented, and also the assumption by the NZ-born that island-borns were in awe of the *pālāgi* and that they still suffered from a colonial mentality. Moreover the significant factor was that the NZ-born had shown lack of cultural understanding in that as NZ-born, and as a younger person, aspects of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* are integral in the Samoan context, despite perceived *pālāgi* skills, qualifications, expertise, and shows the overriding influence of parental *fa'aSamoa*, and differing order of priorities in Samoan systems of government. Moreover, the NZ-born has not taken into consideration other impacting factors such as financial resources, etc., which may (or may not) have influenced the Principal's decision.

A similar phenomenon is apparent in the experience of a NZ-born minister who now heads a church in Western Samoa. During a sermon one Sunday during a visit to New Zealand, he talked about how he is still treated like an "alien" even after serving two years in the parish. He talks about how on an acceptability scale from one to ten, that after two years he feels he is still at the bottom level, and that being a NZ-born minister in Samoa is a struggle (Sermon, 19/12/93, Newton Church).

Most accounts of NZ-born experiences talk about the fine "balancing act" that one has to go through. This perspective is depicted in the following narrative.

The biggest problem I had to face in Samoa when I first went there was an immense jealousy because I was an expatriate in my own country...and they were jealous that I was made an expatriate, that was number one. Number two was the hardest thing I had to do was again this fine line balancing act, because the balancing act is that...if I went with the *pālāgi* expatriates to everything they did, the Samoans hated me, and then if I went with the Samoans, the *pālāgis* would say, It's just another bloody coconut situation....He's just gone back to his people. So you had to, again, balance this thing to do everything equally. To do the *fa'aSamoa* stuff, to do the *pālāgi* stuff.

Varying coping mechanisms are evident in the experiences of members being called or perceived as *fiapālāgi* by island-born *'āiga* and others. What is interesting is that *all* NZ-born members in my focus group have been and are still being subjected to this experience, whether young or old, male or female, *matai* or non-*matai*. Factors such as visible

appearance (either obviously Samoan or *afakasi*) or the ability or non-ability to speak Samoan, become irrelevant. It is more the fact that one is a person from beyond Samoa's shores that becomes the defining factor as to what for island-born Samoans separates them from 'āga members born in New Zealand and beyond. In the New Zealand context the use of the label *pālāgi* by island-born elders of the Church is what separates them from the youth element of the Church, thus allowing them to negotiate more political power and status for themselves in the structure and administration of the Church.

All members express the alienating experiences of being perceived as more *pālāgi* than Samoan by 'āga in Samoa. Themes expressed by members in coping with these experiences range from feelings of confusion bordering on resentment or *ita* at one end of the scale, to indifference bordering on arrogance--*fa'amauualuga* or *fiasilil*--at the other. However, the more common coping mechanism used by most members was to be humble, respectful or *fa'amauualalo*.

Younger members recalling their first visits to Samoa talk about the bad vibes that they felt and their embarrassing experiences. At first their typical response is to be angry, insulted and frustrated as to why they should be perceived as stuck up or why they should be treated like dirt. They coped with this by taking on the *ita* coping mechanism.

I had quite a bad experience this year when I went over in February this year. I got beaten up at a night club. It was very scary. Other days when you go to the shops and people are slamming money on the counter...it was quite bad. I don't know whether it was because they don't like us NZ-borns. You just get bad vibes. It's like they're, they don't really care about you, or Oh yea...stuck-up NZ-borns. There's no sense of service with a smile. So people basically take their time.

We got the comments of *fiapālāgi* et cetera. I hated being in the family shop serving and getting the order wrong because my Samoan wasn't that great, and then they turn around and treat you like dirt.

I remember in 1987. We'd walk along Apia, just along the streets, and I could hear people saying, *Va'ai le teine pālāgi lale!* And I'd think, I know what you're saying, I'm not *pālāgi*! It was probably 'cause I was wearing a teeshirt and slacks, and everyone else was in teeshirt and 'ie lavalava. And then, so I thought, that's what they thought of me. I felt a little insulted actually, and I still do. I think I'm Samoan! I wanted to turn around and say something, but even though I'm Samoan I didn't really know what to say. I probably would have turned round and said, I'm Samoan too, in English, and that would have really helped [in sarcastic tone].

This phenomenon impacts more markedly on members, who are themselves parents of NZ-born children, who have been differentiated as more *pālagi* than Samoan, regardless of ability to *tautala fa'aSamoa*, by their own grandparents in some cases.

The youngest one, [...], his first language is Samoan, second language is English. One of the worst things he found over Christmas, his cousins arrived from Samoa. He came to me very upset and said, they're calling me a *pālagi*, I'm a Samoan aren't I dad?

My daughter just went over there [Samoa] last year...and my family called her a *pālagi* and she was very, very angry, and because her mother is a *pālagi*, she is very Samoan in looks, but my parents called her a *pālagi*. The reason why she went was because the Samoan [school] group went and also to establish her Samoan identity and over there the people called her *pālagi*.

Although some of these bad experiences are perceived by NZ-borns as due to the fact that they are NZ-born and cannot speak Samoan, it is a far more complex issue which impinges on other considerations such as age, gender, etc. What is important here is the *perception* that it is their lack of knowledge of the Samoan language which NZ-borns see as the overriding factor, as the following narrative exemplifies.

There was one bad experience. When I went to [a village considered '*tuaback*'] in Samoa on my second trip there, I went there and I couldn't speak Samoan but I could understand it. And [my aunty's] new husband wouldn't speak to me the whole time I was there...me and my brother, 'cause he said, Oh, you can't speak Samoan, what kind of Samoan comes to Samoa and not know how to speak Samoan?

Other younger members cope with this by regarding the situation as "that's the way it is", that their Samoan '*āiga* want to live by what they are, thus expressing the acceptance of the idea that this is the *natural* order of things. These members talk about feeling "superior to" or "better than" their Samoan '*āiga* counterparts. This coping mechanism I refer to as *fa'amaualuga* or *fiasili*.

They called me *pālagi* or *fiapālagi*. I know they got a buzz when I spoke English. [For example] Yes. Can I help you? I could see their face smiling. I think they'd like to know English. New Zealand is a colonised country but over there, you know they're real Polynesian.

They treated me like a queen, 'cause I couldn't really speak it, but to be honest I probably could. But because they were fluffing all around me I just accepted it. But when I went back just recently, I get embarrassed speaking in English so that's the difference. So I think you're kind of proud to be a *pālagi*, when you go over there. When they treat you like that, you're proud 'cause you don't understand your culture. You don't appreciate it. They'd refer to me as *pālagi*, well you know when we used to go and eat. They all used to eat on the floor and they used to go, Get her a chair! and things like that. They would say things like, Come and meet my *pālagi* cousin. To be honest, at the age of fifteen to be called *pālagi* made me feel good. Oh yea I'm different, you know, I'm special. But it used to make me laugh, 'cause first of all they'd look at me and see that I'm exactly the same as them, but then when I spoke, even Samoan 'cause the accent is really, really different, they still pick it up.

We'd gone to a few bars...eating. I was a bit fussy that way, but being able to speak to them in Samoan, I was 'one of the boys' type of thing. I always had the fan in my hand. I was the odd one out, so I suppose they saw me as different. I suppose wearing different clothes as well. I didn't wear Samoan garb. I was more or less trying to look good half the time.

When I was there, I was bad because I'd go out there and I'd wear pants. Here comes the *pālagi* boy! But different because, I was still [Samoan], proud of what I was doing, and so they accepted it. If you go in as I've just said...mix with them, play with them, they'll adore you. Talk down to them or look down at them, they'll kick you in the arse. Guys who didn't do that were successful. You feel it straight away when you get to Samoa. At the airport they do you at Immigration, they do you at Customs. They give you shit, because they say, You smart arses coming over. Who the hell do you think you are, Big shots? That's the way they are.

Older members in the group expressed yet a third theme for coping with this situation—the coping mechanism of *fa'amaulalo*. In this regard the concern of these members is focused on trying to adapt to how things should be done properly, to "go with the flow" and not appear different. These members talk about how they didn't want to be put on some sort of pedestal, and how they try and blend in by not being fussy and participating in the same activities and eating the same food as their *'āga* counterparts, lessons some had learned after their first visit. From the overtly negative material associated with experiences of their first visit, members gradually reveal the individual circumstances under which they begin to emerge from this phase. Once this positive situation is established it is the foundation for continuing improvement.

I believe I know how to adapt. I mean when I go back to Samoa I know how to behave like a Samoan, I try not to be fussy about food and clothing, because I know that it's not the same as it is back here where I'm able to be fussy. So, I go with the flow and live the way they live. There are times when they can pick up the accent, maybe because they don't speak Samoan the way I speak it. Maybe it's because I can't eat *taro* or bananas, so I don't eat Samoan food. I just eat a lot of bread and rice. So things like that they pick up. But other than that I have never found, or felt as though I'm an outsider. I've always felt that I'm a Samoan 'cause I try to adapt to how they are.

Just even the way that they called my uncle who is head of our family here [in New Zealand]. They call him *Pālagi* and terms like that. For example, *Ua ka'u i le pālagi?* Have you told [...]? We all know that they'd be talking about Uncle [...], and I just felt that even though they had that, that that was like a muck around. I just felt that that was how they saw us too, as real *pālagi* as well when we came there. And I was more aware of that on my second visit there and that meant I wasn't so fussy about the food I ate, and whatever I was given I would just take it and tried not to be different.

I tended to try and bridge the gap in some ways by just doing what the rest of them did, you know, like if it was plantation work I did that, if it was working out in the garden I did that. It wasn't any of this, I'm here for a holiday!

When I go back to Samoa, I always try and fit in. I try not to be treated differently. I help with *fe'au*, wear 'ie *lavalava* and tee-shirt all the time, even when I go to town. It's funny 'cause last visit, my cousin who was born and bred in Samoa, now living in New Zealand came back for a holiday. And she walked around the village in heels and skirts. So here's me trying to be Samoan, and her trying to be *fiapālagi* [laughs].

All members who do not *tautala fa'aSamoa* and whose threshold experience occurred when dealing with 'āga who are recent island arrivals to New Zealand recall the feeling of distance, and the seemingly vast gap which separated them at first contact. Many talk about feeling like onlookers as their parents, aunties and uncles went about familiarising these 'āga members with life in New Zealand, and the changes that they would need to make. This situation improved as members tried to communicate in responding in English to their Samoan questions, or found other points of familiarisation which facilitated common points of reference, and as these 'āga members gradually learned English. Nevertheless the feeling of not perceived as Samoan by newly-arrived 'āga and also the member's own self perception that they are different from Samoans is magnified in these situations.

Older members identify these threshold experiences as occurring also within their Church 'āga at Newton. These members, who are in positions of authority within the Church structure as Session clerks, or on Session committees, or Sunday school/bible class administrators are often accused of thinking or doing things like a *pālagi*, thereby prompting accusations of *fiapālagi* by island-born elders and ministers alike. The following, from an island-born ESG elder, exemplifies an extreme position.

I believe, because they're an educated group, because they're NZ-born, because they don't have a deep understanding of culture, and they don't understand church culture per se Pacific Island people, they will eventually destroy what we have. And I see...the influence of people like [the *pālagi* charismatics] coming into those kids which is different from the Polynesian influence. And that's extremely dangerous. Those [people] have come in, and they've said that the *fa'aSamoa* stuff and all this in our church is corrupt, and they're getting into the heads of our kids. I've seen it. But it doesn't fit our Pacific way, that's the difference, it doesn't fit our Pacific way, and our kids are taking the easy option, and the easy option is we don't have to give money, we can do it this way. And that's wrong because giving money is strength, for what we are....It's tying us together, and that way it's supporting us...and that worries me.

Fa'amaualuga or *fiasili* is extended by some members who have developed a disdain for being mistaken as recent island arrivals and this has resulted in the practice of labelling the latter as "FOB"s or "freshies" (see Chapter Five). This is an attempt by members to proclaim that they are different from Pacific Island recent arrivals to New Zealand, and therefore should be treated and viewed as different by mainstream New Zealand society. Some members state that this labelling is countered by 'āga in Samoa calling NZ-borns "BNZ"s (meaning Born in New Zealand and Bank of New Zealand), and the financial implications this label entails (see *Le 'Au Giusila* in Figiel 1996:39-44).

Challenges to members' Samoan identity are thus handled in various ways. In the context of their experiences in Samoa, younger members tend to either cope with the accusation of being *fiapālagi* by strategies of *ita* or *fa'amaualuga* and *fiasili*, while older members have learnt to become *fa'amaualalo*, learning from experience and because of their increasing consciousness and levels of understanding of a secured *fa'aSamoa*. In the New Zealand situation, however, when faced by challenges from island-born elders the response

is different. All three coping mechanisms come together in a *conflict mode*. Realising that they are not in Samoa, but in New Zealand and therefore on their own turf, all members of the group respond to such challenges by asserting their unique situation (albeit in a very *pālāgi* way by challenging authority in the first instance) in using or applying their *pālāgi* knowledge in a NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* way. This will be discussed more extensively in the next chapter.

This range of bad experiences and coping mechanisms is interesting because it illuminates the meaning of *pālāgi* in the NZ-born context (and also NZ-born in the island-born context): first, a NZ-born is called *pālāgi* by both strangers and *'āiga* (who know them), therefore familiarisation or lack of thereof is not a factor; second, a NZ-born is called *pālāgi* whether they can speak Samoan or not, therefore the ability to *tautala fa'aSamoa* is not a factor; third, in many cases, a NZ-born is called *pālāgi* regardless of physical or outward appearance, e.g., being visibly Samoan or *afakasi*, wearing *pālāgi* clothes or *lavalava*, therefore appearance/dress is not a factor. In summary, it is becoming more obvious that in the New Zealand context, being called *pālāgi* is glossed as being born, brought up or educated *outside* of Samoa despite one's ability to dress or even talk like a Samoan born in Samoa. In this regard this label should be viewed as an acknowledgement of difference delineating birthplace and consequent socialisation only, and NZ-borns should not feel inferior, shame, guilt, etc. What is even clearer is that it does not refer to the traditional gloss for *pālāgi* as skyburster, whites, aliens or foreigners. Nor does it refer to Rolff's more contemporary gloss as untrustworthy, anti-social, uncaring, lacking in love, unmusical, or atheistic (1978:126). It soon became obvious to me that if one had not grown up in Samoa and had not experienced parental *fa'aSamoa* in the homeland context--the shared morals, sociality and face-to-face social relations of island-born Samoans--that the label *pālāgi* would almost always be applied. This explains why in the '90s *pālāgi* has become the term used by island-born Samoans to also refer to Samoans born and raised beyond Samoa's shores, in this context, New Zealand.

Having experienced these challenges to their Samoan identity members often comment that these challenges have affected their notions of home and homeland. All members have very clear perceptions of family land or *'āiga*-owned land. Surprisingly, most have first-hand knowledge of where the land is, their connection to the land, the

communality of 'āga-owned land, the court cases involved with their land, and who is actually living on the land. But members express no pressing desire to go back to Samoa and claim entitlement to the family plots of land. It seems sufficient for them to know that family land is there and that they have access to it, should they so desire at any future stage. Not surprisingly most members regard New Zealand as their home, and have no intention in returning to live in Samoa, however they still feel the need to participate in the *matai* system and transnational corporation of kin system. This highlights the emphasis placed on the commitment to and maintenance of 'āga networks, which takes on more priority than the lure of owning land or living on the land in Samoa at some future stage.

We have family land, but not from my title. The grandmother had given it to 13 children. I've always wanted to build on that land but not for myself...for cousins I would, 'cause there's no way I could allocate it unless it was given me, 'cause all of us have shares in it. At the moment one of my mum's sisters is living on it, and so she is more or less like a caretaker of the land.

It's being overseen by a particular uncle. We have family land that is privately owned by my mum and dad...just vacant, and it belongs to his brothers and sisters proportionately. Actually that's been a problem. I went back last year to negotiate the sale of our portion, but it's on the back burner for now. The other land is overseen by my uncle and other *matai*.

We do have some but we haven't really talked about it. No-one has expressed wanting to go back. We have had a few court cases. My grandmother's land...and she divided it among her sons and daughters. So we put in money, and they'll ['āga from Samoa] go back and say, We're going to do this and that, and they don't divide the land up properly, and then they've come back and money's been owing for lawyers, and you're wondering what are these fees for. They were supposed to do this last time. So it's been a bit disruptive. But now it's been divided up properly, but there's still costs owing on it.

Well one of the things you have as a *matai* is your family land. It's always a bone of contention. I am fortunate in that the ones I am responsible for aren't a bone of contention. Whoever wants to go and live there I always say, Look just let me know. Like my cousins in America...Go, as long as you don't claim it as yours. You know the land will always be there. It's for use. Go put up a house and if you want to go somewhere else give somebody else the house....

Notions of home or homeland are more problematic. I asked all members where they considered home to be. All felt New Zealand was home to them but they varied in the

degree that they also considered Samoa home. Younger members tended to identify New Zealand as their home, and described a reluctant ambivalence felt when making this decision. But whether they were reasons to do with finances, familiarity or comfort, most expressed desires to return at some future stage, or an acknowledgement that their roots were in Samoa. It is apparent that the perception of home and homeland could change at some future stage. But there was no clear indication that these members wanted to cut off all ties to Samoa.

When I was living there [in Samoa] for four years it felt like home...I guess I felt something like that but after living there for four years the reality changes...I guess I still thought of New Zealand as my home, as it has been the land of opportunity for us.

Mum and dad call Samoa home, but I feel New Zealand is my home...like if I went back to Samoa and stay there for some years, I'd probably call that my home...like my real home. My roots are in Samoa. I intend to go back for a couple of years or something just to fill in the gaps.

Older members identified more with Samoa as homeland, and express the notion of having more than only one home, practically relating to New Zealand, but spiritually and emotionally identifying Samoa as their home. They also express the idea that home is not a bounded locality, a physical place, but where the heart is, or where close 'āiga are. The importance of thinking about Samoa as home becomes more apparent on maturity and on having children.

For me Samoa has always been home but I think more it's just a thinking as opposed to a socialised response. I think all NZ-borns are faced with it at some time. I feel at the moment that I belong here in Tamaki makaurau. Our parents geared us up to do well here and then to go home. I think some of the realities are that some of us feel more at home here but at the same time we go home back to Samoa, like I'm off to Samoa this week. To me it becomes an issue, when I look at our children, and that's one of the reasons why we've taken the option to take our children home right now so it leads into their informative years, the actual linking of going home to Samoa.

We're the roamers of the Pacific. It's not a problem because we are the nomads of the Pacific. Shifting is a fact of life with us.

I consider New Zealand as my home, but my heart is still in Samoa. I would love to

live in Samoa permanently for many reasons. It's much easier to live in Samoa. You don't have as many bills. But then again you can't have everything in one place.

In this section I have dealt with how members' Samoan persona is challenged by 'āiga in Samoa and by island-born elders and leaders of their Newton church 'āiga. These challenges are in direct conflict with members' perceptions of their own Samoan identity instilled in them through their parents and grandparents and their own experiences of the *fa'aSamoa*. Their images of Samoa, followed through by actual visits to Samoa expose them to island-born perceptions of their Samoan-ness, or lack thereof, and force them to question their notions of home and homeland. Members have dealt with these challenges through various coping mechanisms, which change on maturity from *ita* and *fa'amaualuga* and *fiasili* to *fa'amaulalo* as one reaches a secured identity. The conflict mode however is heightened in the New Zealand context when these challenges are exerted by island-born members and leaders of Newton Church.

The impact of being perceived as *pālāgi* by island-born 'āiga and others during the identity journey is crucial to the understanding of identity confusion and conflict for NZ-borns. This challenge, together with the associated challenge of not being regarded as a 'New Zealander' either, adds to the confusion and conflict to the extent that the NZ-born may reach a situation of crisis. How the NZ-born (mis)manages this crisis situation is covered in the remaining sections and in particular Chapter Five.

3

"I AM A NEW ZEALANDER...BUT NOT A NEW ZEALANDER"

While it is not in the scope of this thesis to embark on an exposition of a New Zealand or pakeha identity (refer Novitz & Wilmott 1989, Pearson 1990, Bell 1996), an important observation is how minority ethnic groups, and in particular, this group of NZ-born Samoans perceive their New Zealander identity as opposed to their Samoan identity as the following quote explicates:

I'm proud of being a New Zealander, but I'm always a Samoan, and there's always a balance. We will always do when it comes to things New Zealand, we're proud of being a New Zealander. But when it comes to being us, Samoans, we are there first, because that's who we are, and we should not be deprived of that right. If a New Zealander questions that, you ask them a simple question. You say, when a New Zealander goes to the U.K., does he leave New Zealand behind? No. He retains his passport. He loves it, and whenever anything New Zealand comes up, he's right behind it. And that's a New Zealander anywhere in the world. In the same way we are New Zealanders in New Zealand, but with the Manu Samoa, we are Samoans and we're there. And that's the distinct difference. So you can't separate it. We have this love and this pride in both areas and nothing will ever take that away.

Having been born in New Zealand, and therefore being New Zealand citizens by birthright, it is assumed that members of the ESG have enjoyed the same access to educational, economic and social opportunities afforded mainstream New Zealanders. Although cultural, gender, and class barriers have indeed been experienced by members, this is overshadowed by the particular way in which members' narratives focus on educational success as the crucial factor in becoming a successful New Zealander. Members perceive education as the most significant vehicle through which they can absorb New Zealand mainstream socialisation, and therefore a New Zealander identity. In this regard, participating in or not participating in the education system, as shaped by their Samoan parents and PIC influence, is evident in many of the life choices and career paths and career outcomes of each member.

My first education was mum and dad. It started at home. My second one would have to be the Church because I didn't start primary school until five and between one and four, I was at Sunday school.

As most members' parents and grandparents chose to live near Newton Church, most families lived in the inner-city area. Because of school zoning, primary schools attended by members were located in the Grey Lynn and Ponsonby area--Newton Central Primary School, Grey Lynn Primary, Ponsonby Primary School, Beresford St. Primary and Richmond Rd. School. The Intermediate schools pool were Ponsonby Intermediate and Kowhai Intermediate. At Secondary School level most of the boys attended either Mt. Albert Grammar School or St. Paul's College, and most girls attended Auckland Girls'

Grammar School. A few families lived in Avondale and their children attended Avondale Primary followed by Avondale College. For those who were not accepted into these schools because of zoning or other problems, co-educational Seddon High School (now Western Springs College) was a reluctant next choice.

I went to Grey Lynn Primary with all the rest of the Church, then Ponsonby Intermediate. A lot of people from the Church were there. Then I went to Seddon. I went there basically 'cause my parents hadn't pre-enrolled me the year before at St Paul's, and two weeks before school started they said, Well you go to Seddon. They weren't too fussed as to which school I went to. All my friends went to MAGS and St. Paul's. There wasn't too much in the way of sports or school pride at that time [at Seddon]. It was basically you had to drum up your own school spirit sort of thing. There wasn't much in the way of school sacrilege or tradition...it was different. I found it a bit of a struggle being quite a patriotic school person, but it was okay.

I went to Grey Lynn Primary school, then Pasadena, then Seddon High School. I really enjoyed school. I enjoyed the co-ed school...I think it helped me cope in trying to mix in with the guys, 'cause I've seen a lot of my students come through from all-girls/guys schools and they can't cope until they're about 17, and I thought, Oh my gosh I'm glad I went to a co-ed school. Not only that, in my time, not so much into the culture then, 'cause it wasn't really reinforced in terms of school. But I really enjoyed the ethnic mix with...I mean at Seddon it was really multicultural then...I mean it was like 'Spot the Whites!' I really enjoyed my schooling years.

Most members managed to obtain School Certificate--92 % for females, 45 % for males--did at least one 6th form year, and about a third went on to University--35 % for females, 36 % for males passed UE, although 21 % for females, 9 % for males passed Bursary (refer ESG Profiles, Appendix Eight). All members understand and note the primary importance that parents and *'āiga* place on going to university, and how Samoan parents equate doing well at school with a university education. Members' recollections of reasons for not going on to university centred around not being "brainy enough", or being forced to get a job to "support the family". Others tried going to university but then "bombed out". Those members who had no formal educational qualifications--7 % for females, 36 % for males, managed to find other avenues to obtaining employment.

However evidence of stringent enforcement by parents is not present in the narratives which suggests that parents were not taking disciplinary measures in order to get their children to attend university.

I went to Avondale Intermediate then Avondale College. Again I really liked it, it was very much a social thing, you know, I think being a Samoan Polynesian. Being with people was really important, and that's what I really enjoyed about school was just the social aspect of it, you know, being with my friends...I also hung around a lot of Niueans, Samoans at the same time I was going to Newton. I got School C and UE accredited. I didn't want to do Bursary. All my friends had left by then and I didn't want to be by myself, so I left and went to Tech. 'cause my friend [...] had done a course called the New Zealand Certificate in Commerce, and it's now called the NCB. But it sounded really interesting...accounting, economics, law. So I went through the first year and got six papers and then I left.

I didn't actually enjoy my college years. I think mostly because I had this notion in my head that I wanted to do music and not really having anyone to sort of...that knew music at that time, who could direct me as to what I could do job-wise where music was concerned. It was pretty hard and so, more or less I went to school just for the sake of going to school, and bombed out. Did a fifth form year, I got English and Art School Cert. and then went to sixth form, bombed out of sixth form, and then, I think it was less than a year, then I found a job, and then just started working. It was a job at a warehouse.

I got right up to 6th form. I got two subjects in School C. I didn't go to University, but I did do some papers but I was working, but it didn't tie in with what I wanted to do. I left school after 6th form. I worked as a clerical staff for Shell Oil Company for about five years...mainly because my brothers had gone off...and my parents were sick and so I was the only breadwinner at that moment at home and [...] was at home permanently looking after my parents. And so I stayed in Shell 'cause I was the only breadwinner, and [...] stayed at home permanently while at secondary school to look after my folks at home.

Then, only [my brother] and my dad was working, and I really wanted a job, and my sister got expelled. But she was working at a factory, and I knew that I wasn't going to get UE even if I tried, and mum wanted me to get UE, but I said no, I wanted to work, but I'd actually wanted to sew. I wanted to be a fashion designer, but mum and dad wanted me to be a typist. They wanted me to be in an office, so I took clothing right up to 5th form, got it in School C. Then mum and dad told me to drop it, that they didn't want to see me in a factory...they didn't understand that factory and designing were two different things. But so I'm still in an office 'cause that's what my parents wanted in my life.

The experiences of those who did go on to university reflect the immense parental pressure exerted on them to succeed. Many comment as a theme that they didn't want to go, and when they did they often weren't allowed to take what they wanted, but degree courses that their parents wanted them to take. For these members this resulted in some of them doing conjoint degrees or double majors in order to *usita* 'i their parents, and to please themselves at the same time.

So I went to work for two years after Massey...I was a gang worker here in Auckland, I went to the King Cobras, I worked for Boystown, the official term was detachee worker...then I went back to Massey University...finished off my Bachelors Social Work degree majoring in social work and education. From [...] I was at Knox Theological College

[My daughter] was fortunate. She obeyed our wish to go to university. Although she didn't study what I hoped she would do, she studied a BA in English. I said, That's not enough, you can never get a job with that. And then she went and got a MA in English again because she wanted to be a journalist. In those days there was the Herald and the Auckland Star going, by the time she finished she was wanting to get a diploma in journalism, but the Star went out of circulation. She's teaching now. I said, Why don't you get a diploma in teaching? But she went to Carrington and AIT and got a diploma in Adult Education. Perhaps she didn't like to teach kids.

AT AGGS I went right through to 7th form, got School C, no UE at that time...6th Form Certificate, Bursary in five subjects...I personally think it's my parents. They were really supportive and understanding. Yes I always have [wanted to be a doctor], but I want to be a missionary ultimately. I want to be a missionary first and then a doctor, with useful skills that I'd be able to take onto the mission field.

Out of our family there were five, I'm the eldest, then ...[...], she's the youngest girl. She had a year off to study. She got UE, Bursary. She is really bright, but she wasn't looking forward to coming to Uni at all, in fact she negotiated with dad that last year she would stay right away from Uni if she could be allowed to work and concentrate on her biblical studies, her theology-type studies.

The above narratives are interesting not only because they illustrate the desire of the parents for their children to go to university, but also because they show how for most members the enforced choice made by their parents was the right one. None of the members expressed that going to university was a wrong move or negative career choice, rather most acknowledged that it gave them a chance to evaluate and work out where they

wanted to end up. Another significant point is the willingness of these parents to negotiate with their children, and make compromises. This strategy allowed members to fulfil their parents' desires to go to University, and at the same time, allowed them to carve out a career path for themselves that they could pursue, either concurrently, or at a later date. That is, for these members it was more important that they *usita'i* and fulfil their parents wishes. Their own desires to take other courses or degrees thus took second place. More importantly, these members had found a way to balance and maximise both priorities without compromising the cultural *vā fealoaloa'i* and *vā tapuia* aspects inherent in the parent/child relationship in parental *fa'aSamoa*.

What is also significant is that the females in the focus group were more highly qualified than the males—two more females than males passed Bursary, more females passed UE and even a larger proportion of females than males passed School Certificate (refer ESG Profiles, Appendix Eight). This can be explained by more pressure placed on young females to *usita'i* and obey their parents, and that females have in fact obeyed their parents. Females are also pressured into staying on and doing well at school, going to university, being responsible for the domestic chores in the home, looking after aged parents and grandparents and teaching/leadership responsibilities within the Church. Young males on the other hand are pressured into leaving school to help with financial obligations if necessary, and/or to become ministers or *fai'fe'au*. Two male members of ESG are ministers, three female members are actively involved in missionising overseas, and more females have become educationally qualified than male members which bear out the realities of this pressure.

The role of the '*āiga* during members' university years is seen by members as a combination of '*āiga* pressure, and immense '*āiga* support.

Supportive parents through school life. At AGGS I went right through, School C, UE, Bursary. The extended family were very supportive, they did place conditions on you. I think at that age sometimes you do too much, but when it all comes down to it, like when I went through this kind of crisis...at university when I said, I'm not going to make it, I really was able to pull on that and think, No, I'm not just here for myself, and that was a positive way to say, Well I'm going to finish it 'cause it's not just my name. I think we've been more fortunate than a lot of other people in that regard, and sometimes they've allowed us to kind of not do other things. A lot of the other parents have forced their kids to be good at school, and

it's really hard. I think it's to do with like being Samoan and being with family, I wasn't into Commercial Law and things. It's just a natural progression, I think...and so I specialised in Family Law.

This narrative is significant in that it exemplifies the return flow of 'āga support if one is obedient to one's parents and 'āga; the realisation that this member was but part of the whole 'āga, and the importance of carrying of the name of one's 'āga. In this case, being aware of this reciprocal relationship at a crucial time enabled this member to draw strength from understanding this relationship to the extent that this member was able to pass all examinations and become qualified in Family Law.

At the other end of the spectrum are those NZ-borns who dropped out of school. Members recall that this was due to "mucking around", "not being interested", being "entrepreneurial at a very early age" or to "help the family financially".

Implicit concerns present in the narratives are the effects of the influence of Newton Church on educational success and the effects that parental expectations have had and are having on members' career paths and final career outcomes. When asked what relationship there was between educational success and Newton Church, the following responses mirrored most others:

Only in the sense that your Church friends were always wanting to do better than another Church friend. I think competitiveness played a small part but not a major role. I think I always wanted to do well and not come to Church and everybody hear that I didn't get School C, or didn't do this.

I think a lot of pushing from my parents, mostly I think just God just watching over my life. I mean I hadn't yet become a christian. I didn't become one until I was 18, but I think right throughout that was the main thing, and just coming to Church as well. There's really a lot of discipline I think, and a lot of just good things instilled into my life. My parents were really good in terms of support, there was a balance, you know, time to do schoolwork, time to do chores, time to relax.

...all the christian philosophies were the only ones I had come into contact with, and so I went job hunting. I went back and prayed and asked God where I should go and I ended up by going to work at this childcare centre, a really secular environment, and I'm the only christian. I've just come at the right time in terms of being a real helpmate to these employers, 'cause [the employer] had just gone through a phase with the staff where they were too much to handle and things...and I think just coming in and my personality is like a peacemaker, it's like to smooth

the place.

The education and schooling experiences in New Zealand has affected members and in doing so has shaped their views of themselves and of others. From pre-school to primary school members have been presented with demands for order, punctuality, respect, obedience, neatness, conformity, competition and uncritical adherence to what New Zealand society values. In Secondary school the message was accentuated--School Certificate, University Entrance and Bursary examinations, the epitome of social aspirations, became challenges for members, and the technical manipulation of the belief that there were winners and losers in New Zealand society became a reality. Given that 75% of my focus group had passed the School Certificate examination, 36% went on to University, 60% are now involved in career paths and professions requiring tertiary qualifications (see ESG Profiles, Appendix Eight), indicates that most members have become part of the New Zealand establishment. Their middle-class status in terms of careers and professions reflects their successful participation in New Zealand culture, the total collection of behaviour patterns, values and beliefs (Wilmott 1989:6) of mainstream New Zealand society. They are therefore theoretically highly successful middle-class New Zealanders. But this socialisation process has not been experienced uncritically by members, nor have New Zealanders allowed them to.

4

"TO NEW ZEALANDERS I AM A 'BLOODY COCONUT' AT WORST, A 'PACIFIC ISLANDER' AT BEST"

Following the Second World War, Pacific Island immigration to New Zealand increased, reaching a peak in the 1960s and early 1970s, with Pacific Island migrant workers providing a necessary pool of labour for an expanding New Zealand industry.

Election statements by a National New Zealand Government in the late '70s (extensions of statements initiated by the Labour Government [1972-5]), blaming Pacific Islanders for overloaded social services and overstaying, appeals to inflated figures

portraying Pacific migration as a 'brown epidemic', and the constant use by politicians of the terms 'overstay' and 'Islander' as if they were interchangeable shaped a stereotype of Pacific Islanders as 'overstayers' (see Chapter Three). Ross points out that Pacific Islanders made up only a minority of immigrants to New Zealand. But this was ignored. Also ignored was the reality that Pacific Island migrants did not represent a threat to New Zealand jobs, social services or the economy in general (Ross 1992:48).

The theme of racism permeates members' recollections and experiences of the 1970s. One member recalls an amusing account of a rural New Zealander's ignorance and ambivalent attitude towards Pacific Islanders and Auckland—considered to be the place where all the "coconuts" and "Asians" are, and where "paper-pushers" live. Also interesting is this member's juxtaposition of rural *pālagi* and urban *pālagi*.

There was a guy who had come from the South Island, and he'd never met a Samoan before in his life, and we were having dinner there, and he kept asking questions about Samoa and that, and he said, Do they still wear grass skirts and all that kind of thing. And I said, Oh yea, all the time. We live in grass huts, and we still eat people. And I said, You'd better lock your room tonight 'cause I get hungry about midnight. And when he put his hand there, I got the salt shaker and salted his hand! [laughs] And he said, I get it, I get it, and his friend said, They're not that primitive, they're like Hawai'i....

Another account giving a view from the other side from a former *pālagi* member of the ESG, who is currently married to a NZ-born member, describes his poor country boy, "amazing" experience at being surrounded by Pacific Islanders, for the first time.

I was blown away completely. It was the first time ever in my life I'd ever been in a minority situation. I went to a bible class dance. And I went back and everybody hung on my every word, 'cause I was living in Waikouaiti at the time, the army mess. I was teaching the army kids, and I had to live in the army mess. And all the soldiers down there were listening with intrigue to the stories I told them, Yea, when I was up there there was a whole hall of them! And there were only three pakehas there! Wow! That's amazing. What's happening? So it was just a new situation. That was a story of the poor country boy coming into the big city, everything like that.

From the 1970s to the 1990s, the legacy of this stereotyping has resulted in Pacific Islands people being subjected to racist abuse by governments, media, and the New

Zealand public in general. Members have been called "coconuts" or "black bastards" or "bloody Islanders" by their peers at school (but, note the recent outcry in the New Zealand rugby world and media furore over the head-high tackle of Brian Lima, a Samoan member of the Auckland Blues rugby team, being labelled a "coconut" tackle by a South African sports commentator [*NZ Herald* 4 March 1997]).

During the 1970s and in a climate of a subordinate minority ethnic group, exacerbated by stereotyping of Pacific Islanders as overstayers, the older members of my focus group were between starting and finishing their Secondary school education. Most members claimed to have been subject to racist or discriminatory practices, and this is mirrored in their accounts of their secondary school experiences.

I had a rocky time at [Grammar School]. I think it was the first time I had come across racial prejudice. I mean [primary school] was good, a good mixture of kids. And I remember my first week at school, a guy came running up from the field one day and said, You know, they said no blacks can play. I couldn't believe it. I said, What? They said no blacks can play. So we said, Who said that? He said, Oh these big *pālagi* guys down there. And so we went down there, grabbed the ball, and said, Who said that no blacks could play? We were SO wild ay. And [...] pointed out this guy. So I've forgotten who went over...went over and boofed him in the face. That was the first time I'd come across racial prejudice.

...but when I did my undergraduate degree I started critically reviewing what [that school] had done for me. I'm a loyal [school] old boy, but I have to say that that was the school that really opened my eyes on racism for the first time. Because when I was at [primary school], I was a valued PI member and I had a positive outlook on where I came from. The moment I got to [Grammar school] I was streamlined. Their expectation for PI students was really terrible. We got low-grade pakeha teachers that were not really geared for working class ethnic children and it was also the first time I was called Black bastard, in front of my teachers. So it was just sad. When I look back at my high school and I really enjoyed the sports and caught the racism on the other side of playing soccer.

A guy who I thought was a good friend got into a little argument one day over some thing, it was at playtime...and he called me, A black bastard! It was just such a shock to my system that somebody could think like that. So I gave him a hiding. It took a long time to sink into me that there was and is racial prejudice in New Zealand.

That's why I'm so grateful to the Church for gathering our parents together and it gave us a sense of [being] important and special. And then suddenly you got out to

a situation like at [Grammar school] where you thought somebody's saying otherwise! ...and you sort of lashed out at them. But there were lots and lots of other incidents. Like in the end I got suspended....I was in the Headmaster's office three times. He asked me, Why? What's happened to you between 4th form and 6th form? And he said, You used to be such a good boy, and now you've turned into...a bad boy. After, there was quite a big blow up...with the Polynesian kids. A Samoan was appointed head prefect....I don't think it was a token gesture, he deserved to be head prefect, but at the same time....They had to make some concessions for the fact that the school was no longer a white upper middle class school.

Opposition to not being considered a "New Zealander"

Members often recall how this sustained attack on their ethnicity as New Zealanders is continued even beyond secondary school, and the anger, frustration and confusion they felt during this period in their lives. The members most forthcoming in recollections of racist abuse and experiences were male members only, both *matai* and non-*matai*. Female members spoke of the subtleties of discrimination they experienced at school and framed their experiences more in terms of a passive experience in that they became silent, and internalised their feelings and emotions. Again this may be explained by females responding more with *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* aspects of parental *fa'aSamoa* than males, where those older than ego whether Samoan (parents, 'āga, Church ministers and elders) or *pālāgi* (peers, teachers, employers) were continually deferred to, and not retaliated against. Whereas with males, almost all racist attacks were responded to by physical retaliation. Although female members felt that they had dealt with racism in their own way, they became animated when they expressed views that they would not tolerate their children being victims of racist abuse.

And I was taking [...] to a *pālāgi* kindergarten, and unlike when her sister went there ten years earlier, it was predominantly white 'cause everyone had taken their kids to language nests. And I noticed the atmosphere was different. I mean when all of the Maori and PI kids from the area, from Ponsonby, they all kind of got together. There was none of this, Don't touch this! This is mine! But in this predominantly white environment, [...] didn't feel comfortable. She didn't know why, but I guess that same sort of comraderie wasn't there. So I started looking around for something else....

Coping mechanisms for members during this period in their lives also evolve around responses of *ita* and *fa'amaualuga* and *flasili*, but in this context responses do not show *fa'amaualalo* attitudes towards this challenge. Rather, an attitude of defiance bordering on confrontation and a desire to change the status quo becomes acute. The "frustration", "anger" and "rage" of this phase in members' lives--their teenage years--is apparently subject to reactivation. Some members seem to work through this stage while attending secondary school, but if they move into tertiary milieu or milieu separate from 'āga and Church which rekindles feelings of inadequacy and confusion, they revert to the kinds of activity characteristic of the earlier angry phase.

A coping mechanism linking members' accounts of their personal experiences of racism and institutional racism is their dedication and commitment to social change. How they have arrived at this point is through their own experiences of the bureaucratic systems, especially in government departments, and perceived social injustices inflicted on themselves, their parents, grandparents and 'āga. Many members talk about being involved as "go-betweens", "mediators" or "interpreters" for their parents and grandparents when dealing with the system, for example, with the Departments of Social Welfare, Police, Immigration, Maori and Island Affairs, Labour, and with school principals. They often accompanied their parents and grandparents to any formal interviews etc.

To cope with racism or not being accepted as a New Zealander, members recalled that in their youth, the following strategies were employed: (i) finding solace in associating with *tangata whenua* and becoming involved in gangs or political movements, (ii) learning to assert their Samoan identity more, and (iii) channelling their energies into helping other Pacific Island and Samoan people. Younger members may or may not have undertaken these strategies, while a good number of the older members have undertaken all three, especially the latter two. I will now examine these strategies.

(i) Relationship with *tangata whenua*

Some members talk about a "special" relationship with *tangata whenua* which has never been examined or sufficiently explained before. Historically, the period involved is the period between 1950s and early 1970s. The political situation in New Zealand at that

time was that Maori as well as Pacific Islands people, NZ-born or not, were very marginalised socially, economically, politically and educationally. The modern Maori renaissance (in earnest) had not yet begun; Pacific Islands people were not visible as yet in large numbers and were being tolerated by mainstream New Zealanders—they had not yet become "a problem".

In the '50s and '60s, in the inner-city schools, these older members recalled that Maori and Pacific Islands children were treated as one homogeneous group, usually lumped under the label "Polynesian". Many spoke about joining the Polynesian club if they were interested in performing or taking part in Maori or Pacific Island culture. In reality, most Maori and NZ-borns gravitated towards the Polynesian clubs because they offered familiarity in the strange, alien milieu of schooling in New Zealand—dominated by *pālagi* children and teachers, and the *pālagi*-orientated school curriculum. Sports groups were similarly organised. There was no recognition of separate ethnic identities, nor was it encouraged. Similarly at the University, members gravitated towards Maori Studies (which was then part of the Anthropology Department), and the only other discipline which dealt with familiar Pacific Island areas and issues—Anthropology (Thaman 1996).

There was an ambiguity of ethnic boundaries between Maori and NZ-born children in the schools and among students at the universities. Maori and NZ-borns learned together, struggled through studies together, played sports together, socialised together, joked and laughed together, and fiercely supported each other's political agendas. Many members remember how surprised teachers and employers were at their involvement in political issues, especially those involving *tangata whenua*.

When I was getting interviewed for Theological College, they asked me, Have you ever been arrested?...I [said], Yes I got arrested during the Springbok tour and at Waitangi. From there he was really excited as to why, and I went on, Because I believe that the Springbok tour should never have gone on, I believe indigenous people in South Africa have been treated badly, and as a PI of Aotearoa, I felt motivated as a christian to participate....He asked, Why were you arrested at the Treaty [celebrations]? I said as a Samoan I felt it was important to acknowledge *tangata whenua*, because if I could make those sacrifices for someone in South Africa, it then also put the responsibility onto me back here in Aotearoa.

It was not unusual to find Maori performers in Polynesian clubs and culture groups,

and very often Samoans in Maori culture, political and sports groups. (Research on the incidence of Maori-Samoan intermarriage during this and subsequent periods would provide interesting comparisons and would probably reinforce this theory [refer Macpherson 1972, 1975]).

Very often, members recall being mistaken as Maori, mainly because of the absence of a "fobby" or "freshie" accent. That is, they sounded like kiwis. And sometimes just to identify with the largest non-white ethnic group, a few NZ-borns identified themselves as Maori from up north, mainly to avoid lengthy discussion on why they did not have a freshie accent. These members often "passed" as Maori. Other members talk about the opposite embarrassing situation where they were mistaken as Maori because of their appearance and lack of a fobby accent. At times when these young women have attended Newton PIC church socials, or other Pacific Island socials, they have been asked, "*O 'oe se Maui?*" or "*You a Maui girl?*"

Aspects of this phenomenon are described by only a few Pacific Island scholars (Wendt 1990). The following narratives offer more concrete examples.

That's happened to me heaps in my experience, that is being mistaken for a Maori. I remember when I was at school. Going into College this girl I went to Intermediate with...I was singing a Samoan song, no it was High school. And she said, Are you Samoan? and I said Yea, and she said, I thought you were a Maori!

Usually I used to say I was from up north [laughs]... 'cause they would just go on and on and say, Well you don't look like an islander...or...you don't talk like an islander if I said I was a Samoan....It just used to be easier than having to explain ALL the time, EVERY time...you know....

...a lot of people at work think I'm Maori... 'cause of my skin and the way I talk, and I say No! I'm Samoan, man.

...when people ask me what I am at work, like people come in all the time and ask me, Are you a Maori...because I've got no hint of a Samoan accent, and I say, No I'm a Samoan.

ESG members' empathy and support for Maori political initiatives usually began at secondary school:

That's when I first heard about Bastion Point, at school. Like I was really into it

after finding out about it. When I left school, I ran away from home, got involved with political groups, such as the Black Womens Movement [a Maori women's gay group which focused on suppression of Maori women by (Maori) men]...was involved with Waitangi Action Committee, Nuclear issues. Bastion Point was actually my introduction into politics. I was 16 then....I learnt quite a lot from those people, ['cause] I suppose I had quite a sheltered life.

I was going through a lot of changes 'cause there was a lot of social issues. I got involved a lot with the Springbok Tour, and things like that so, I wasn't very popular at school. I missed the first few days of school 'cause I was up at Waitangi protesting, and [when] I went back, my parents had signed a letter saying that I was protesting...you know...pretty radical for our parents. And when I got to school, the Principal asked me for the letter, he read it, went in, said something to the DP, I was given a letter saying I was expelled. It was to do with stereotypes, I mean he started lecturing me saying, How old are you and you think you know it all now. You're only 16. You don't know what the world's like, and then I said to him, Oh you don't have to be a Maori to understand what the struggle is, And he said, Oh you're not a Maori?! And I was saying like, Get me out of here!

Recalling the days of their "youth", older members stated that one typical response to racist taunts at school and in the wider community was to join a gang or marginal group which allowed members to give vent to feelings of anger, disillusionment and inadequacy, when they felt they had no control over their lives. A few joined gangs. Some became affiliated to groups such as the Polynesian Panther Movement.

(ii) Assertion of a Samoan identity

As some members found themselves caught between a dominant group of mainstream New Zealanders, and the smaller group of *tangata whenua* who were demanding their sovereign rights under the Treaty of Waitangi, they could not help but become enmeshed in this political climate. Often members who became part of Maori groups became skilled in political lobbying and political processes and used these skills to assert their own Samoan identity, and to raise the profile of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. Not surprisingly, for some members, initial involvement and association with Maori liberation groups and activists provided the impetus to branch off later on into

initiating change for Pacific Island people and groups.

I learnt a lot of things during that time. I was challenged by them [a Maori women's group]. I remember just standing there telling them all to get fucked. From there we started up the Pacific Island network, and got involved in that. We got out of there. We decided that we couldn't stay with them any more, it was a Maori movement. It wasn't what we were on about. I was thinking the best way we can help PIs and Samoans is...we help our own people.

I'm still involved in some of those [Maori interest groups], but I'm focused more now on Pacific Island issues and becoming more focused actually on Samoan issues. It's like trying to find where I want to work, and I'm being drawn towards Samoan issues.

For others, the Polynesian Panther Movement was a vehicle which some members used to "conscientise" other Pacific Islanders. This organisation was founded in 1971 by a group of Pacific Islanders—Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islanders, and a few Maori. Most Panther members had grown up in and lived in inner-city Auckland and were from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The families of some Polynesian Panther members belonged to Newton Church. Many of them were university students at the time and the leaders of the Polynesian Panther Movement were both stimulating and inspirational. Te Ahu Poata-Smith points out that the Auckland gang problem provided the impetus for the formation of the Polynesian Panther Movement. He states:

The Panthers located the the causes of...Pacific Islanders' oppression within the exploitative social relations of the capitalist system of production. Consequently, the Polynesian Panthers promoted a strategy of liberation based on the complete overthrow of the capitalist system and the social relations necessary for its development (1996:103).

The working class backgrounds of all ESG members' parents and grandparents ensured that members at an early age were familiar with the realities of ineffectual Government policies *vis à vis* Pacific Islanders, and issues of unequal pay and unsatisfactory working conditions. Members talk about how they became familiar with the Labour Party, protest, trade unions and marches at an early age.

The reason why I went on to ministry, part of my education was groups like the

Polynesian Panthers, back in the 70s, that really opened my eyes. Also dad's hard work in the Labour Party. All those political things merged through into that mid-70s where all of a sudden, I mean I was going through my charismatic, non-political theology growth and then from mid 70s onwards there was social justice liberation....

I remember...the overstayers issue of the 70s. And there was a little march before the Auckland City Council met and they had a meeting down at the Town Hall, and I was really young, but [my dad] dragged me out and made me march even though I didn't really know what it was about. He even took me to a meeting, so...even though you knew at times, sometimes there was no appreciation by our own people or those he was fighting against.

The stated goals and aims of the Panthers centred on the welfare of Pacific Islanders at every level--they ran homework centres, visited Pacific Islanders in Paremoremo and hired buses to take Pacific Island families who did not have transport to visit their brothers, fathers, uncles and cousins at Paremoremo, they ran programmes informing Pacific Islanders of their legal rights as New Zealand citizens. The Panthers even organised community social events--I recall taking part in a street party held by the Panthers and supported by the Auckland City Council which brought together at risk gang members and unemployed youth in Ponsonby and Grey Lynn. The Panthers also supported Maori political initiatives and Maori political movements (some of its members were also foundation members of Nga Tamatoa). The Panthers became involved in anti-Springbok Tour groups (HART), the Maori Land March in 1975, Treaty of Waitangi protest marches, and marches to promote the recognition of Maori language as one of New Zealand's official languages.

And then you know, I'd never really thought about it up until then. I thought I'm not going to sit back and take all this rubbish. So that's why I was quite interested in the Panthers, and I thought, I'd like to think that it helped others. Like things we were asking for in the early 70s, like Maori language in schools, Maori language on radio. People just take it for granted now...and it made people stop and think, Oh there's a militant Polynesian group in New Zealand based on the Black Panthers in the States. It made people think, Well you know...we can't push all Polynesians around. It was like a stand saying, We're not going to take it any more. To me it was like we had grown up.

I think that's why the Polynesian Panthers got set up in the first place. There was

this social conscience that we all felt. I think all the kids NZ-born of that age all felt that growing up at that time.

In our time, it was the Polynesian Panther Movement that provided our outlet for working through those issues, but in the 1980s I guess there was nothing.

The Polynesian Panthers provided an opportunity for members to express their solidarity with the Maori liberation struggle, and to express their own identity as Pacific Islanders. They publicised the everyday struggles of Maori and Pacific Islanders, from land claims to the discrimination and violence of the police (Polynesian Panther Party, 1976). However, the Panthers sought a pan-ethnic grouping of both Maori and Pacific Islanders, and their views conflicted with those of Nga Tamatoa who favoured Maori unity as a priority (Polynesian Panther Party 1975 cited in Te Ahu Poata-Smith 1996:103).

(iii) Commitment to helping other Samoans and Pacific Islanders

A crucial factor which should be highlighted is that regardless of the strategy employed, there has been firm commitment and dedication by all members of the ESG to actively change the status quo. Whether male or female, young or old, *matai* or non-*matai*, all are involved with occupations, professions, activities which when combined focus on the educational, philosophical, secular and spiritual alleviation and elevation of Pacific Islanders from their subordinate position in New Zealand society as second-rate citizens. A significant factor must be that these members are all children of Newton Church and the children and grandchildren of Samoan pioneers to New Zealand, and thus must be regarded as a particular group. However overriding this is the ability of this group to balance their secured *fa'aSamoa* and New Zealander identities, and maximising both to indeed effect these changes. Many have therefore chosen or found themselves in professions and occupations which either allow them to initiate social change for Pacific Islanders from within the systems, or to act as guardians of Pacific Island people during their brushes with the law or misunderstandings of the bureaucratic structures. Members state definitively that it has been these dealings with the system, their personal experiences and their observations of what was happening to their peers and *'āga*, that has provided them with the impetus to

change the status quo. This phenomenon is very much a product of the times in terms of the socio-political and historical context of Pacific Islands people growing up in New Zealand in the 1960s and 1970s (refer Ross 1992). Members recall how as young Pacific Island school leavers they were actively recruited into government departments to cope with the expanding Pacific Island population, especially in the urban areas of Auckland and Wellington. At the same time, other members were entering universities, and becoming not only intellectually stimulated by what they were learning, but also involved in political activities on campus.

Those members whose association with *tangata whenua* was not a close one chose to focus on the assertion of their Samoan identity. For many members university was an affirming site for "reclaiming" their Samoan identity, and an opportunity to juxtapose their NZ-born or secured *fa'aSamoan* knowledge and belief systems against other *pālagi* intellectual systems and movements. The university experience played a major part in the critical analysis of what was happening to, or happening for, Pacific Islands people living in New Zealand. Many members talk about how this helped them to critically assess, finally understand and put into perspective, issues of racism, inequality, feminism, the gay movement, power and knowledge. More importantly their university education gave them explanations to heretofore experienced but unreconciled understandings of the subordinate position and unequal power relations of Pacific Islands people in New Zealand society.

I've come up against feminism...also during school, and Varsity, 'cause a lot of our teachers at that time were lesbian and feminists. And when Bastion Point came up, people were saying it wasn't much of an issue 'cause they were women. And I couldn't understand that. Like I said, Well what's that got to do with the price of fish? Like that [feminism] was at the bottom of my list...you know? Feminism is for *pālagis*. We can't change the way we are at all. The fact that we've got this coloured skin. We can't opt out. We walk into shops and we get followed...you know...we haven't got those choices.

At [...] University we were taught loyalties and perspectives, very radical....But the thing I like about, for me, was that I was mixing with groups of gay people, feminists, separatists and so on. At first you're blown away by it and by your fourth year there is a respect of other peoples and a sensitivity. This was really preparing me for a very diverse world that we're living in at the moment.

Liberal pakehas are dangerous. For racists it's pure ignorance. You can work on people like that. But people who are saying to me, Yes I know what you're saying!

I sit there and wonder, What are these people trying to get out of me?

Those who did not go to University found other avenues to help Pacific Islands people. They found work as public servants, working in government departments, some studied to become teachers, social workers, others to become ministers and missionaries.

We need to have new types of models of ministry, we need to show PI people that we're accountable, we're committed to justice, that people live with this foremost and they have control, not the minister. One of the best places for community development and social change has to be that PI pulpit and a place for the PI church in relation to its community.

I discovered as PI we're family orientated and we're friendly and so we did things for people. I was so naive, and I was also going through my very staunch christian faith at that time which also put me in conflict with my work context. I went to work for Social Welfare Department because I thought it would be really good to have an insight to the job. The insight that I got when I worked for Social Welfare Department was that they don't want to help people, the clerical side was that you are being used to go GET your people. I lasted six months there then I went to university.

...we sort of got involved, and we started up [a] PI network, but now its established in Government circles...the PI network....In the mid-eighties there was a lot of us doing youth work and things like that, and we used to meet and try and link in with all PIs and see how we could get resources, and everything else. So it was a dream, but now I know of different government departments that have a PI network....it's [now] official.

From there I went down to Wellington from 1984 and we established the Pacific Island Women's Project, from funding that we got from the Government. It started off quite small but we were able to establish about five groups around the country. They were actually working. That was through Pasifika. Well I left in 1989, and there were about 13 groups established, so I was part of setting the whole thing up in Wellington. I came back in 1985, got involved with St James Presbyterian Social Services.

In this section the labelling of members as "coconuts" or "Pacific Islanders" by New Zealanders and themes centring around racism, and members' reactions to racism have been explored. These experiences have often resulted in members' commitment to effect change for Pacific Islanders and the relationship with *tangata whenua* and other island-born Samoans. These challenges to members' New Zealander identity are dealt with

in diverse ways, and various coping mechanisms are employed. Younger members who are still trying to understand racist attacks, or being labelled in derogatory ways, are at various points along the continuum in reaching a final understanding. They are still at a point in their lives where they are experiencing anger and rage and feel they are not in control of their lives. The older members—those who are university-educated and whose professions reflect this, and for whom a New Zealander identity should be most internalised and practiced, have understood and reconciled these attacks and stereotypic labelling. The assertion of their NZ-born or Samoan identity, rather than a New Zealander identity can be viewed as their changed perspectives of these earlier experiences. These members feel that they are now in control of their lives and their identity. That is to say, those members who have reached a secured identity have internalised both their Samoan and New Zealander identities. These members have reacted by participating in some form of formal protest (Polynesian Panther Movement, or other political groups) in their formative years, thus giving vent to their anger and frustrations. They have been able to critically assess the political, socio-historical aspects of their experiences with mainstream New Zealanders and *tangata whenua* through their University experiences. Later these members have pursued jobs and careers reflecting a commitment to social change and justice for 'their people'. De Vos' coping mechanisms of "passing" in which people attempt to escape what is perceived to be a negative social self-identity occurs where members identify as Maori. There are only a few instances of this kind of "passing", and they have usually occurred in cases where during their identity journey, the member has had close associations with *tangata whenua*. There are no examples where members tried to pass as a pakeha or New Zealander, except in the implicit coping mechanisms employed by female members. Outwardly their physical non-reaction to racist taunts and stereotypic labelling could be interpreted by some as "trying to be a New Zealander" or "passing" as one. However, female members have dealt with these threats by either ignoring them or internalising them, and reacting to them using one or other of the various strategies already dealt with.

"I AM - TO MY SAMOAN PARENTS, THEIR CHILD"

Implicit in this statement is the combination of the challenges inherent in the two previous sections focusing on challenges to a member's Samoan identity and New Zealand identity. It expresses the notion of reaching a final understanding of members' Samoan parents' and elders' perspectives, and their impact on their child's NZ-born identity. This section examines the area of members' perceptions of Samoan parent and NZ-born child relationships. It centres around parents' reasons for coming to New Zealand and parental expectations of their children, and how members have handled these expectations.

The most usual reason given in the literature for Samoan migration is population pressure in Samoa and, along with it, the lack of unemployment outside the traditional agrarian mode of labour. Other reasons, not so well documented, are the perceptions both material and symbolic of other rewards of life in New Zealand, including better educational opportunities for oneself and one's children (see Chapter 3).

Most parents and grandparents of the ESG NZ-borns migrated to New Zealand in the 1950s, and offered conservative reasons of them wanting a better life and educational opportunities for themselves and their children. For some an additional incentive was to support the *'āga* back home. Members state that in most cases, their parents did not choose to come to New Zealand but were told to by their *'āga*.

He [dad] didn't want to come. It was his parents' decision. He didn't want to leave [Samoa]. He cried.

In addition, the majority of these parents and grandparents, were either *afakasi* or full-blooded Samoans who had been relatively more "exposed" to *papālagi* life-ways, and a number were also skilled people--nurses, teachers, tradesmen. Other reasons cited for migrating to New Zealand were medical problems, to escape some unhappy situation, or as an individual choice. There were only two instances of married couples emigrating. Most of them came as single, workers who met future husbands and wives either at Newton or at the workplace.

Central to all narratives is the scope and magnitude of parental expectations of their children. The drive for their children to succeed, especially in education, and to go on to university, and the pressures they exerted on their children to achieve this goal are viewed positively by some, negatively by others. There were costs associated with either success,

or failure; for those who have been successful that of the perceived loss of a Samoan identity and the inability to speak Samoan fluently; for those who have failed the added embarrassment of the perceived loss of face and the inability to achieve status, for themselves and their 'āiga.

Because members' parents and grandparents have stated that they came to New Zealand for a specific purpose, i.e., for a better life and for a better education, members of ESG feel that they have obviously succeeded in meeting this aspect of parental expectations. They have become more educated, and upwardly mobile. That is to say the first generation of NZ-borns have become better-educated than their parents and grandparents, because this was the first priority for them. Further research into the educational achievements of second and ensuing NZ-born generations, in terms of the changing orientations of their own parents' priorities, should provide interesting comparisons.

I think that dad really wanted us to achieve, and I think he knew that education was the key to achievement in most island parents eyes...that was the key to get through university.

The pressures exerted on members to succeed or achieve--whether at school, Church, sport or work--because one was Samoan, and how this success or achievement is measured in pride of being Samoan are continually mentioned by members.

Dad used to say we were like trees growing, that was the imagery. I always got that every day. Dad said we were like a tree. If the tree doesn't grow straight then we were in trouble.

...they were really into pushing us at school. Although the expectations of our parents in terms of peer pressure and what was happening, was [hard]....we were always told to be proud to be Samoan. But that was the challenge that was put to us at school. We had to achieve because we were Samoan. We had to show everyone that we were just proud to be Samoan, to do well.

But I think for our generation, we knew what we had to do--YOU HAD TO BE A SUCCESS, 'cause your parents had come all this way for you to be a success.

When members questioned their parents, reasons for succeeding were always framed in terms of the parents' deprivation of similar opportunities, and the notion that their children somehow had a privileged life. Often it was to make good what had gone wrong in their own experiences of growing up--wasted chances and wrong choices.

The only pressure was that everything that you ever do in life at that young age, you did it for your parents. All of us, everyone, we did it because giving your parents the pride of succeeding at something, whether it was the choir, or the play that we did, or the Sunday School exam....when we grow up our love for our parents is stronger than anything in the world. Our parents sacrificed to come to New Zealand and give us the opportunity, and nowhere did they ever block our opportunities. But they gave up a hell of a lot for us to have the opportunities. I mean our parents deprived themselves of everything for us to succeed.

Pressures on males

This aspect is frequently the subject of comments by members: they draw attention to the pressures exerted on males to become ministers. These comments endorse parents encouraging their children, especially boys, to become ministers because of the extra privileges and status it brings to the *'āiga*. It is therefore not surprising that there are two male ministers in the focus group and many, including females, who are or have been involved in missionising as part of the ESG's Tropics programme (see Chapter 3). Although this pressure may not be considered extreme, it is effective in that combined with Newton Church influences, it provides a powerful incentive for members to "decide themselves" that they want to become ministers, with minimal coercion from their parents.

I always wanted to go to Knox but only because it always terrorised my mother, my nickname was [...], I was the naughty one in the family, so for my mother, I used to taunt my mother and say, I'm going to Knox, I'm going to Knox man, and she would say, Don't you dare, Don't you dare....

I think...looking back now...it's probably the support of my parents and family, and also the fact that I WANTED to go to Theological College. I had that thought very young. When I was about 14, I came to see Challis...my parents never suggested I be a minister...there were none in my family.

Another "negative" pressure to do well at school or university was identified by males as the "following in the footsteps of..." syndrome. It involved the comparison of a member to a former successful sibling or member of 'āiga of the same (or older) age-set, who had graduated from university and had achieved elevated personal and 'āiga status.

...all I know is from primary, I knew I wanted to come to university. I don't know where I got that idea from, but I just knew deep down that I was going to go, and that whatever was going to happen to me that this is the place I was going to come to. I didn't know anything about it until I came to my dad and realised that my older cousins, were coming through, and that's when it became important to my dad that I follow in [...]s footsteps. So I've had really good role models in thinking things through, and they've been there for us in terms of discussing a lot of things that we find difficult here at Uni....

I think the one point that used to really frustrate me was being...always pin-pointed to do better than [...]. Okay...So that used to really upset me and offend me...that you know...if my grades were down that was the way my parents would get back at me...was...Well, look at so-and-so...and also because [...] was younger, you know, she was flying...and I was like [saying], Don't compare me, don't compare me [to her]....

Pressures on females

In a previous section I examined the pressure exerted on females by their parents in the situation where they were visiting Samoa, and described the chaperoning the girls endured and stringent disciplinary measures taken. Different expectations placed on girls of this group in the New Zealand context arise from their experiences of being raised with brothers and/or male cousins. In comparison, the females of the group perceived that more pressure was placed on them to succeed at school, that they were forced to be more obedient, that they had developed a better understanding of the responsibilities associated with *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*, and that they were expected to naturally take on care-giving responsibilities when their parents reached old age or became ill. This expectation is very problematic as evidenced in the narratives. Also prevalent is the notion that only boys are keepers of privileged knowledge—the knowledge of *gafa* and other details about land, are usually transmitted from father to son. Another perceived gender imbalance was that while

girls were kept under strict supervision at all times, boys were usually left to their own devices. There is also more intense pressure for girls to succeed at school and university.

They basically left it to me. I probably gave my parents this impression that I could handle it on my own, and they basically didn't put any pressure or anything on me....More of that is put on my sisters.

All of his lessons are all along the lines, Don't do what I've done, do what I say. And for us as the girls being brought up, it works. But for my brothers it doesn't work...you know...they need to be seeing people who do what they preach more.

I think more so for my sister 'cause her teenage years were spent on just being an adult caregiver and sometimes it's roles that we're not equipped to do. And as a child or young adult you're not equipped to take on the responsibility of running a house...nursing. That was my big dilemma, I came to a little crossroad where I kept on thinking, Well I'm not equipped for this, I don't know how to do...to look after my parents and things like that. But I think it was just our role as women to take over and be major caregiver, and I suppose you go through little phases where you think...my brothers should be here. But they had families so us girls were left to maintain a lot of the caring for the folks.

In the previous section we examined some of the perceived parental expectations of members. How other expectations were conveyed to their children is another matter. While expectations of educational success were routinely and systematically enforced on their children, parents' more liberal attitudes towards reinforcing parental *fa'aSamoa* provide strong counter-themes in the narratives.

I found my parents really quite liberal. At home they spoke Samoan but they always encouraged us to pursue educational goals but there was never any impression on us to conform culturally I guess....But in that way it was good for us because it gave us a greater appreciation of our background but it wasn't really forced on us. There was one thing they encouraged us to was to speak Samoan at home.

I think one of the things is my wife and I never involved them [our children] in things like visitors coming late and kids have to stay up late and make cups of tea and that sort of thing...you know, the *fa'aSamoa*. We didn't want their time to be taken up with those sorts of things. Their time should be concentrated on their school, their books, their learning.

Some members in retrospect wished that their parents had not been so liberal, that

their parents should have forced them to *tautala fa'aSamoa*, to join *'autalavou*, and to adhere more strictly to parental *fa'aSamoa*. Given that Samoan parents' reasons for coming to New Zealand and their consequent expectations of their children were varied and diverse, liberal in some aspects, and not-so liberal in others, narratives which show members' expectations of their own children will illuminate what aspects NZ-borns have taken on board and which carry less importance. As stated previously the drive for educational success appears to be apparent at first NZ-born generation only. Further research on ensuing generations would provide interesting comparisons. Overall, there is a strong desire for members' children to retain parental *fa'aSamoa*, remain as members of Newton Church, and to learn the Samoan language. Hence the expressed desire for their children to attend *ā'oga 'amata*. Regarding family size, most members express desires to have large families with four or more children, which implicitly reinforces the theme of *'āga* as being the most important aspect of parental *fa'aSamoa*.

I intend to bring them up in the *fa'aSamoa*, very much so, regardless of the ethnicity of my partner. I'd give them time to spend with my mum. It's really hit home the importance of *fa'aSamoa*. I went home in 1992, which is the first time in ten years....

I'd teach them [my kids] all the good stuff. I'd probably teach them that whole thing of the kids are seen and not heard... 'cause it demonstrates respect and it helps the child practice respect with their elders and that's important. But I think I'd stress that even though you need to respect me, you need to communicate with me as well and tell me where you're at. And that's how I am with my mother...that's how they brought me up. They've showed me that respect is good. Respect your elders but at the same time, talk to us when you need help, so that's how I'd bring up my children....

The things I see as a positive thing to do at the moment is to keep the links between not only the *fa'aSamoa* that's going on here in New Zealand, but the *fa'aSamoa* that's back in the islands. So regular visits to Samoa has to be a must for my children. They'd get the stuff that's here, getting involved with the family, and so in order for that to play a part in their lives. I've still got to maintain good links with my extended family here in New Zealand as well, and play a part in the decision-making body...and that's already occurred. I've already been part of *mafukaga*, which is part of my family .

Most members felt that they had fulfilled the expectations of their parents and

grandparents, and as successful upwardly mobile people with good tertiary qualifications, there is no doubt that they have educationally achieved.

We're all reasonably comfortable as a result of our education, getting good jobs, being able to compete with New Zealanders, white New Zealanders. We're no great achievers, but we certainly did it, we never failed.

I think that's the nature of our Church anyway because we're dealing with the first wave of migrants really and all their kids have made it. They've integrated quite successfully, they're all virtually middle class the ones from the first generation, but that's peculiar to Newton, no other branch.

From even primary school, my dad always used to say like, All the good Samoans...we've come to New Zealand so our kids could have a good education and we're going to bring you up here....I guess they've achieved their goals....We all got educated, and we're all in reasonable jobs...we're middle class.

What is interesting about the last two narratives is that success to these members is measured in social, educational and economic terms. What is more important is that they feel they have fulfilled their parents expectations and achieved the success their parents had wished for. However what is glaringly absent in the pressures exerted on members to educationally achieve by their parents are the costs associated with this success—the inability to *tautala fa'aSamoa* fluently and being not Samoan enough.

A serious ramification for members is that they perceive themselves as an "invisible" group. Because they have been born in New Zealand and have become successful New Zealanders, it is taken for granted that they have assimilated and taken on the persona of an assimilated person, having no knowledge of parental *fa'aSamoa*. Indeed while many other NZ-borns have accepted this persona quite comfortably these members of ESG are quite adamant that they have not. However, they feel that they are continually being left out of decision-making and consultative bodies, precisely because they are considered to be not Samoan enough (see next Chapter). Their experiences as Samoan children growing up in New Zealand are not considered to be legitimate experiences of the *fa'aSamoa*. Rather it is island-born experiences of growing up in the homeland which is reified as the true *fa'aSamoa* for Samoans, or Pacific Island experience.

You'll find that at Varsity what constitutes legitimate study for graduate

students...and it won't be NZ-born issues but PIs in the Pacific Islands and what's happening to them. They're more interested in the development of the Pacific...you know...but New Zealand has the biggest PI population in the world!

Well I went to a seminar for Polynesian people in Social Services, and it felt that NZ-born people weren't discussed. They were discussing a *fa'aSamoa* thing, and that our parents' experiences and things were discussed, which was a good starting point but then where we go to from there was never ever discussed. What we do as a people who are living here right in the middle of the problem they were discussing. Somebody brought up, What about NZ-born? And I heard someone say, All they care about is themselves!

The invisibility factor in this context can be directly related to Samoan cultural principles delineating old/young, male/female, *matai*/non-*matai* relationships in parental *fa'aSamoa*. Thus mores such as being "seen and not heard", "not speaking unless spoken to", to *usita'i* blindly, combined with inability to *tautala fa'aSamoa*, and complicated further by the knowledge that they are better *pālāgi*-educated and thus have more skills and expertise than their island-born counterparts younger or older, male or female, *matai* or non-*matai*, become hallmarks of this "invisibility" factor for NZ-borns. Moreover NZ-borns are in a double bind realising that any attempt to change this by daring to "speak out" or challenging traditional authority would be regarded as *fiapālāgi*.

In this section the identity journey has been examined from the perspectives of NZ-borns of the ESG, Newton Church. The conflict and identity confusion experienced by members as a result of challenges to their Samoan identity and their identity as New Zealanders in the context of their interaction with their parents, 'āga (in New Zealand and Samoa), island-born elders and leaders of Newton church and wider New Zealand society has been explored. Mechanisms used by members to cope with this conflict have been outlined and discussed. Interwoven with these positions are members' understandings of the role of their parents, 'āga and Newton Church in influencing their negotiation of their NZ-born self-identity.

No matter where you're born you're Samoan...: A 'SECURED IDENTITY'

From this study, a secured identity can be defined as a "satisfactory self" or a "self-satisfying ethnic identity", whereby a person can successfully negotiate irreconcilable differences in order to make life bearable for themselves while embarking on, continuing on, or on completion of, their identity journeys. In other words, it means understanding 'secured *fa'aSamoa*' as retaining ethnic culture and attaining necessary knowledge and skills for manoeuvring/adjusting to the dominant culture as well as parental *fa'aSamoa*. These members with secured identities are able to assert their own ethnic identity and values without rejecting those of the majority (in both senses) and can demonstrate ethnic (NZ-born *fa'asamoa*) pride, without disparaging other ethnic groups and/or their island-born elders despite future challenges (see also Hall's "ruptures" [1990:226]) to their perceived self-identities.

Those members who feel they have successfully negotiated all the challenges inherent in their identity journey, feel secure and confident as to who they are and are in control of their lives. They see themselves as both Samoan and NZ-born, and, depending on the context, their Samoan and NZ-born personal identities are inter-changeable. This is not an ambivalence borne out of confusion. The choice is made deliberately and can be justified at any instance. What is common among them is the definitive denial of a New Zealand or 'kiwi' self-identity. They assert that NZ-born Samoans definitely have a culture of their own, that it is an "Aotearoan-influenced" Samoan experience, and agree that in terms of language, that this 'subculture' includes Samoan people who *tautala* NZ-born (although some among them are fluent speakers). When called on to identify themselves, those members who cannot *tautala fa'aSamoa* state that using the NZ-born label signals that they were born in New Zealand and therefore may not be able to speak Samoan fluently. It does not indicate the unwillingness to be identified as Samoan, on the contrary it is a definitive affirmation of being Samoan and therefore an apology for not being able to converse fluently in Samoan. The audience therefore is a crucial factor. If the audience is Samoan-born, then the NZ-born label tends to be used. If the audience is *pālagi* or other,

then the NZ-born label is irrelevant.

I am Aotearoan Samoan. Aotearoa acknowledges that I was born in Aotearoa and also distinctly I see my identity in terms that it's an Aotearoa influenced Samoan experience. And I say Aotearoan Samoan because it also makes it clear to my conservative counterparts that I'm not trying to be disrespectful to our old Samoans. So when you say Aotearoan Samoan some old people get really offended, others take it as a cue or key to say, Well I'm not your traditional *fa'aSamoa* person....

Filling out statistical forms is another matter. There is usually no allowance for identity other than New Zealander, Pacific Islander, or Other. Members either leave this section blank, or put in NZ-born Samoan or Samoan in the 'Other' box.

When I fill out forms I'm Samoan. If there's no space for Samoan, for example some just have 'Pacific Islander' or 'Other', I don't put anything. I find that quite insulting. I call myself NZ-born when I'm with Samoans. I identify the differences I suppose to...because of how I've been brought up and the different expectations that have been put on us. It does become a culture of its own in a sense. NZ-born Samoans definitely have a culture of their own.

Well...I actually say that I'm a Samoan, more than anything, even though I don't speak Samoan very well. But I identify with the Samoan side of me, more than I would the New Zealand side, basically because appearance...physical appearance...it's difficult to say otherwise. Once I talk, I mean I don't have an accent, it's pretty obvious...I live like a New Zealander. But I've felt I've wanted to be more Samoan than anything, so I tend to identify more with that side.

I always say Samoan, so they assume that I was born in the islands. But I always say Samoan, because I look Samoan....It's obvious because...it's still a big part of me.

The centrality of language as an integral factor in a Samoan identity is borne out by the members who do speak Samoan fluently frequently dropping the NZ-born label.

I say I'm Samoan all the time. I never say NZ-born. If they ask, then I go NZ-born. Maybe it's because I speak Samoan...

Despite the fact that most members were of mixed descent, either part-Chinese, or part-*pālāgi*, or both, this part-identity was obscured by their self definitions, in favour of a

NZ-born Samoan, or Samoan New Zealander, or Samoan identity.

I see myself as a Samoan born in New Zealand. Usually I say I'm a New Zealander, but then I say, but my parents are Samoan and part Chinese 'cause my dad's half Chinese as well....When I fill in forms I put Samoan Chinese.

The integral feature of a secured identity, in which members identify themselves as Samoan or NZ-born Samoan, lies in the awareness that one is able to balance both identities--that of the national identity of one's birthplace, and that of the ethnic identity of their Samoan parents. In this regard members talk about being able to maximise both identities so that they are able to successfully participate both as members of New Zealand society, as well as members of their own Samoan *'āga* and communities. They express having control of their lives to an extent which is unrecognisable while on their identity journey. There is no identity confusion here. Rather a final understanding and consciousness that they have reconciled previous oppositions and conflict experienced during their identity journeys, and found their niche in terms of a self-identity which empowers them to function as successful New Zealanders and Samoans. This feeling of control and security is exemplified in the following statement.

But when it comes to the crunch we're Samoans. I am the lucky one because I have this balance that I can balance being a *pālagi*, and being a Samoan, whereas a lot of people are either one or the other, and I've had the advantage of maximising both. Because they [*pālagi*] recognise the fact that I can play in their world, but I'm also respected in my own community....I'm always with the community. Involvement with the Church has given me the community....And I get laughed at by people...when I say, and I mean it, that I am owned by my community, and they think that's a joke....But they don't understand that, because what I'm trying to say is that any [Samoan] person who succeeds, through his success, he becomes the property of his *'āga*. He needs them, 'cause that's the pride element of our people, and let's face it, Who do we do it for? We do it FOR our people. I was given certain talents. I was given an opportunity from my parents. I've got to a certain level. I can't take it with me, I've got to onpass it. Now, when you go to the grave you leave your money behind, but if you go to the grave taking your brains with you, you're a waste to the world. So before you go to the grave, there's a cut off point where you turn round and say you want to give back. So you use your knowledge through whatever means, and in my case I want to...use all my vast knowledge to give back to lift our people up.

A singular feature of having a secured identity is one or more significant

relationships with adults who were characterised as role models--strong, the cornerstones and influential people in their lives. The significance is assigned by members; it is likely that some of the adults nominated by members would not regard their role as particularly influential or significant. In many of the narratives the adult was a matriarchal figure--mothers, grandmothers--or fathers who exerted their own mother's/grandmother's influences--who through interaction with their children and grandchildren instil feelings of self-worth and confidence, and motivation to be strong and proud of parental *fa'aSamoa* (see interview with Albert Wendt in Hereniko 1993:51). The information and stories passed on to members by their mothers and grandmothers, regarded by members as strong traditionalists, remain firmly embedded in their emotional expressions of personal and ethnic identity, and provide the continuity of homeland, expressed through secured *fa'aSamoa* in the New Zealand situation.

...like in my case, like I distinctly remember Gran, especially. She kept on hammering at me about Samoan culture...our 'āiga...land...titles...all these things. She had land. I guess I started realising [the importance of these things]...I guess when I went to Samoa for [a job]...I started decision making. I was about 27. I guess a lot of it started sinking home after Gran and mum died. That's when all the things they talked about started to become reality.

I know it sounds stupid, but as I grow older I'm becoming more like my mother...my mother 'cause she's a real strong woman of integrity and she's not afraid to speak out....I like all the strong women in the church. I want to be like that.

I've got a lot of things to be thankful for. First of all, it's 'cause of my mum. She introduced me to church...took us to church all the time.

My dad wasn't a strong traditionalist, but my mum very much was. So I guess from dad we learnt the *pālāgi* way of things, and from mum the *fa'aSamoa*. When there were *fa'alavelave* and things to go to, she'd always take us along, and I remember when there were things that you had to do...like a *siva...taupou*...she'd always get us to dance and things. So I really learnt *fa'aSamoa* from my mother, and she's the one that instils it in us kids.

I suppose my mother 'cause she's always there, she's constant, and even when my father died, she picked herself up. She's active...she takes my daughter to *Ā'oga*. She still gets up early on Sundays and does family lunch even if she's going somewhere....

Other members have identified Newton Church ministers, leaders and elders, almost all Newton Church founders, leaders, and former elders and office holders of Newton Church. This is not surprising however, when one remembers that members' parents and grandparents were pioneers in the sense that they were the first major group of Samoan migrants to New Zealand's shores. Their children and grandchildren chose to be inspired by people with whom they were familiar, loved and respected. Few chose role models from outside the tight circle of *'āiga* and Church.

I look more towards a guy like Tanuvasa Yandall [Samoan elder], 'cause he's always had a great heart for the young people. He's so solid in his faith and he's a very good ideas man. He loves the Church, he loves the people in the Church, and he loves his sport too. Sofi Pua [another Samoan elder of the Church] 'cause I really felt he was so open to everybody. He was so accessible, taught us all how to pronounce [Samoan] names right and he was just a great man. Of course Rev. Sio, that's an obvious one. He's been a great father in a lot of ways...a real inspiration. Mr Challis of course. I used to love listening to his sermons. They were the only ones I'd sit and listen to and concentrate on. I always felt that his message was pretty on target and what I wanted. Those are the four guys. Perhaps the last one Fred Atiga. Those guys are just all top guys. They'd be role models for most of us here.

Whoever the people who are seen in this significant adult role are, the two characteristics which are prominent in members' narratives are firstly, that they are givers of love, support and acceptance, and secondly, that they are integral in reinforcing parental *fa'aSamoa* and a Samoan identity for members.

In this chapter it has been shown that the members view their identity journeys as a continuum: the major themes of their identification as a Samoan, as a New Zealander, and as their Samoan parents' children are themes which every member mentioned in discussing their identity journey. I have concentrated on the confluence of understandings relevant to the identity experience as members have conveyed these through their stories. The identity experience has been considered as a journey in which I have described these three themes as challenges. Members reach through their identity experiences and challenges expressed in the identity journey, various understandings of the *fa'aSamoa* (parental, NZ-born or

secured) and may have reached a final understanding or secured identity. I have shown that members who have reached a secured identity are mainly mature members. At the same time this final understanding is not identified by members as a particular time or a singular consciousness. The final understanding is recognised by a positive feeling: constituted by an accumulation of understandings or levels of consciousness and an inner sense of gaining control and being able to position oneself in terms of New Zealand society, their elders and parental *fa'aSamoa*. Attaining a secured identity is a position of relative stability in contrast to earlier stages of identity confusion and instability characteristic of younger members' teenage years and secondary school stages with its potential for relapses in early adulthood stages. The relative stability and sense of well-being is challenged many times but, gradually and with maturity, most members have developed strategies to use and resources to employ in crises situations by the time a secured identity and a secured *fa'aSamoa* position is reached. The way in which members gain control is asserting the confidence that they can understand and be understood by New Zealanders and their Samoan *'āiga* and elders alike at a level which allows them to participate as a functioning member of New Zealand society, and as a member of their own *'āiga* and Newton Church. That is, they have the ability to balance and maximise both identities into a NZ-born one.

Many of the extracts in this Chapter have also contained or intimated reflective criticisms of Newton Church, the inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic and inter-generational conflict experienced by members and the learning experiences these provide. The following Chapter focuses on these narratives and the valuable insights these reveal in understanding how a NZ-born identity is further shaped by the institution of Newton Church during NZ-born identity journeys.

CHAPTER FIVE

"THE CHURCH IS...THE BATTLEGROUND OF CHANGE"

I think when you get a dynamic community there's bound to be some internal clashes. There are things like island-born, things like theological differences, things like the new elite and all those sorts of things. It's a macro overview of NZ-born versus island issues, culture versus New Zealand experience, womens' issues, theological issues, our new qualified versus unqualified, or qualified versus the old *matai* titles. It is such a complex issue and the church is...the battleground of change.

In many of their statements quoted in the previous Chapter, members expressed forthright or implicit negative comments about the Church in their journey, both from their own experiences and their "confluence of understandings". The integral feature of their comments concerns the integrating, and at the same time alienating, role of the Church in their identity journeys. In particular, members expressed trenchant criticisms of Church as the site for inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic, inter-generational and cultural conflict which had led to them "leaving" Church for periods of time, referred to as "time outs". To these matters further consideration will now be given.

The majority of members with secured identities, while being critical of the Church, are reservedly grateful to the Church for providing them with an identity and stability as NZ-borns, and their continuing relationship with the Church attests to their recognition that Church remains an integral part of their lives and identity. For those whose identities are not yet secure, conflict remains the cause for identity confusion and dissatisfaction with the Church. Their reservations and frequent disparaging remarks also include constructive comments which point to the concern of many members for the well-being and successful future of Newton Church rather than an isolated dissatisfaction.

Revival changes are taking place in the country today...it seems to be more towards consensus I guess. I kind of think that the strategy for leadership in the coming years is...we needed those strong leaders in the first place to take us through but I think more and more we're going to see rather than individuals it would be more team leadership which is a good thing and we need to be ready for that. I think what is actually involved in the church today is you will notice that everything that the

church has planned is taking a very static view of the future, the future is kind of set and it doesn't change, and that's not reality. The situation is the future is always changing and I think what the young people who are involved in churches today [have] is the ability to read the trends and to see the changes taking place in the future and to be able to adjust...our planning according to those changes. So it really does involve rather than just the individual really as a team, the consensus type of approach to leadership because we're going to make decisions, important decisions basically for those changes that are coming.

1

"...SAMOANS ARE VERY DOMINANT. THEY'RE VERY LOUD, AND BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT THE BIGGEST MOUTHS, THEY HAVE THE BIGGEST SAY..." : INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT

Newton PIC has remained multicultural since its official enforced formation by the CUNZ in 1947. Although congregations of Samoans, Cook Islanders, Tuvaluans, Tokelauans and Niueans, as well as *papālagi* spouses, have worshipped together in the past, the principle and biggest groups have always been the Samoan, Cook Island and Niuean groups respectively. The Tokelauans were asked to establish their own PIC branch in Grey Lynn in 1980, and other groups have similarly featured in other PIC parishes (e.g., the Owairaka branch is predominantly Cook Islanders). At Newton however, the Samoan, Cook Island, Niuean and ESG groups coexist and together make up the *ekālēsia* of Newton Church. The Cook Islanders and Niueans have established their own separate Sunday schools (conducted in their own island languages), even though some Niuean and Cook Island children still attend the mainstream Sunday school and bible classes (classes in English and predominantly attended by NZ-born Samoan youth). Some members see this positively as growth rather than separation. Others view this development as growing discontent with the way "the Samoans dominate everything".

Narratives regarding inter-ethnic relations describe the overwhelming domination by the Samoans in many aspects; the lack of any real opportunities for ethnic groups to combine and truly be multicultural because of the unwieldy size of Newton *ekālēsia*; the precarious position of the ESG as yet another ethnic group; the future of Newton as a multicultural Church especially on the retirement of the Rev. Leuatea Sio in 1994; and the

plans to restructure PIC Church as a PIC Synod under the umbrella of the PCANZ.

Ever since I can remember, in our Church, we never did things together. We worshipped together, and meetings and some functions....but we never really get together to get to know each other. I mean, the most words that probably most Samoans have said to Cook Islanders are, Hello.

There could be better ethnic group relationships. Like Sunday school teachers are excellent, but as a whole....When people walk past each other....When you look down the aisles where you have a Samoan and Cook Islander sitting next to each other, and they're not even talking to each other, they're just looking straight ahead, just being scared of talking to each other. We still have a long way to go....and I'm quite surprised that we've lasted this long, to be honest.

Members are certainly aware that the institutions of Sunday school, bible class, ESG, combined choir and the combined Session are invaluable in promoting co-operation and unity among the different ethnic groups, especially among the youth, leaders and teachers. Moreover the occasional special event, such as ministers' retirements, serve to solidify the mutual admiration and respect that the various groups feel for each other, and cement the bonds which keep this *ekālēsia* together. However, members observe that these combined occasions are becoming fewer, less supported by the other groups apart from the Samoan group, and they question the ability of the Sunday school, bible class, ESG and combined Session to keep the Church together.

We get on very well though at the other levels like Sunday school, we're like one big family. We're accepting of the other cultures, encourage the other cultures when there's anything on, and I think...we think not so much Samoan but multicultural...all the groups et cetera....If your leader of a particular group is that way inclined, encouraging to all groups, then it flows through...but if you're more one way than the other, then it comes through, but I think that we all enjoy each other. A lot of people [in Sunday school and combined choir], especially young people, have said to me that they've been able to talk to kids that they've never really talked to before from the other groups, and parents from other groups.

The only proof of that is the length of time we've been together so that's pretty good evidence that the groups get on well. People looking from the outside will see that the groups get on. The fact that each group has its own Sunday school and that...they're developing their own cultural base...shouldn't be seen or mistaken as people that don't get on. There seems to be respect for each other which hasn't been lost for over fifty years. It's been preserved quite well.

Less optimistic is the recognition that the Rev. Sio's retirement in 1994, and the combined choir are the only vehicles through which this multiculturalism has been truly acknowledged, that there is not really enough opportunities to combine "like in the old days".

I think going back a few years now development has been within each group. One of the things I was really pleased about Saturday's [the Rev. Sio's] farewell was it was the first time in many years we all worked together combined, it hasn't been like that for a while....Saturday was very exciting.

...just recently they have with the choir and stuff [given impetus from Sio's retirement]. It's the only opportunity for groups to combine...like my parents, I think they know a lot of people in other ethnic groups that I don't know, and I think that's come from years of going to church...they hardly have any more socials.

I think if this combined choir thing didn't come up the way it did, and when it did, I'm sure things would've been a bit of a shambles.

Undoubtedly the singular most recurrent comment in all members' narratives regarding inter-ethnic conflict is the domination by the Samoans, their "one-upmanship" and their "high-handedness".

...the Samoans are very dominant, and when they want something they're there in numbers and packs. Samoans are very dominant, they're very loud, and because they've got the biggest mouths they have the biggest say. The Niueans and the Cook Islanders are very afraid of that kind of thing. Once a Samoan starts yelling, that's it, they go quiet....But when it comes down to the crunch...to the church working together as a family, I don't think so.

Members observe the domination by Samoans as especially applicable to areas such as the day-to-day running of the Church in terms of Session meetings and decisions. The Samoan group because of their numbers and financial clout are seen to have a strong influence in persuading the other groups to see their point of view in sometimes "aggressive" ways.

I don't like the upmanship and highhandedness of *some* Samoans...I don't believe

the division of things are fair, because the numbers don't stack up. We're fifty percent et cetera. And it was very hard on the Cook Islanders, and Niueans. They're a small group but are quite powerful financially. Right from the early days we were strong...that's the thing that hangs with me...as far as I'm concerned, this Church belongs to each and everyone equally.

Older members have slightly different understandings of why Samoans dominate. These members view the domination as "part of the Newton PIC", that the other ethnic groups seek guidance and leadership from the Samoans and admire the way Samoans "always get things done". This differentiation between young and old can be explained in terms of the younger members not having as much experience as older members in sitting in committees, holding positions of office within the Church, and experiencing inter-ethnic conflict during Session meetings and in other contexts. Older members view the resolve by other ethnic groups to stay and remain as part of Newton Church as their acceptance of the dominating practices of the Samoan group--some to the extent that they believe the other ethnic groups enjoy the leadership provided by the Samoan group in this way.

...we are aware of the Cook Islander, the Niuean, and the ESG. Other churches in the PIC tend to have only one ethnic group and are missing out on the close relationship that we have. Because as Samoans we cannot talk as Samoans only...only when we're angry, like at Session. That's why our Sessions are easy, because only now and then the anger comes through, and it's anger mainly directed against one of our own. It's always [something] we must acknowledge in the relationship with the Niueans and Cook Islanders, as the bigger group. We also take the view that we must not lose that protocol...that we are used to because we have been brought up in it...The Samoans dominate only by numbers, 'cause we tend to be bigger...but as far as protocol and sharing and respect, we are fortunate in that we grew up and worshipped together with these other groups and this gives us the advantage. It makes us *au fait* and more comfortable with other groups.

Younger members' reactions to this insensitivity by some Samoans range from asserting the desire for more equal power sharing, consultation and more balance to avoid the other groups shifting away, to more complacent views.

I really think that Samoans can be really insensitive in little things like being there together as a combined choir. [...] still insists in giving notices in Samoan, even in the morning service when we're together, there are still notices that are brought across in Samoan. How the Cook Islanders and Niueans have tolerated this I don't

know. We may have the numbers of Samoans but we still need to realise that we are the PIC.

In terms of the other PI islands I find the Samoans do definitely dominate the other cultures which I don't see as very good. The Cook Islanders are almost putting out as much work and yet don't get the same recognition as the Samoans...and the same with the Niueans. I'd like to see a more even balance....

These remarks, both from younger females, illustrate how the women of the group tend to view Samoan dominance as unhealthy and unfair. They insist on there being more balance in the way time is allocated during combined Church services for the various ethnic groups to participate, e.g., in the reading of Church notices. This articulation of Samoan dominance was not as noticeable in the views of males in general—the younger males' views merging with the older males in tending to view the imbalance as acceptable given the larger numbers of Samoans and financial donations being provided by the Samoan group. There are various factors which contribute to this differentiation. One could be attributable to there being more males than females in positions of power within the Church structure, i.e., as ministers, Session clerks, elders. This together with Samoan socialisation experiences of females who are expected to be helpmeets to all those older, especially male, underlie female views that although the males have status within the Church structure, it is they who are actually doing all the work. Here, work refers to the greater involvement of females in teaching and leadership activities in the Sunday school and bible class. Perhaps complaining about Samoan dominance, and widening their own concerns to the other subservient ethnic groups reflects their dissatisfaction with their perceived subordinate position despite their crucial and major roles as—on the one hand, 'good' Samoan daughters and sisters of their *'āga*, and on the other 'good' daughters of Newton Church as teachers and leaders. That is to say, females who see some of the aspects of parental *fa'aSamoa* as inhibiting, especially in the area of continually having to *fa'aaloalo* and *tautua* those older (without being culturally able to voice discontent with their lot), use empathy with the other minority ethnic groups as an opportunity to voice their concerns about the unfair dominance of Samoans and parental *fa'aSamoa*. Making these complaints as Sunday school teachers or bible class leaders in the Church context thus lifts cultural restrictions which would inhibit these females from voicing these same concerns in the

home and in the company of older 'āiga members.

The male perspective is borne out by the following rationalisation of why the Tokelauan *ekālēsia* had to leave Newton and form their own parish. In this view, the splitting out of the smaller Tokelauan and Tuvaluan group was necessitated by the financial imbalance. The Tokelauans and Tuvaluans were trying to match the larger financial contributions of the larger Samoan group, so forming their own parish was the only realistic alternative.

The Tokelauans were too humble, they were struggling because at that stage...the Tuvaluans and Tokelauans made the smallest [financial contribution]. They needed really about three times more [per person] than the Samoans to match their totals, and there was no way that they were going to be let off. I think [...] saw the need...okay, this is the way that they can develop on their own and be masters of their own destiny. I think the other groups didn't want to do that, but the Tokelauans, especially at the end, were starting to feel the pinch...and there was no way that they could say, No we can't do it [contribute financially]...'cause you know what we're like...we save face. [...] could see, right here's this little group...'cause they're so ashamed of saying no, and they're putting in three times as much individually...so I think that's behind a lot of what goes on....

A related issue focuses on the ESG and how its members perceive themselves in relation to the other ethnic groups, and how they feel they are being perceived by these other groups. The narratives clarify how and why the ESG came into existence, and what the ESG does, expanding upon the introduction to the ESG provided in Chapter Three. The purpose and function of this group is problematic as officially it is the loosely defined group of Church elders appointed as English-speaking elders and youth elders. They are recognised as a part of the Church structure and represented at Session meetings, and its members are spread through the whole plethora of Church groups and institutions, especially as Sunday school teachers, bible class leaders and administrative personnel. As the ESG consists of mostly NZ-borns, unofficially they are members of the Samoan group also, as children and 'āiga of their Samoan parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts. Certainly there are no existing official documents which outline the functions and duties of the ESG. Only by examining the narratives, therefore, can a clearer understanding of the functions, make-up, programmes, value and future of this group be ascertained and contextualised.

When members consider why the ESG was set up and what its functions are, in their comments they see the ESG as being a transition group for working out issues of identity, a "pragmatic move", a "middle ground" to cater for cross-cultural marriages, a "gap that had to be filled" between bible class and *'autalavou*, a space and time for young people to "do their own thing", a way of catering for young marrieds, and a place for *pālāgi* and English-speaking NZ-borns, designed to keep young families together, to bring back people who have left, and to build up leaders for the Church.

To my knowledge it's twenty-odd years old now. It was formed to cater for the predominantly NZ-born as opposed to *pālāgi* that were worshipping in the church. You reach a certain age, bible class was history, you then had to move on and the next step was turning up to the 11 o'clock service or joining the *'autalavou*, or one of the Cook Island [youth/sports] groups or whatever. There was a major gap there that had to be filled. Also I think there was also concern that NZ-born were leaving the church then. And so this group was formed to cater for the need of the NZ-born and any others who wanted to be part of it. So I think that was its main, original purpose. Sio and Challis initially had a big part to play in it. They were pretty on to things that were going on with the NZ-born.

My understanding of it is that with Rev. Sio, it was a response to the NZ-born. It was a response also to those partners that had married into the Church that were not Islanders. It was also an acknowledgement. Also there's a third part, an acknowledgement that historically at that time, of the pakeha population that was in this congregation. So its sort of a three-folded beginning. And I think that the other thing that was seen with the English-speaking was that it was meant to be a transition group, as opposed to a staid group so thereby it gave mobility for those depending on where they were at with their development of their faith and their identity, whereby they could then go back into the traditional groups if they wanted to, or they could stay here, or vice-versa. It was open for those in the traditional groups going for a change...they could then move across to the ESG, and then go back if they wanted to.

They got a bunch of us...sort of all being ordained at the same time...not a big group, say four or five...a core group who got together, and we were English-speaking elders. For the first few years, we always pondered about this. We were separate from the other groups, and that recognition started to grow and there was this dream that this group was going to grow and become the biggest group in the church.

Reasons for accepting the "call" and becoming ESG members and elders are varied and supports the notion that the ESG provided a bridge between disaffected and traditional

elements of the church, and youth and adult status within the Church. In reality, the ESG despite projections by some that it would one day become the largest group of the Church by virtue of increasing numbers of NZ-born numbers, remains relatively small. Reasons for this are varied. But the predominant explanation given is that the responsibility of becoming an ESG member, especially an ESG elder, is too time consuming, and the commitment too great to handle. When members are asked to become elders, they soon realise that they will have to sacrifice their social life in terms of other work and leisure activities. The perceived sacrifice they have to make is too great for many. Nevertheless those who do accept the responsibility and accept the call soon discover the need to manage and balance all these outside influences with their commitment to their work within the Church.

[ESG's] only just started to take off in the way of getting numbers and that, since last year. And I think the only reason why it didn't take off was it didn't have a core group to get it going. I mean it had the elders, but we never really did anything, 'cause the only thing we ever did was serve communion just before the services came along, before we started ladies group going. When I joined and became an elder I thought that was really sacred...people looking up to you and that. I just did the things you were supposed to do as an elder, but I never really went out of my way to do anything different. The ESG people nominate people and then I think [...] put my name forward. They approach you...give you time to think and pray about it...and then I decided, Yes, I'd do that. So that was in the year I got married, and I thought, Oh Yea that would be the next step I suppose, 'cause there was nowhere else to go, and I didn't really want to leave the church. This is somewhere that I like to be...and then I was just an elder...and then just last year I think things just started taking off. We decided it was time to do some things.

However, for the core group, reasons for staying in the ESG become apparent in the fulfilment and satisfaction gained through the various outreach programmes that the ESG has initiated and perpetuated with the support of Newton Church community (see Chapter Three). All these programmes aim to reach out to Church members who have left the Church in an effort to reincorporate these people back into the Church community. Members become very animated when they talk about the most significant accomplishment of the ESG--the Tropics programme. Many members have participated in this outreach programme and describe the experience as "brilliant" and "excellent". Moreover members who have become missionaries during this programme feel that they are supported by the

Church.

Firstly, if we're looking at it in terms of giving missionary, outreach experience, then from that we've had the development of Tropics. That's been brilliant 'cause it's at least...realistically worked where families just don't have the money to go to the big missionary things that white man does. Here at least [...]'s trying to keep the [kids] at church...saves money and also they can do their own thing. The second one would be *Tagata Pasifika* Development Trust. I think that's just awesome. That's now one of the longest running PI projects. Secondly, it's the only NZ-born PI project in all of Aotearoa. 'cause everyone of the other projects are run by our parents. Those are the only two projects which stand out for me for the ESG.

I left and did this thing over in Hong Kong, called Far East Evangelical Team. It was with Youth with a Mission, and I had to wait for about six months and I stayed in Hong Kong. What they do is they take different teams into different parts of Asia...and they use things like drama, singing, visual things, visual presentations just to share the gospel. So I was in Hong Kong for about eight weeks and then we went to India and China for the rest of the time. Yea it was excellent...just really being exposed to other people, other countries, their culture and just seeing the way they live.

I turn now to ESG statements about how they feel they are being perceived by other factions of the Church. The site of this examination is where members feel that most interaction occurs--the combined Session meetings, which include elders from the Samoan, Niuean, Cook Island and ESG groups. The conflicts raised centre around communication problems and the members' inability to compete with the other ethnic groups in terms of financial giving. Members talk about how as the minority, they are ignored, misinterpreted and not taken seriously by the other groups. Often members feel that they are viewed this way because they are perceived as too young to be contemplated seriously, that they represent a more *pālagi* viewpoint and that because the combined Session is conducted in English, there are serious communication problems.

ESG had a clear understanding of WHAT they said and WHAT they meant...but classically, ESG people would have misinterpreted sometimes what the other groups were saying, 'cause they had to use their second language to express it, and the other session groups probably misinterpreted some of the things that the ESG were saying and thinking that we were cheeky. But we were not being cheeky, we probably thought they were being conservative, but they were not being conservative, they were showing love for us, and we didn't understand it.

We're the minority, we're the smallest group there is. I think with the kind of people we have in our group, because we're able to speak in Session. We do speak our minds and we fight for what we believe regardless of what goes on. But otherwise we're not really noticed. I mean like you take for example Communion. We're not noticed in that, we're not even given the opportunity to take part in the ceremony. We had to ask for that this year...but up until now we've been pushed to the evening service, the youth service, and that's an example to show how much they think of us. They think our elders are just useful for the evening service. So they don't encourage us for follow-ups or visitations to groups. They don't encourage...and yet, we try to encourage ourselves to visit families, find out where the young people go, we do our own thing.

Some members vividly recall a situation where at the peak of their frustration in not being taken seriously by other groups in Session, ESG leaders threatened to disband the ESG. Although initially meant as a "joke", Session's serious reaction and willingness to "co-operate in future" provided a positive sense to the ESG members that they are regarded as a necessary part of Newton Church. What is clear, is that members feel that even though they are a comparatively small group and therefore cannot compete on the same financial basis as the other ethnic groups, they see their greater contribution as being in other areas such as their skills, expertise and professional resources.

The church started saying, Well what's this group doing?...We said, Let's go back to the Session and say to them, Do you really need the ESG? It sort of started out as a joke. The reaction was, they wanted us so badly. So it was good to let them know that the group was alive. Down the track a bit though, they [the Session] still had this deep concern about the young people leaving in droves. Where are they going? What was the ESG doing about it? It wasn't an intense concern like, Buck up your ideas. They wanted to know what we were doing, it was more like curiosity sort of. But we thought in our own [way]...[that] we could implement a lot of new things in the church that would see it grow, and we'd bring them into line with the thinking of today....It actually did open the door for a few things. We started up a missionary Board, Tropics....I don't think they look at us seriously. They don't look at us as a threat or anything. I think part of the reason is...some of the comments at Session which often surface when they talk about ESG. They talk about our financial commitment and contributions...we can't do this, we can't do that. But I'll tell you what we CAN do. We can put in place good ideas that'll be really good for the young people, so don't look at us as if we're hopeless. And I think they've recently changed that...[referring to the decision by Samoan group to include the ESG financial commitments as part of their own]. So that gives us the opportunity to do other things.

Another frequently expressed concern is the future of a multicultural Newton Church. Central to it is leadership of Newton Church especially since in the past Newton has been led by the Rev. Sio—a "staunch traditionalist" and someone who has actively encouraged and imposed a "Newton *fa'aSamoa*" on Newton Church, sometimes to the detriment of the other groups. Members perceive this domination as particularly attributable to the Rev. Sio's leadership of the Church since the 1980s and note that "troubled times are ahead" in terms of the tensions which will arise concerning Samoans and future non-Samoan leaders. On the Rev. Sio's retirement the Senior minister who replaced him was Niuean. When this Minister retired in 1995, the Senior Minister position was passed on to a Cook Islander, in the absence of a Samoan minister (to replace the Rev. Sio). When a replacement for the Rev. Sio was found, the Senior Minister position was redesignated as a shared position between the same Cook Island minister and the new Samoan minister. All this has not happened without opposition and criticism directed against personalities and processes.

It's hard for Rev. [...]...it's hard for the Samoans to accept that Rev. [...] is the Senior Minister...and that they have to go to him and stop trying to run to Sio....But I think the Samoan lot are the worst ones, in terms of wanting power. Samoans take the lead 'cause of their numbers. I think this combined thing was timely...'cause since Sio retired all sorts of things have happened...tempers have flared up and whatnot. Me personally, I find that I'm going out of my way. I've got to be seen to be supporting Rev. [...], 'cause he is the senior, and I'd like people that I'm working with to do the same thing.

There is no doubt that the legacies of the two great leaders of Newton church, the founder, the Rev. Lye Challis, and his successor, the first ordained Samoan minister, the Rev. Leuatca Sio live on in the memories and actions of most ESG members, their parents and grand-parents. Their leadership styles, though vastly different, are reflected upon, referred to and critically questioned, often. Undoubtedly these two men are perceived to be the two greatest leaders of the PIC. They are referred to as "men of vision". The Rev. Challis was necessary "to get us through the early years", and the Rev. Sio taught members "to be true to your roots" but "not to close your eyes to the new world". Both leaders were fierce defenders of the early Pacific Islanders Newton church community in Auckland in the 1960s and '70s, and their right to be part of the wider New Zealand society.

Leua was the one who came on while Challis was there, and Challis was brought in to be the father, which fitted that particular time. It was a white missionary, missionising to brown people and he fitted that role....Even though Challis...understood a little bit about us, he still had white ideals and he imposed those on our structures. Now that leadership went when he went, and then Sio came along and he imposed very much the Samoan style of leadership. He saw the need to be strong, to be up front and that's what he did. He led from the front....But his strength was, he was flexible, and he changed his leadership as he saw fit. I mean the way he brought up my generation in the church in allowing us to express our views....the delegation thing to allow people to develop. The seed was planted by this fellow, it wasn't planted by Challis. But he [Sio] planted that. He said, Be true to your roots, but don't close your eyes to the new world. Explore and experience and bring in such things that are relevant to your life style and to Samoa. He had this open-mindedness....

The Rev. Challis, who was part of Newton Church from its inception, encouraged Samoan parents to teach their children English, and enforced this principle in setting up the Sunday school and bible class to meet the needs of the NZ-born children.

Challis' leadership was great 'cause he fulfilled the vision of catering for the needs of new immigrants. Sio, great again 'cause he sustained that. He worked on it and built on it.

...the leadership certainly came from Bob Challis. He had a lot of respect. He could speak well in English, he'd hark back to his days, his coal-mining town in England, and he could speak Cook Island. And all his experience in the Cook Islands. He could speak Samoan but we all knew his pronunciation was wrong, but at the same time, he could do it.

While the Rev. Challis is but a memory for some of the younger members, the Rev. Sio features prominently in the narratives of the older members and young members alike as still a crucial part of members' lives. Above all it is Rev. Sio's openness, his support of the young people, and his ability to "experience...and change" which is remembered.

There is nobody, and I mean absolutely *nobody*, that can stand alongside of him. As far as preaching or anything. He had the ability to mix at all levels. He had that unique ability to be able to get down to the kids level, which has to be respected. But I respect him and love him for all these years, and I always will.

All the other churches look at us as the mother church and of progressive originators. That's how they view our church, as the pioneers of all these things.

And when they see Sio, Rev. Leua, coming up with something new, they go, Wow, they start mimicking us. And Sio is the keeper of our traditions back home. But he is not a stagnator. He acquires, and he experiences, he explores, and he is an explorer and a very successful one at that. So the legacy that we have, and the view that we have was Sio's legacy to us as the children that went to that church, opening our minds, not closing them. He always said, Open your mind, don't close it. Our young kids call him Uncle Bob, and our parents say, Shsh...[the parents] tend to cringe. But he manages to relate to the little ones, four to five year olds as much as he relates to Dame Cath Tizard.

But I don't know 'cause I've been in the PIC all this time, and in youth leadership, and with Uncle Bob. He's always supported the youth, a green light all the time, no matter how silly the idea. We've never struggled that much. We wanted home groups, we got home groups. We wanted to send missionaries away, he supported us. So with youth issues, by just being able to listen to us, I've seen a lot of things come to pass, things given to us, like sports, music, et cetera.

That old man has given a lot of effort to this church, and whatever he gets, he deserves every bit of it. To me that's how I felt, and if there is any new guy that comes and says Mr Sio is...done this and that...and is overpaid or overtreated by people. Well Rubbish! There's no such thing. That old man gave his life, his time, his energy, his money, to this church. Any reward that he gets out of it, that's his benefit. It's not a million that's not enough to pay him back. I'll tell you what, I feel I would like to give him a million dollars! I'd say, Enjoy it.

Members recall the many rumours that have surfaced over the years about Cook Island or Niuean groups splitting out. However, until the recent retirement of the Rev. Sio these have never been taken seriously. A more dangerous threat is seen to come from the Samoan element of the Church who have already proven that if discontented they will leave the Church. Optimism about the growth and future of Newton church is tempered by thoughts of future schisms, especially by Samoans to EFKS. Although the PIC in its early years experienced schism, when a Samoan group broke away from Newton and formed a new Samoan church based on the EFKS model in Samoa (Chapter Three), there is little likelihood that this will happen again, mainly because there are now many EFKS churches available to recent arrivals. Also the Samoan component within the Newton church structure feels secure, for the time being anyway. It is implicitly understood though, that should the situation change, the Samoan group would be the first group to leave Newton and the PCANZ if necessary.

I know that a year or so ago there was a rumour that [...] was going to retire and move to another denomination [EFKS]. We know there are Samoans that will go with him if he goes that way. There's not much reason to now...I don't know, except to say it wouldn't be unusual....There's also another group that want to move out 'cause they're not getting their say and are not getting their way so I don't know how long PIC will stay.

There still is [friction]...at one point you could almost see us splitting. I think it was the time we had [...]...and the way they dismissed him, and things like that....That was close to a split because it didn't just affect the Samoan group, it affected the Niueans and Cook Islanders and it was scary. I mean a lot of us started thinking now how can we divide the property if we ever did split? Amongst the ESG we were talking about would we stay and fight. We would fight for the church to remain in the hands of those who were willing to work for the *whole* church and not a particular group, the whole church. But no, you still have friction.

Despite rumours and speculations about Samoans or the other ethnic groups splitting out, most members maintain that Newton Church will remain multicultural, but that it will be dependent on the future leadership of the Church. Most talk about changes that will be required, and the "changing face" of the Church in terms of how the "old people are dying out" and the different mix or generation of the future Church, and future leadership styles.

...seeking consensus amongst four groups...the good thing about it is that I think we're the only PIC church that's maintaining that. Most of the other PIC churches like new churches are like Samoan PIC or Cook Island PIC et cetera. It's a contradiction in thinking that here we are still maintaining our original model, streamlining it, but still maintaining the four groups, as a matter of fact three groups with the addition of the ESG. Yet the churches that have since been set up have gone into individual ethnic groups. There's no church modelled after Newton [except Christchurch]. I think we're the only true...the original PIC. That's a gift that I think we can give this country, the gift that we can give to the Presbyterian church, in that here are four groups, each maintaining its own individual identity, but working together under one umbrella. I think our secret is that we keep our four things separate. The groups do it in their own Samoan, or Cook Island way, and then we come together....We've always negotiated our way, we've always managed to accommodate change. That's why we've succeeded as four groups under one umbrella.

Repeatedly, members asserted, when asked about the future of the Church that its multicultural nature is its strength and its uniqueness and that in the end a multicultural

Newton Church will remain.

I think that has always been our strength, we've survived fifty years, we've shown that groups can actually work together and I think that's the added bonus we have over some of the other churches, like the *Efakasa*, we have the added advantage of other ethnic groups. That's always been our strength.

Yes I think we'll remain multicultural, that's one of the roots...that's what keeps the church together, that's just one of the strong points. Newton will be around in the year 2050 I think 'cause times have changed and this church has been able to allow for those changes to happen and be flexible, but still staying strong and I think that's a unique feature.

In this section it has been shown that members experience conflict as the children of Samoan members of the multicultural Newton Church. The inter-ethnic conflict is expressed in terms of the perceived Samoan domination of Niuean and Cook Islander groups in the Church, the precarious position of the ESG regarded as the NZ-born *pālagi* component of the Church, and the importance of leadership styles for the future of a multicultural Newton Church, especially with the proposed changes that will be incurred by restructuring Newton Church into a PIC Synod (see Chapter Three and Seven).

Members statements concerning inter-ethnic conflict present a range of views. Indeed, a pattern of *mirror-imaging* among NZ-borns within Newton Church emerges, a pattern where on the one hand, the views of males (usually older) decrying the dominance of the Samoans and focusing on negative aspects, and on the other, the views of females while acknowledging dominance of Samoans, stressing the working together of the different ethnic groups, in a positive vein. Mirror-imaging occurs when NZ-borns, cognisant of their status and roles in parental *fa'aSamoa* within their own personal '*āga* environment, perceive that these roles while already carried through or repeated in the Newton Church '*āga* environment in its present form will be acutely sharpened and accentuated in the proposed Synod structure. Men who are *matai*, or heads of households, as well as sons, brothers, fathers and husbands within their own '*āga*, perceive that financial commitments will escalate if informally-recognised dominance of the Samoan influence is formally validated by the Synod structure. They fear that as ministers (in some cases), elders, leaders, Church administrators, they will be doubly burdened as they are

also sons, brothers, fathers, in the Church 'āiga also. That is, their disdain for the heavy Samoan influence in the Synod structure is caused by the perception of this mirror-imaging. For females, who are mothers, sisters, daughters, wives within their own personal 'āiga networks, and who are fully aware of their perceived subservient status and roles within parental *fa'a Samoa* in terms of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* to a greater extent than their male counterparts, this disdain of Samoan dominance in the Synod structure is not perceived in financial terms as it is in the more positive aspects of *alofa*, peace-making, working together for the whole, despite their comparatively elevated roles in the Church 'āiga as teachers, leaders and elders. That is to say, for female members mirror-imaging occurs also for as females, they serve their 'āiga in much the same way as they serve their Church 'āiga, despite the fact that for some, in their Church 'āiga they carry the same status and role as their male counterparts, e.g., elders, teachers, etc. However, opposition to Samoan dominance for these female members is expressed in terms of their drive for more balance, equal representation of all ethnic groups, and they see the consensus-style decision-making apparatus of the Synod structure in this more positive light.

Many of these extracts have also intimated that conflict is experienced intra-ethnically also. The following section is focused on the conflict experienced by members with their leaders, teachers, and island-born elders within the Samoan Church community, and the identity confusion and learning experiences this conflict has meant.

2

"FRESHIES", "FOBS" AND "NZ-BORNS": INTRA-ETHNIC AND INTER-GENERATIONAL CONFLICT

The new identity which has emerged in the 90s is signified by the label "NZ-born" (see also Chapter Seven), which in the New Zealand context provides a new focus of identity for first, second, and third generations of Samoan people and communities living in New Zealand. At the same time, however, it is important to note that this NZ-born identity is not a single, unified identity, it exists alongside a range of other differences of

culture, gender, class, and religion. Nor does this identity imply a *non*-Samoan identity or preference for the recognition of being a New Zealander. Rather it identifies being Samoan but with the differences of place, knowledge, lifestyles, language and a NZ-born or secured *fa'aSamoa*. In other words when many NZ-borns use this self-identification label they are asserting that they *are* Samoan but have been born in New Zealand, that they are more familiar with the New Zealand life-style, that they *tautala* NZ-born, and that they are familiar with the knowledge and practice of *fa'aSamoa* in the New Zealand situation.

What is important is that NZ-born is an example not only of the political character of new identities, but also demonstrates how different Samoan migrant enclaves and ensuing generations express their contemporary cross-national Samoan ethnicity in ways that are compatible with their various life-styles over time and in different localities. What these different groups of NZ-borns (whether they be church, sports, or community groups) have in common, what they represent by taking on the "NZ-born" identity, is not that they are culturally, ethnically, linguistically or even physically the same, but that they are seen and treated as "the same", that is, "non-white", non-island-born "other", by New Zealanders, recent island arrivals, and island-born elders.

Consequently NZ-borns have sought to represent themselves to New Zealanders and others as different Samoans from those Samoans who are recent arrivals from Samoa. This difference is recognised physically--in clothing styles, linguistically--in the absence of a stilted English accent, and educationally--in terms of higher qualifications. These differences are accentuated in identifying recent arrivals as "freshies" or "fobs", labels which are used in a derogatory sense in some contexts but which also imply merely difference. These differences are reflected upon in the narratives of the ESG. Certainly in the wider community, this difference is emphasised and portrayed in intra-ethnic and generational conflict, for example, the Semisi family in the television comedy "Skitz", the plays "Fresh Off The Boat" and "Tatau", the short films of the "Tangata, Tangata" television series. In the Newton Church community the "freshie" element is identified as the *'autalavou*, and island-born elders and ministers.

In my heart I believe there is nothing between NZ-born and island borns. I think it's the understanding and environment in which they were born into. Like the young people in the after function on Communion Sunday. I can fill my stomach on

sandwiches and what have you, and yet it's easier on the pocket than having to buy a chicken or a taro. It's costly. But you won't convince either one as to which is better. They should try and learn from the other's point of view.

In the narratives comments refer to the perception of the ESG as too young to be taken seriously, too *fiapālagi*, not respectful enough, not ready to become leaders. Members remark that at times the relationship between the bible class and ESG, the NZ-born element of Newton, and the *'autalavou*, the "freshie" or "fobby" element of the Church, has been almost confrontational, and there has even been open conflict for NZ-borns in the "tug-of-war" between them wanting to remain in bible class and ESG, and their parents forcing them to join *'autalavou*. Language and communication are seen to be the major barriers but there are other factors such as different life-styles and goals. Some members, on the one hand, regard island-born Samoans as "inferior" to them and "ignorant to New Zealand ways", and have a real disdain for them, and, on the other hand, resent that they are not being supported by the Samoan-born groups, elders, and especially the ministers.

I actually went to the *'autalavou* in about 1989, 'cause I felt at home there. When I was in bible class, I actually hated *'autalavou*. I think the friction is one where both sides accuse each other of being too much the other, either too *pālagi* or a bunch of *fobs*! It's the extreme. Both sides are to the extreme right where they're too scared in experiencing the other side...you don't want to experience what the other side's like, and therefore you don't want to cross that bridge. There are a lot of NZ-borns in *'autalavou*....It's actually wanting to cross the bridge and see what the left's like. [Unless]...you can cross that bridge, you'll never know what the other side is like...

Well not all the youth in the *'autalavou* are island-born...I mean there's a difference between the liberals in the ESG and the NZ-borns in the *'autalavou*, and also who their parents are. The *'autalavou* is getting bigger and the bible Class smaller as the resurgence is happening. This trend has been happening for a while now, as the parents pull them out of bible class and push them into *'autalavou*. You should have seen them last year man, if you were around when they were practising for their competitions, or even this year, you'll be amazed at the number of young people. At the time I used to think that they weren't into it...but a lot of them I think are forced.

However this demarcation is not as pronounced as one would expect. This can be attributed to the make-up of the ESG and the *'autalavou*. In some cases members of the

same 'āga are spread across the ESG and 'autalavou; some members of the ESG are also members of 'autalavou; many NZ-borns while not in ESG are members of 'autalavou. In the case of island-born elders and ministers, despite disagreements arising from time to time, ESG members, although voicing their disappointment and contrary views at Session meetings, generally opt to respect wishes of the ministers, elders and majority. In other words decisions are made in the context of one-way directional *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* on the part of the younger NZ-born generation, in recognition of *feagalga* aspects of the relationship between ESG, the Samoan ministers and elders and the wider Samoan group. In this regard some members view the attitude of disdain towards the island-born element of Newton church as "selfish" and "self-centred" as their more liberal and *pālagi* attitudes towards island-born Samoans.

I think us being born in New Zealand, we've been very much influenced by the *pālagi* life-style. I guess sometimes that can come across very selfish and self-centred. I've noticed that my cousins that come from Samoa, as they come into my family situation, they're serving, and just giving of themselves. Samoan kids have come from a real community and a family thing and are very comfortable around a lot of people, and very social. We sort of tend to be more individualistic or just like with close friends. When Samoan kids come over...they do so well at school. They give it everything they've got. But here it's like we just cruise along and everything's just fine. And so they do really well and yet we who have all the advantages in New Zealand aren't getting as much out of school and life as we should. There's a big difference.

A theme which links all the narratives concerning intra-generational conflict is the notion that on the one hand, members are NZ-born and educated, and have become skilled, professional experts in their own fields. Members feel that lip service is given by island-borns and elders of the Church to these achievements and possibilities, that they are "kept down" by their elders, and that their skills and expertise are not translated as real power within the Church structure, especially Session. On the other hand, from the elders and Samoan-born perspectives, NZ-borns and ESG are regarded as "*fiapoko*" and wanting to be too "*fiapālagi*".

[We're] all professionals and skilled...and I think that if we were all used for the talents that we have in Session. If they allowed us to help in the running of the church, and different organisations, and gave us credit for what we have got, for the

talents that our people have, we'd be better off...but they don't.

I think the role of the ESG is to be the influence in terms of our voice being heard in the general Session, in terms of bringing a deeper understanding. I think we're going to be an asset in terms of encouraging our Church to [have] a greater understanding of different issues....I think that as a group, we can really encourage and educate our parents as to what these things will mean to them, otherwise they're just left in the dark and they only hear bits, and we, the so-called educated, professional people, we can be of more practical help towards our folks.

What are they [ESG] doing for our Church? To me, as I've said, the older people are not interested in the NZ-born kids and what they can do, because they're only interested in what perpetuates the *fa'aSamoa*. ESG doesn't perpetuate the *fa'aSamoa*. But I've looked at the group and wondered myself, What is that group supposed to be doing? What is its functions? Its goals? The same faces are there twenty years later. Are they sincere about growth or is there a dynamic in that group that prevents them from growing. Our parents are only interest[ed] in what perpetuates their culture. It's good, but it's not going to help their young people, that's the thing. But they don't realise it and if they do, they don't see it as important enough to do something about.

The financial aspect in terms of the ESG being a small group and therefore not an equally-contributing donor group also perpetuates this view. Some members react to such accusations as unfair especially in view of the severe financial strain that they are subjected to being members of the ESG and having to contribute to their parents' Samoan group also. These members perceive accusations of not being Samoan enough or *fiapālagi* as equivalent to "not contributing enough money when and as required", and reflect an extreme view of NZ-born *fa'aSamoa*, and provide strong counter arguments in the narratives.

The ESG are taken seriously, but when you look at the financial thing, it's hard 'cause the people we're looking after, those young people, are bound, but at the same time, the generation that are married and still in their parents house are paying out for the Samoan section of the Church and they have no say as to where that money goes, but in their hearts you know they don't want to give it to ESG.

[The ESG] sort of shared about a quarter of the discussion on it, quarter of the decision-making power of Session. It didn't really have a quarter of the members though. It was totally embarrassing. We only had about a fiftieth of another groups' total. And they were always being quite patronising and sort of looking at us and saying, Well that's okay, they're only a small group. Yes, the commitment from the ESG will be \$2,500, Samoan group \$65,000, Cook Islands group, they're a smaller

group, theirs is \$40,000, things like this. We tried to rationalise it in the same sense by saying, well a lot of our ESG are giving it anyway...giving their money to their parents to support them. .

Some Samoan elders comment that they do not see the need for a separate ESG, that the ESG is a source of division of the Church, that members should all be in the Samoan group, that the ESG is dangerous and that the main reason for members continuing with the ESG is to lobby for a NZ-born minister in the future, something they feel is unnecessary and will never happen. Its existence thus poses a situation of potential intra-ethnic conflict for its NZ-born members whose loyalties must be divided as to commitment and support--and the balancing act between NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* and their perceived *pālāgi* ways. Note the following comment made by a Samoan elder, and a counter remark from an ESG member:

I don't really know why we have an ESG. I think it's created a problem that we don't need. In creating the necessity for another minister. As far as I'm concerned we're segregating for no reason. Well there's no such thing as an ESG...we all speak English, we all belong to our own groups. Personally, if you're asking me a straight question, I think we should NOT have an ESG. We should be one Church of the three different ethnic groups. I don't want them to exist because I think they're dangerous. I think they're a dangerous lot if they get too strong [Samoan elder].

I think they would have been better off going for a NZ-born minister in this Church. But because of the big voice of the Samoans and the others, they don't want anyone who can't continue their culture you see. So they've never thrown any resources into a NZ-born minister, 'cause they think that they'll get nothing back. They want the young people to come along, but they want them to conform to what they want...and they don't realise that that isn't working.

Yet another view often expressed is the unique position of Newton as the only PIC which has an ESG. Other PIC branches have not followed suit and copied this example set by the mother Church. Why is this? One reason is that no other PIC branch is as multicultural as Newton. That is, no other branches are made up of large numbers of Samoan, Cook Island, and Niuean members together. Other congregations are either overwhelmingly Cook Island (e.g., Mt. Eden Parish), Samoan (e.g., Otara), or Tokelauan (e.g., Grey Lynn) (see Appendix Five). Another reason is that senior ministers and elders

of some Parishes refuse to allow their NZ-born young people even this small measure of autonomy. For these and other reasons the ESG of Newton is regarded by other PIC Parishes and young people of these parishes as elitist and *fa'amaualuga*, and members express this feeling of alienation from other branches and other youth groups especially when attending various PIC youth meetings around Auckland.

The general feeling throughout the country is I guess, what is this ESG? I think...the other churches...thought that it was basically a waste of time. Eventually, however, there has been a move to cater for the specific needs at PIC Newton. So we generally accept it might not be every other fellowship's cup of tea, but they've got to be able to form their own group that meets the needs of that particular parish, and I think that's what we were trying to say, that the ESG came about when there was a specific need. It may not be applicable, the idea of a ESG in a church which is primarily Samoan, it would be a waste of time. What we wanted to state was that it was applicable really to the needs at Newton.

Within the ESG itself some members are at odds in their feelings about the relationship between ESG and *'autalavou*. Female members see the value of both institutions and maintain that people should join both groups because they offer different things. They have a different appreciation of giving and serving than the male counterparts in the group who continually emphasise the negative aspects of parental *fa'aSamoa*, usually in financial terms. This differentiation is borne out by the observation that most of the members who were also members of *'autalavou* were younger female members and older males. None of the younger male members were also members of *'autalavou*.

I think if you see the people that are in the ESG....Their parents haven't been involved in the *'autalavou*, so that's why they're like that. With me I was brought up so whatever qualifications I get, I know that I'd want to take them back to the *'autalavou*. At the same time I'd want to help out the ESG 'cause it exists. So that's where I'm coming from. Like I started with the *'autalavou* and so I grew up in the *'autalavou* so I can go back, whereas they didn't. They haven't, they're not founded or rooted...nowhere to go back to....Where do they go? They don't see the ESG as a place where they can get their language or culture back.

Realising that success has come at a price, some members comment that their Samoan identity has suffered. The realisation that they have become successful New

Zealanders in terms of education and the middle-class professions is coupled with the knowledge that they have become "less Samoan". These members perceive the ESG as isolating them from the Samoan element of the Church unnecessarily, and in so doing are in danger of losing their Samoan identity.

ESG is an awesome group, they're children of parents that spoke English to them mostly. ESG should be the group taking the PIC into the 21st century. ESG group is the product of that first generation. Our church is the example of the first successful NZ-born generation...but then comes the dilemma of it all. I mean they're questioning the price of this success that they've achieved. Mainly lacking their identity.

The internal divisions among ESG members point to the cliquey-ness of the group and the realisation for some that it is a relational group and that its emphasis at times is on social aspects only for "the same faithful few", with no real commitment towards change or parental *fa'aSamoa*.

Strong motivational ideas as to the future direction of the ESG is provided by mainly female members who point out the need for real commitment in terms of the eldership, and who question the focus of the group. Whereas older male members see the focus of the group to retain current membership and maintaining current programmes, female members tend to stress the need to outreach to those who have left the Church, to "minister to the people wherever they are", and devise strategies to build the group up. Parental *fa'aSamoa* principles regarding personal relationships, reflect the females' concern with inclusiveness of a larger group, whereas males tended to present views which argued for the exclusivity of the group. Regardless as to what members feel about this issue, it is obvious that current leadership of the group is content to maintain the status quo and the focus of the group continues to remain in confusion and open to diverse interpretation by not only members but the Church in general.

While most members of the ESG are aware of the group's potential to become future leaders of the Church in a real sense, this knowledge is tempered by the realisation that a balance needs to be struck between the expertise, knowledge and skills in *pālāgi* terms that the ESG bring to Newton Church, and parental *fa'aSamoa* which permeates Newton protocol and processes.

In my view the ESG has got an opportunity...like it COULD be the group that brings the whole Church together because in our group there are mixed marriages, there's English-speaking, a few who are fluent in both, so out of all the groups, if we were to call people we know from the other groups, it could bond them all together more....It's at that melting pot stage where it's time for this group to grow. All the other groups will intermarry and everything else and if our group can get a strong footing in the Church that will be the generation for the next church, for the coming church.

We were a little bit arrogant in the early days because we were able to express and articulate what a lot of the Samoans were trying to say in Session and couldn't say, but I guess things started changing and I think a lot of respect was gained when a lot of professional people were roped in. They had the skills. I think a lot of the Samoans were concerned they could see that it was mainly the ESG that were involved on the Development Committee, and all the areas that related to policy. We actually wielded quite a bit of power in those days....but we came across quite arrogant. I think we've grown up as a generation who know what we want and being quite aggressive in being able to do it but we've got to temper it also with regard to cultural things because there are protocols. I think we trampled that basically on hindsight which we should not have done. There has got to be a balance.

The future of the ESG as part of Newton Church remains secure. What is not secure is the extent to which members of the ESG want to maintain the balance between *pālāgi* knowledge-based skills and expertise, and the retention of the Newton parental *fa'aSamoa* in the future.

The day of the giants is gone. I think this generation is going to have to take over.

"...and now I want to get a life for myself": 'leaving' Church and 'time out' periods.

Parents' expectations of their children is for them to be "good" Samoan children and "to go to Church". The expected pattern is that one becomes a member of Newton Church through being baptised or christened at birth and brought up through the Sunday school and bible class. This involves the first fifteen to sixteen years of one's life. As an adult, parents hope that their child then goes on to become a member of the *ekālēsia*, which necessitates identifying with particular ethnic group activities. For NZ-borns this means being part of the *'autalavou*, *'aufaipese* (church choir) and other associated Samoan

groups, and perhaps other combined groups. However many NZ-borns do not follow this pattern. They talk about the gap after bible class and how there is nothing which effectively keeps them at Church apart from becoming a Sunday school teacher or bible class leader, or joining the various Samoan groups. Indeed the hiatus for many NZ-borns results in leaving Church altogether, joining more charismatic churches, just "floating", or becoming "Sunday christians". The most common type of leaving is when members have a "time out" period, where they "get a life". The reasons members give for leaving the Church involve the culture versus christianity dichotomy, and the intra-ethnic and inter-generational conflict this involves. The "time out" periods represent space in their lives during which issues of personal identity in relation to parental, NZ-born and secured *fa'aSamoa* and the Church are contemplated and considered.

I guess it's just maybe like if they're at Varsity, they just find that Sunday is all they need so they can do research, study et cetera. Those that aren't schooling, it's not for them. There's nothing in place after bible class and if you don't want to be a leader....Other people they just find some other interest. I guess quite a lot opt out of church altogether. I know one particular girl, she hasn't been a bible class leader, but she hasn't come to Church anymore. She's finding a life I guess.

In some cases leaving the Church is due to the tremendous pressures placed on members by parents, *'āiga* and church leaders to become bible class leaders or Sunday school teachers. Realising the "full on" commitment this entails, they either rebel against their parent's wishes (which often leads to their leaving the Church), or reach a compromise by becoming members of the ESG, or the *'autalavou*. The ESG is thus regarded by these members as an institution which fills this gap, as a bridge between disaffected youth and the traditional ethnic component of Newton Church, and the strenuous commitment and obligations of being bible class leaders, teachers or members of the *'autalavou*.

The hiatus becomes apparent in the narratives of members' perceptions and experiences of bible class and give insight into reasons why youth leave the Church in this specific context. Members recall that the formation of the bible class by the Rev. Challis and the Rev. Sio was to "try and get the young people meeting themselves...", to encourage leadership.

Leadership of Sunday school or bible class was cited as the crucial factor in either leaving the Church or remaining. Either way, members are aware that this aspect "either makes you or breaks you". Some had found commitment and fulfilment:

I found it neat just giving back to people sharing what I've learnt and stuff....I don't know what I would have done if I didn't become a leader.

I was glad I was in leadership, 'cause it helped me understand the politics of Church and stuff. Just the whole thing, like taking things to Session, making sure the elders know about it. When I was younger I thought okay this is bible class, and the Church...and we were all really separate, but using the same buildings. But when I was a leader I realised that there were umbrellas, and that bible class was under the ESG, I mean under the Sunday school actually, and Sunday school is under the ESG and then to take things through Session. And also I think I learnt what a leader really was...not a leader up there, but a leader down there. It was good just understanding that.

Yet, members recall instances when they or close friends refused to take on this leadership role, had time out periods, or just floated out of the Church. Many recall the pressures placed on them to take on this role and their subsequent feelings of guilt when they failed to comply with the wishes of their parents, leaders and peers.

If you're not in leadership capacity, then you tend to float, and you float out...and then you decide to float back, once again. The only thing at PIC is that if you're there for two or three years, they quickly nab you back into something that's always in a leadership capacity. If you're not in leadership capacity you float.

... 'cause after bible class there's really nothing else, only Samoan group, the *'autalavou*. If you weren't a leader you weren't doing anything. Then that was a bit of pressure. Sometimes you'd feel guilty if you weren't teaching or anything. Yea, they'd say, Well why aren't you teaching?

Among those members who have had a time out period there is the notion that they have to culturally conform to Samoan generational notions of ESG being young (no matter what age members actually are) and that they should therefore be obedient, and be expected to continually serve their elders. Members had become tired of giving (financially, and in terms of personal commitment and time) all the time, and not receiving anything in return.

These members see these periods "out" as arising from the stress and pressure placed on them to become leaders, and the pressure exerted on them to conform to parents' and leaders' cultural ideals of youth always complying with the wishes of their elders, and the notion that individual desires are secondary to the wishes of the group. These periods last from a few months to ten years or more. Members recall feeling guilty and ashamed but also speak about these "time out" periods as giving them opportunities and the space to reflect and think about this aspect of *fa'aSamoa*, identity and Church. Many feel they have done their time and now deserve a break. Again most of the female members felt more acute guilt than their male counterparts as the following narratives illustrate:

All my life...I went through Sunday school, bible class, twelve years in leadership. The thing is that it's quite difficult for me. I've only gone away for two years doing my own thing, and I've come back to PIC and straight away people have wanted me to become full-on...back into leadership roles, back into serving bible class....People don't realise that in the past, in the bible class, it's like people decay in there. I mean your whole life is. Every day up there there's a meeting of some sort. And now I have finally got to a stage in my life where I'm thinking, No. Being a christian doesn't mean you have to serve in that capacity. But...sometimes you feel really guilty up there, 'cause they say, Well you're single so you should be up here serving the church...Oh you need to come back for bible class...You need to come back and help...or...Why aren't you here!! This is how I felt. It's like, Hello, you guys have got a short memory. I've been here twelve long years, serving here, and now I want to get a life for myself....That ten years I had gone on and it was lovely to be away from the PIC 'cause all my life had been one of responsibility...everything...in family life and church life. I was just giving, giving, giving...and nothing came back for me. And I always felt guilty.

The time commitment was too great. I mean it was straight from work to church....One thing I realised last year is that I was so committed that my relationship with [my spouse] was suffering. With a supportive partner sometimes you can take them for granted...and I felt, That's not fair or right, so I made a conscious effort to say no....

The stresses and strains imposed on female members by the pressures exerted on them to conform culturally, in terms of serving their *'āiga* and Church--and becoming teachers and leaders--become powerful incentives for female members to leave Church and have time out periods. This is borne out by female members in the group having longer and more frequent "time out" periods than male members, indicating that male members did

not involve themselves as fully with Church activities.

Members say that these "time out" periods were times when they were able to work out their identity in relation to the Church. Many describe feelings of "confidence" and "release" and "security" in being able to put into perspective this aspect of leadership enforced on them by their parents, and Church leaders. This deep reflection was more common in the older female members of the group and framed in references to parental *fa'aSamoa*. For these members time out provided them space for coming to terms with the *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo*, and *usita'i* aspects of serving others culminating in the understanding that the plight of Samoan women is not to continually serve, and that in time it was alright for them to receive and expect *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* from others. The empowering thing for these women was the realisation that for them their understanding of secured *fa'aSamoa* and a secured identity had been consolidated.

I think just taking that space, that time out after ten years of serving at the church and serving my family. FOR ME, I think a lot of island upbringing is that everything is seen as corporate, and sometimes you feel guilty when you say, Well I want...[and they say] Excuse me! This is a family thing, what do you mean I want?....It had finally got to the point where I realised that I can't give any more. My resources have all dried up...and it was a wonderful time. For me it was the Lord saying it was time for you to receive blessings, friendship, to stop giving, and learn to receive. I don't know if it's general in all island women. It's hard to receive 'cause we're always taught to give...give....Even with me if someone gives me something I always have to give something back...or it might counteract.

So I went away and I came back more confident in who I was, that I was a person to be respected too, that I was a person that had opinions that were valid and things like that....I began to learn that my security was not in so much my works. My security was in who I was and it wasn't just my position, my whole identity wasn't just centred around being A leader OF bible class [in sarcastic tone]...or I'M leader OF bible class...Big deal!

A recurrent note is the immense amount of competition that members recall having to take part in. The disciplinary pressures they experienced as children from parents, their teachers and leaders to compete and be successful were often extreme. Of annual Sunday school examinations to choir festivals members have vivid recollections of the many workshops and practices that were involved. The degree of competitiveness was so acute that at times members were shamed into leaving the Church either because they couldn't

sing, or weren't competitive enough. Names of those successful in examinations and placings in competitions were always read out in Church, or made into lists which were prominently displayed so that unsuccessful members were implicitly and many a time explicitly made the brunt of ridicule and embarrassment by their parents, leaders, teachers and peers. Members view this as another instance of inter-generational conflict where they as individuals had no choice but to comply, to fit in or leave. The pain and hurt reported are indicative of this conflict.

I started Sunday school and then I went to form one I think and then I left. I felt that nobody liked me. I had no friends because...you know those Sunday school competitions. They used to try to make me enter them, singing and that. But I never wanted to, so I pulled out. I stopped going and used to make up excuses. I was forced to take part, not by my parents but by the teachers here. I felt that I was pushed into things that I didn't want to get pushed into, and I felt that because I knew my limits that they shouldn't push me. So I started making up excuses to my mum and dad and eventually I never came any more.

...when I was ten or eleven...[....] shamed us. He just had unreal expectations. I remember coming out of choir thinking, Oh no, I can't sing, I haven't got a good voice...not only because of him, but all the other people who *could* sing, the good singers. So ever since then I've never had a great desire to sing, although I love choral music. A lot left because of the hurt. It was a real power trip for [....].

They don't do it now, but there was a generation of us, my age group, that were really hurt from practices that we had, as in choir practices...solos...how you had to stand up and do solos. It was the teaching methods of the choirmasters and the discipline. It got to the point where the discipline got personal. If they couldn't get at you at practices...to buck up, they'd start getting personal about your family or something.

Male members felt this embarrassment more acutely than females and often this stigma remained with them into adulthood. This differentiation begs further clarification. For males, often less musical than their female counterparts, the limitation in their musical ability being pointed out and publicised caused severe stress and shame. Their upbringing in parental *fa'aSamoa* as young boys, sons and brothers did not prepare them well for their Sunday school and bible class musical experiences. They were not disciplined nearly as much as young girls, nor was their behaviour restricted and shaped as severely. Although they were keen to compete at a high level, when their physical capabilities or attitudes

impeded this, they were not as able to cope with the severe "dressing down" by teachers, choir-masters, elders, and ministers. Girls, unable to compete with anyone at home and who were used to being excessively disciplined, thrived at Sunday school and bible class, in the atmosphere of competitiveness in musical and examination activities. Even though not all were capable of avoiding the teacher or choir-master's stern dressing downs, females showed more resilience in accepting criticism, and remaining in the group, in trying to improve their failings. Some members point out though that at times over-excessive dressing downs caused whole families to leave the choir and the Church in some instances.

We were very competitive...the whole teaching method...the whole method of, Hey, you're flat! Do you want to be flat on stage? Do you want [...] to beat us or what? That's when I started realising that there was a real sort of hate for [...], so when we met at competitions, there was a real sort of, you know...We'll get you, we'll get you, we'll see who's bad!...for young males, it was really hard to be ridiculed in front of fifty other people....I think about it now and then and it still really hurts...really church just sucks, man, you guys are all fake man. Who deals with that? Yea...Those days, man I was really...Like I say only few of us survived that...a few of the families stayed and the rest don't want anything to deal with that.

Members who have been successful in obtaining good educational qualifications question the wisdom of their parents and elders in forcing them to accept the notion of western christianity so wholeheartedly. They view the Church as part of the colonisation process and challenge accepted notions of christianity, expressing radical and political views about the relationship between parental *fa'aSamoa* and western christianity.

I'm thinking in terms of colonisation...in terms of the effects that the West had on our people, because I got to think about and learn about that at a young age. A lot of my questioning came from...being quite critical about christianity.

The pattern which emerges is that because of intra-ethnic and generational conflict, many young people 'leave' the Church. Yet despite this, many who do leave Newton (usually during late teens) invariably return to the Church, usually when they start having their own families. They express it as "returning home", returning to their "roots", reclaiming their Samoan identity and the desire for their children to be exposed to Newton

Church life. The ESG provides a home or base for these returning members.

I've been involved with Church ever since I was young...Sunday school, bible class, chairperson of bible class for a little while, Secretary for a little while....there was a gap and for a few years you just came on Sunday and went home and that was it.... Then you get to that age when you have a social life, and waking up on Sundays is a bit much. Yea, you have this gap where you have a life on Sundays and Saturday nights, and then you start looking around and think, What is there? and then you have children...and you think, I should give them the same opportunity. 'cause you look around and see so many different things and so many kids going off the rails, and then you start coming back to Church again, start bringing them through.

In this section I have explored through their narratives members' experiences and perspectives of intra-ethnic and inter-generational conflict in the context of Newton Church. This conflict impacts on members self-perception of their identity as good church-going Samoan children. Intra-ethnic conflict involves members being treated by their parents, leaders and island-born elders as too young or *fiapālagi* that are countered by members perceiving themselves as skilled, professional, having the expertise, and "waiting in the wings" to carry the Church into the future. Also, inter-generational tensions concerning leadership, competitiveness and compliance embedded in the older generation's ideas of the young serving the elders have been identified. Most members have experienced this conflict and have dealt with it in some form or other: some members comply and become leaders, others leave the church and have time out periods, others merely float in and out. Undoubtedly though for all members, the most pervasive arena of conflict and the one that impacts most markedly on their identity confusion relates to the question of the dialectical relationship between parental, NZ-born and secured *fa'aSamoa* and church, or culture versus christianity.

3

"FA'ASAMOA...REEKS OF CHRISTIANITY": CULTURE v. CHRISTIANITY

This section examines the tension between culture and christianity that pervades

members' narratives in their exploration of how these relate to Newton Church and parental, NZ-born and secured *fa'aSamoa*, and the effect of this tension on their lives and self-identities. The material and the issues they represent are divided into three sub-sections. The first is an exploration of the notions of culture: the parental *fa'aSamoa* which pervades Newton Church, the historical development of Newton as the pioneering "mother-Church", the Samoan village analogy--and changes in parental *fa'aSamoa* promulgated by Newton Church, the exaggerated size and scope of gift-giving by the Church, and Newton's "think big" policies. The second is members' understandings of the notions of christianity: the perceived tensions in being a traditional, as opposed to a born-again, christian entails the perceived notion of a "Newton christian". Finally, the conflict inherent in understandings of the dialectical relationship between culture and christianity will be examined. My conclusions focus on the transformation of a *coconut theology* as merely the "substitution of communion wine and bread with coconut milk and taro" (Duncan 1990), to the theology of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* that is practised at Newton Church in terms of a *winner mentality* and a Newton *fa'aSamoa* which conclusively establishes Newton Church as a site of decolonised christianity. This new understanding of a *coconut theology* represents a further transformation of the Samoanised version of christianity practised in Samoa, a christianity which has transcended its colonial imposition.

The tensions which the dichotomy between culture and christianity make explicit become an issue for members when they become disenchanted or unhappy with the Church. Their reactions to this conflict are to either reject Church altogether, to become critical of the Church, or to move further away from the Church because they are unable to culturally voice this criticism. However, through adopting various coping mechanisms, in particular the winner mentality and theology of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*, members find that they can achieve even within this system.

Although the make-up of the ESG presupposes certain trajectories--all have now returned to church, all are committed to the ESG and church community, and most have attained a secured identity--their experiences of their own individual identity journeys which reveal numerous time out periods during which they have opted out of church and the *fa'aSamoa* for diverse reasons allow us to understand the context of their 'leaving', their experiences while they were "out there", "in limbo", and thus insight as to the reasons

behind their incorporation back into the church and the *fa'aSamoa*, and the socio-cultural cohesion the church offers NZ-borns during their identity journeys.

Culture/*Fa'aSamoa* in the context of Newton Church.

There is strong affirmation among members of the uniqueness of Newton Church. In Chapter Three, I described how Newton was the first Pacific Island ethnic church to be established in New Zealand, the mother-church to some thirty odd PIC branches that exist today, and the largest Presbyterian church in New Zealand. When asked what other factors make Newton so unique, members noted the strong influences and intensity of parental *fa'aSamoa*, referring to Newton *fa'aSamoa* or a "Newton identity". When asked to explain what this meant older members spoke of *'āga*, kinship and familial ties of the Church community, and made comparisons with parental *fa'aSamoa* in Samoa and elsewhere. They talked about Newton as being their *malae*, their home and village, and that the people of the *ekālēsia* are their family—views which are in line with existing scholarly descriptions of the "Samoan church as village" concept prevalent in the 1970s and '80s which emphasised the structural adaptation of *fa'aSamoa* to New Zealand conditions (Pitt & Macpherson 1974). Also prevalent is the notion that Newton does things in a very *fa'aSamoa* way especially in the context of *fa'aulufalega*.

Our Church is very unique and at every meeting I try to remind the people here how unique we are at Edinburgh St, because I don't think there is any other Parish in New Zealand or the world that are worshipping together, singing together, eating together, joking together, crying together....Instead of people saying I'm a Cook Islander, I'm a Samoan, I'm a Niuean, or NZ-born, I try to change their thinking by saying we are a family here....And I love this church, because I take it as my security, my family, my wider, bigger family. That's my understanding of the church and I love the people that come here, regardless of who they are. I remember, and bear in mind all the time that we all make mistakes and there again the word family comes in...your family, my family, your child makes a mistake you tell him off and you love him at the same time, that's why you do it, that's why you tell him off. Anybody you don't love you just turn your head and say it's not my responsibility, he's old enough to think for himself. That's why I'm really very, very serious about this church, to think of it as a family, our family, brothers, sisters, younger ones, my children, older ones, my parents...

We [Newton] sing at openings of churches...at *fa'aufalega*. And...we have a *matai* to address the people at the opening of the church when we take our gifts...fine mats....Because the invitation is actually solely to the Samoan part of the church, the *pāsiva*...the *pōpese*...and so it's a Samoan thing, 'cause the church is predominantly Samoan....

...in Wellington, the PIC ministers were far too conservative...in terms of the *pālāgi* way of thinking. [They] never allowed much of the *fa'aSamoa*. It was only Newton who allowed the mats and everything else. I don't know what [...] was trying to achieve. It's [the *fa'aSamoa*'s] the thing that makes people think they're at home, and that's important in the Church, that people feel at home.

One member describes the attraction of Newton *fa'aSamoa* as a kind of "filled up calendar of social events". This member becomes energised as he describes the excitement of meeting new people and groups and is enthused by the particular brand of parental *fa'aSamoa* practised at Newton. He speaks of the sense that there is always something happening, and unlike the mundane "day-to-day" and "week-to-week" strict schedule of a professional occupation, and other *pālāgi* churches, Newton *fa'aSamoa* offers the welcome change of a schedule which runs from event to event, and an experience which is full of people and life.

I think there's an attraction with the PIC, there is always a sense there is something happening. In Newton week after week there is always something on and I guess it appeals to something in our nature where we tend to be....My calendar is next week we're going to be having this specific occasion, next week there is a wedding, you just move from one event to another and you can't operate that way in an organisation like this [work-place], but I think it's an attraction to our community. They always know that there is something happening.

Newton is thought of as the pioneering leader of all PICs, their parents and grandparents as the pioneers of Pacific Island migration to New Zealand in the 1950s, the Rev. Challis and the Rev. Sio as pioneers in establishing the first Pacific Islanders' Church in New Zealand. Also notions of "we're the eldest" abound. Given the cultural significance of primogeniture in the *fa'aSamoa*, this is no minor boast. In fact many older members maintain that the development of the Samoan community in Auckland was based on PIC culture. The pioneering aspect flows through to also changing aspects of Samoan language

and culture.

It's unique in the sense that we were the people that started the Church. We are the pioneers of the Pacific migration here, so that is one thing. We were the first-born of our Pacific groups here, by pioneers in the 1940s, so we are the cornerstones that they set. The basis of our culture, this is PIC culture, set the tone for the rest of the community....The worshipping, and the way that the other churches that were born from us structure their birth was based on what PIC culture started. So I think that's the uniqueness of it, and a lot of development and modification of *fa'aSamoa mo Samoa*, was done by us, so that's important. Because we were the only ones courageous enough to do it. We're the eldest!

Some members speak of how Samoan language and customs have been changed or developed by Newton Church, especially the *aofa'alupega*.

...like the way that we do our oration for instance....*Aofa'alupega* was developed by PIC culture, so that's the beauty of what we've done. It became another institution that was very important in developing Samoan language for instance...and the Samoan culture, because Albert [Wendt] did a TV show *Fa'asamoa* in Auckland in 1984-5....he touches on the problem very well, and the style of worshipping that the *lotu Samoa* has was based on the way the PIC does things. So it's the PIC culture. It was actually in the '80s.

Now the wording *aofa'alupega* is also being used in Samoan terminology, which is based on God being used in the orations in Samoa, by our orators. So it's a two-way exchange, and in particular, it's a power thing where someone comes with something new...and then our orators will copy it. So the uniqueness of the PIC Newton is that we were the developers of PIC culture....

Younger members also speak of Newton as "the protector of culture", or "guardian of the *fa'aSamoa*". This reveals a more conservative perspective of the village analogy—that Newton has become the guardian of parental *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand. They also point out that this aspect seems to have taken precedence over other aspects, that a balance has not been attained by leaders of the Church and that *pālagi* churches are aware of the cultural bent of churches such as the PIC. These members while cognisant of the fact that PIC leaders are "out there" fighting for and justifying the Church's existence, hope that in this context more internal dialogue will occur with youth and grass-roots levels of the community.

We've not only become defenders of the culture but we also have to start going through our own cultures to see what we need and what we don't need, so that we're not disadvantaging the next generation with cultural baggage that's not appropriate for their journey into the future.

The most radical change instigated by Newton which all members touched on, some in the context of the corrupt aspects of NZ-born *fa'aSamoa*, others in the context of Newton as innovators of culture, is the practice of "gift-giving" to the minister. Past practice in Samoa was that one privately gave one's gift (money, food, *'ie toga*, other gifts) to the minister *after* a ritual event, e.g., weddings, funerals, and other *fa'alavelave*. In the Newton Church members claim that this practice has changed. Moreover, this new practice has been "picked up", "copied" and used in Samoa today.

In actual fact, our customs that we have developed here, are now being used in Samoa, for instance, when you present things in old Samoa, to the ministers, you don't put it up front, you take it to their houses in Samoa. But Auckland developed this thing...when you present the ministers, say mats, you take it across so that everybody can see. Now that's being done in Samoa now! Right now...and they used to laugh at that here and say this is *fa'aSamoa*. I have a very short answer for that. No, that's your *fa'aSamoa* in Samoa. We have no villages here. Our village is our church, our church is our village. And we've attained the salutations of the *matai* [*fa'alupega*] of the *fai'fe'au*, so that he has become the paramount chief of that parish. So PIC Newton is our village, and our Paramount chief is the *fai'fe'au*, and perfectly valid by me, because we're not in Faleasiu, we're not in Falelatai, we are in Auckland.

The last passage is from an older male member who is a *matai*. *Matai* are only too cognisant of the fact that Newton *fa'aSamoa* impacts directly on expectations of how they are to behave, how much they are to contribute, and what their ministers expect to receive from them and their *'āga* during not only personal *fa'alavelave* but also Newton *fa'alavelave*.

Following on from this, another aspect of Newton *fa'aSamoa* which members talk about consistently is the influence (and non-influence) that material factors have on giving. That is to say, the financial aspect--what to give, how much to give, when to give, how to give--is a major feature of Newton *fa'aSamoa*. In this regard members speak of the excessive "think big" nature of Newton's gift-giving policies. The two areas in which

major change has occurred is firstly the size of the monetary gift, and secondly, the practice of announcing up front the size and extent of the gift. Members speak of the disdain of *tulāfale* from Samoa when they attend some of the *fa'alavelave* occasions at Newton. At first their reaction is to regard it as "not real *fa'aSamoa*". However I would point out that the size of the gift is relative and that the difference is one of scale. That is, in Samoa it is accepted that monetary gifts are small in comparison--in New Zealand it would be unthinkable to give the same small monetary gift. In this way members state that Newton *fa'aSamoa* has gradually changed attitudes in Samoa--"*tulāfale* soon stop complaining when they see how much we are going to give them!". This "think big" policy is regarded by members on the one hand as one of Newton's main strengths, on the other one of Newton's downfalls.

There's no big difference between the two. I mean what you did in Samoa is exactly what you do here. The only difference here is that you think BIG here because you are in New Zealand. In Samoa if you go to a *fa'alavelave*, well ten dollars is plenty and a couple of fine mats. But here [if] you go with ten dollars they don't say to your face but they think, Has he got any brains? And that's the only difference....But otherwise no difference at all....Newton helps to maintain *fa'aSamoa*, in a big way. Our church here is our home and our village and our *malae* and our extended family. I think New Zealand *fa'aSamoa* is the strongest. One of the things that stand out is that we help whether we know the church [is] coming to us for help or not. The real *fa'aSamoa* is if a stranger calls you feed him, and that's what our church here does....We never say no. I think it's because we think unitedly. I think that's our main strength.

The orators from Samoa used to come and be very cynical about how we do things here...the way that we structure our *fa'atau*, and the way that we structure our *lauga*...but I remember saying, Well, if you're persisting on doing it *fa'aSamoa* from Samoa, we'll give you a *lafo* of two *talā*...you know the two *talā* from Samoa...Oh No, no no you guys do it...because he wants the *lafo* of \$200. So you know this is one of the developments, this financial thing, and suddenly they have to accept the way we do things here.

Fundraising has also in some opinions become excessive in line with Newton's "think big" policies. Members speak about Newton's power--"always contributing the most", having to "uphold this status image". Some complain that the reciprocity from daughter churches is never of equal value. That is to say, Newton's gift is so large that recipient daughter churches, who are younger, newer and smaller, cannot hope to match

the mother-church's contribution. Nevertheless these members recognise that the onus is on Newton as mother-church to maintain this power because not only is it christian to think this way, but also very Samoan.

I mean look at the power that PIC Newton has as an institution. It's fantastic! We were the original PIC and trying to uphold this status image is a most difficult one. You see when we had the new fundraising of our campsite. There was an expectation that all our other churches that we send out were going to come back with monies, and then we don't have to fundraise ourselves. Aaah...well you know the biggest gift that was brought in was \$3,000. And then when we go out there [to that same 'daughter' church], we take \$30,000. Why? Because it's expected of us...to uphold that status of the mother-church. And we say, you know, all these churches that we give those gifts to...that's the way it is, that's the protocol. And we, if we still maintain and enjoy being their mother, then we should maintain the \$30,000 that we give out to their church....Christian views are also Samoan views, and when you give \$30,000, you give it because you are christian, and also because you are a Samoan.

There are many critics of Newton's "think big" policy, among them members who are annoyed, disapproving and critical of the excessive concern with status. They claim that it is merely "showing off", and that Church leaders are oblivious to the reality that people cannot afford the excessive demands for monetary donations. In most cases members report that it is not a donation that is asked for but a stipulated or set amount per person/family. The need to be seen and recorded as contributing by each member and family places a lot of financial stress and hardship on persons and families, resulting in conflict directly associated with leaving the Church and rejection of parental *fa'aSamoa* for NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* or no *fa'aSamoa* at all. A related matter is the perpetual Church *fa'alavelave*. Members talk about having to give not only for their personal *'āiga fa'alavelave*, but for Church *fa'alavelave* also. The latter includes individual Church member *fa'alavelave* as well as Church group fundraising events and ceremonial occasions. In addition, there are continuous demands by villages in Samoa for financial assistance for schools, churches etc., other requests are forthcoming from EFKS churches and other PIC daughter churches.

It's been said that *fa'aSamoa* is worse in New Zealand than in Samoa....Well what they say is that we do it in far greater depth. What we do here, let's face it...If anyone in Samoa wants something...to raise money...the first thing is PIC Newton,

that's the first thing. And then they send a letter to Leua [Rev. Sio] etcetera. That's the first that we hear. All of us bitch about it 'cause we know why they're coming over. They're coming to drain us....

For some members the real *fa'aSamoa* is in Samoa and Newton *fa'aSamoa* is therefore a corrupted or adjusted version of it.

I think they've adjusted it to New Zealand lifestyle to suit their own needs. That is, there's a Newton *fa'aSamoa*. The real *fa'aSamoa* is still back in Samoa, not here at Newton PIC....And I ask somebody, Oh is that how you do it? And I might have seen something in Samoa, and I'd say I thought it was done like this...and they'd say it's just done this way to suit our own thing.

There have been comments that the *fa'aSamoa* here is even much stronger than it is in Samoa. In some degrees it is but we've gone to some extremes I guess. I've been living in Samoa for four years and some of the things we're committed to in the Church would never be tolerated in Samoa and they pass it off here as being the culture of Samoa....I think a lot of the criticism basically with our church is that they have invited too many groups to come over to do their fundraising here, being the cultural thing to do....That's okay I don't have a problem with that but I think what it has done for us is that we really have neglected our own particular parish, it's okay raising thousands of dollars for another church in Samoa or elsewhere, but there are a lot of young people who can't raise enough money for [upgrading] church facilities....

An apt story is provided by one member who describes an *'āga* wedding in Samoa. The wedding occurred just after Samoa's second cyclone. What is interesting is that the *'āga* in Samoa--the wife's *'āga*, wanted to think big and invited all the high *matai*, etc. To finance the wedding the groom's side--his New Zealand-based *'āga*--was to pay for half the costs and the wife's side whose father was regarded as wealthy was to pay for the rest. What actually happened was that the groom's New Zealand-based *'āga* ended up paying for the whole wedding. This anecdote is notable for the fact that Samoa had just undergone its second cyclone disaster and Samoa was in a state of poverty. Yet, the wife's *'āga* considered this irrelevant and proceeded with a big wedding. Inherently then the *fa'aSamoa* through *matai* (and the church for that matter) demands that material factors be ignored in the drive to think big, to show off. In the event, the poorer groom's New Zealand-based *'āga* fronted up with the funds to save face, to keep their *mana* intact for the groom's

'āga's sake. This is exactly the same scenario that is played out in Newton *fa'aSamoa*-- material factors such as the person's/ 'āga's ability to come up with the required amount is secondary to the overpowering "think big" reputation and policy of Newton church. Amounts that people are required to give are set regardless of whether church members are part of large families, a solo parent, a National Superannuitant or unemployed. Needless to say regardless of their financial status church members do manage to come up with the required sum through 'āga coming together and pooling their financial resources, and also through other interventionist strategies such as *mafutaga* (discussed previously). However these continual demands become the battleground for dissent, disharmony, conflict and change.

It's not so much the pressure to give because you know it's your responsibility. I've noticed here the intensity to give beyond what you're capable of giving, it's incredible, some people go way out on a limb...whereas in Samoa people realise you don't have a lot to give but you give anyway what you have but not...there's not the same pressure, the same intensity as over here.

The intensity of Newton *fa'aSamoa* in comparisons with *fa'aSamoa* in Samoa and elsewhere is seen positively by some, negatively by others. However most members are aware that *fa'aSamoa* in Samoa and Newton *fa'aSamoa* is a two-way process. Many speak of Newton *fa'aSamoa* as stronger, and that the Samoans in the States and Australia are relatively "fobby". Although they are at a loss to explain this strength and "less fobbiness" of Newton *fa'aSamoa*, they need to assess the historical, material and social factors of Samoan migrant communities in these places. In the case of the Samoan migrant community in New Zealand, my research shows that it was in the 1950s-60s that this community was making its presence felt and that despite a large influx of Samoan migrants in the 1970's, Newton *fa'aSamoa* has been going on for fifty years.

I think it's [the *fa'aSamoa* has] really evolved here. I think it's beyond what they [Samoans in Samoa] imagine it. Yea, I think the New Zealand *fa'aSamoa* is amazing. When I went to the States...what you notice with the communities over there is that they're real FOBBY! And that's what the Australian ones are like too. Even the ones that have emigrated from New Zealand. I don't know about Hawai'i, but there's something about the *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand that is so strong....

Sometimes I think some of the practices here really piss me off 'cause I think that's really not what was envisaged by the *fa'aSamoa*.

Over and over again, the difference between Newton or Auckland *fa'aSamoa* and *fa'aSamoa* in other countries and denominations, including the EFKS, is emphasised and speculated about. One member flippantly observes that Samoans, "the original Polynesian nomads [have] populated...and missionised most of Polynesia...in the flying waka", which delineates the growth and spread of Samoan 'āga networks covering vast expanses of the globe.

I'd say Hawai'i and the States are more the real *fa'aSamoa* than New Zealand is. Well I don't know about New Zealand but Newton perhaps. Even the *fa'aSamoa* at these *lotu Samoa* that I've been working. The same things that happen here...and I'd been thinking....We just seem to tailormake everything to suit our own needs. People in Samoa are adopting some of the Newton *fa'aSamoa*. Even these things like family services. We don't have those in Samoa.

A younger member who has not yet been to the USA, describes his surprise at watching an American documentary during a recent Film Festival screening in Auckland of "My Krazy Life" (1995), a film which follows the life of a Samoan gang in Los Angeles. He is shocked by the extent to which he felt Samoan members of the gang had lost their language, their mother tongue and their culture. For many NZ-borns, experiences such as these are the only opportunities they have to stand back and objectively assess their own identities, understandings of a Samoan identity and parental *fa'aSamoa*.

No, I didn't realise they'd lost their culture. Well not as much... 'cause living here, you think that in any country, 'cause of my ideology of the church being the substitute for the village. I thought the same process would be there but maybe there is no church. But that they'd still be as a community....I thought they'd have the village system. So it really blew me away.

Christianity: What is a 'good christian'?

For members with secured identities the dilemma of culture versus christianity is resolved because they have learned to balance what they perceive as being a good christian

with what they perceive as being a good Samoan. Other members who are at various stages along their identity journey are at either extreme position or somewhere in-between. Notions of what it is to be a christian range from various "traditional" perspectives, where one is baptised as an infant and brought up in the Church and thoroughly socialised as a Samoan christian, to the other extreme of being "born-again". Therefore all members are placed at various points depicting their "walk with the Lord" and their christian lifestyles.

I've always considered myself to be a christian, I think like in this day and age there's a lot of reformed christians, and they have a different outlook as to what a christian is, and that if you're not reborn, you're not a christian. And I always argue against that point...I believe that when I was christened into the church...that's when I became a christian...or when I had an understanding of what was going on and an understanding of God.

For me it's living a life-style. I mean I'm still going through the motions of trying [to] still sort of sort it out again about my identity...who I am, and what is a christian life-style....so for me, now, I'm realising that it's to live a life-style that is in the Word, that is in the bible. It needs to be a real challenge and that's so far where I'm at, at the moment.

Members who characterise themselves as "born-again christians" often refer to this state as a charismatic phenomenon. Most of their narratives dwell on the desire to be a good christian, or an effective christian. Two themes are expressed in this regard: the born-again experience, and a gradual spiritual awakening. The first takes the form of an actual spiritual experience when some members have "spoken with God", or have been "touched by the hand of God". These members can usually pinpoint the actual time and place when this transformation of the traditional notion of being christian took place.

I always thought I was christian, but thinking and being are two different things. I went to a rally when I was about fifteen. That's when I first received Jesus. I didn't have any great understanding, or feeling, or Holy Spirit. The rally was Youth for Christ at the Town Hall. That was my first born-again experience.

I was born again in 1985. I was at a camp....I went to this camp and I knew I was bad, I mean I used to swear and beat up people and do a bit of drinking here and there, and things like that. But I was very sick. I got what they call *mai Samoa*, and that's really high in my family, from my grandmother to my aunty and my uncle....But we were playing bull rush and I just fell, and I didn't know where I

was. They said that I had an attack then, and I was talking and saying that I was my grandmother. And they did deliverance on me....And they just said, Look, it's a lie...it's not your grandmother...and the only way to break it is to accept Jesus Christ into your life...blablabla...and so I did. And I've got to tell you...from that day onwards I've never had an attack.

I consider myself a born-again Christian. When I was twelve I did commit my life. Just everything led up to that commitment. I think just all the teaching that I had from Nursery to Primary to Junior to Intermediate. I think it just equipped me, helped me build up a lot of knowledge. I knew more about God and was taught more and more about him, so that's also a realisation that okay, Jesus did come and die for me. I am part of God's master plan for salvation. That was the realisation...that, I realise that I'm a sinner and that Jesus came so I could have a relationship with God that is personal and intimate.

The second is the notion of being born-again as a result of not a specific event or experience, but a gradual process of acquiring a different awareness as to what christianity really means for that individual. All members express that their lives changed on becoming more spiritually aware.

I wasn't a real christian till I was eighteen. I had left school and was at Tech, and at the end of the year I just realised. It was just an awareness I think. Just because you come to Church doesn't make you a christian....I have to really say how thankful I am 'cause we've had a lot of teaching through here...people who have come in and taught us some really good things. So I've grown up with a lot of good teaching. We were spiritually fed a lot, so I can't say that it has been lacking. It has been good. I think becoming born-again it's a spiritual awareness.

Traditional christians are critical of born-again claiming that charismatic dogma is transient, too extreme, "like an overnight romance with God", and are critical of born-again's total commitment, accusing them of being too emotive, "going totally off the rails" if caught off guard, or if something goes wrong. Moreover the charismatic phenomena is regarded as being too personal a faith resulting in born-again's isolating themselves from their parents, 'āiga and the rest of the Church community, aptly described by one traditional christian as like "living in a great bubble". Some members, however, view charismatic dogma as a release valve for teenagers experiencing identity confusion.

It became a far more personal kind of faith. It wasn't just pray for somebody to get

well, it was put your hands on them, and pray for them, and ring them up and try and find out exactly...Let's pray at a certain time of the day for them...that kind of thing...[....] and I had a pact that every Wednesday we'd fast between 9-12, at University, until I caught him in the Cafeteria, eating a meat pie, and I was drinking a milk shake...you were allowed to drink....But that brought christianity right down to a different level...and there was certainly a charismatic influence in the whole bible class movement. I went to my first bible class camp through that, and there were real powerful speakers, and dozens of kids making a commitment. And then we came back and it was easier to witness here in the church...you know....Admittedly, a lot of them fell off as well...young people. They had made a commitment. It was like living in a big bubble...like living in a great big bubble..and you came back and faced reality, and the bubble burst, and guys started falling off. One guy used to borrow money from people and never pay them back. He still owes me money. And there were others. And he was one of the ones who made a *big* commitment...got in the pulpit...get up and cry and weep and real emotional stuff. It's quite a cathartic experience...facing some kind of crisis...the crisis of just being a teenager...and that was like a release....Like I can say that now...but at the time it was a real avenue of release kind of thing.

Because the born-again or charismatic faction of the Church was introduced to Newton by *pālāgi* bible class leaders and because of the emphasis on isolation and individual salvation, implicit in the criticisms are notions that the born-again faction represented *pālāgi* interests and desires and were therefore not to be taken seriously by ministers, leaders and traditional parishioners of Newton Church.

Counter themes are provided by born-againists who criticise traditional christians as being "Sunday christians", not genuine christians. Although there is no overt antagonism, implicit in these criticisms is the reasoning of born-againists that their parents and island-born elders, with their adherence to notions of traditional christianity and their persistence in parental and NZ-born *fa'aSamoa*, are in fact non-christians. This stand exacerbates intra-ethnic and inter-generational conflict and barriers to understanding.

This confusion in their christian identities and cultural identities is evidenced by members' accounts of their fluctuation--"being on the track and off the track"--between both positions. Members who have secured identities see this fluctuation as a gradual process and view their understanding of this process as a balancing act achievable with maturity and a lot of understanding. Moreover they realise that if it were not for their parents giving them these options in terms of bringing them up in the Church, that they would not be this far along in their understanding of a Samoanised christianity.

Back in 1971 I received a born-again type of experience and my life changed radically from then. But upon reflection, I see that really is part of the process....So I think from the day I was born it has been a process of that journey so I can point to 1971 as being the time I came to the realisation about some things about God that I think have been part of the process from the time we are born. We are born in the environment of our families that encourages christian lives so even though 1971 is a significant time for me it was just a milestone for me in my christian journey which is still continuing. I'm still growing, I haven't got there yet.

A few members expressed idiosyncratic concerns about their own faith position, seeing themselves as a "believer in God" but not in the context of a christianity or a religion.

There's a lot of ways of being called a christian. I don't see myself as a christian. I could be born-again but, as long as I believe in God...shucks...That's all I can say....I believe in God, but this christian stuff...I don't understand it....

This type of uncertainty has also caused members to leave and have time out periods. Often it has been those members who are born-again who have focused on spiritual aspects only, and who are discontented with the cultural aspects of Newton Church and have sought more "spiritual feeding" from *pālagi* charismatic churches. Some members describe this as "experimenting" and call it "*osooso*" (jumping backwards and forwards, i.e., to other church(es) and back to Newton), explaining that people do this because they find the sermons boring, not challenging enough, and not relevant to their current lifestyles.

Well, when we're talking about the youth, I know for sure they're not going to other churches. They just abandon church altogether. But a lot of our young people leave because they don't feel that they're spiritually fed here. A lot of them go to the Elim church which is just down the road, cause that's where they feel they are spiritually fed, and I think that's what we lack in our ministering here is that the ministers don't feed our people the Word of God....they don't give lessons, sermons that are based in spirituality. They're just normal. Well, yeah the ones you heard forty years ago. They've just changed the words and the year.

I think it's basically some individuals looking for something spiritual but they don't quite know what. Probably they're not getting it at church...at PIC Newton, so they

try elsewhere....But then you find always that they always come back...so I've noticed anyway. They drift away, and eventually they come back.

For others the contradiction they see in their born-again bible class leaders and teachers trying to be perfect christians to the detriment of any other influence is damaging; they become floating members--"on the outside looking in"--"waiting on the fringes" and getting older.

A lot of the ones I know don't belong to the Church, don't belong 'cause they don't get satisfaction for a start, in terms of spiritual feeding, and in terms of being part of a group that's doing something important. They're on the outside of that group....

I haven't come back. I've been wanting to come back and sit in in bible class to see where these young people are at. But I don't know I just sit back, don't want to get too involved....I know there's a lot of young people who have left the church. I see them because my social life is that I do go out. I see them out there, I see them in the clubs, pubs, and some of them really out of it....That there's a gap that needs to be filled in and that is young people who feel that they've passed the bible class age group, who are not willing to be teachers, Sunday school teachers and that...that gap hasn't been filled....

For some the conflict caused by this new emphasis of the born-again christians and their charismatic bent proved too much. What the charismatic influence brought to Newton Church was a generation of bible class leaders who had unrealistic expectations of many young people. One had to be born-again to be a true christian, and they were very critical of those who had not been born-again, especially traditional Christians or Sunday Christians. These charismatics attacked those who did not share this extreme example of the competitive spirit already present at Newton. The cultural activities of Newton Church were not encouraged and tension arose between the *'autalavou* and bible class in the 1980s. This friction manifested itself in tension between the island-born element and NZ-borns. Indeed many NZ-borns left Newton or left bible class and joined *'autalavou*. For some members the charismatic influence and their born again experiences motivated them to join other mainstream charismatic movements (e.g., Youth for Christ) and missionise in other places. So that in the 1980s many young people had indeed left the Church for these and

other reasons.

Members' perceptions of christianity are further clarified when asked to explain their thoughts about what constitutes a "Newton christian". Undoubtedly their responses were notable for a shift away from notions of individual, general understandings of christianity to an emphasis on "cultural" aspects of the *fa'aSamoa* as practised by the Samoans of Newton Church community: the family or *'āga*, notions of giving and serving which I have presented as unconscious *fa'aSamoa* underpinnings of *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo* and *alofa*. The notion that Newton Church provides for them their roots, thus framing their understanding of christianity in cultural terms raises their consciousness to another level. Also the notion of ones "space always being left vacant" surfaces often in their responses. The theme of *'āga*, that the Newton Church community is like a big family is central and provides members with their own place, a sense of belonging, a second home, a secure environment, a sense of well-being and a secure self-identity.

I think for me, it's just being a good witness of some sort of the christian faith in my life. I think there's more of a christian family tie, and like we're brought up like families...you know...family groupings. Church is more like a family, as opposed to an organisation. You know everybody and everybody's family and everybody's aunty and uncle. And also you get into the manner of how they do it at PIC. Everyone works in a certain way at PIC.

To have Jesus all your life, I think there's a sense of belonging here. Being here for such a long time is like you really want to be doing something to give....You want to pass things that you've learnt on. It's just...family really isn't it? *'āga*. There's a real neat love here, supportive of one another. It's like being in a secure environment, like home.

Often members express how they "really love to serve people in this church...", that being part of the Church and *ekālēsia* has taught them to be committed to their faith and family in the Church. These members realise that there are unanswered questions and "things they don't understand", described by one member as "grey areas", however they see the overriding focus as the family of the Church, and are committed to keeping the family together. They see their positions as leaders and teachers as opportunities to relate this commitment to younger children and their own children often couched in terms of *alofa*.

You know *alofa* is very important and I look at it as the basis of my own christianity, and you tend to go out on a limb for a lot of people, for our people particularly, because of our standing in the community. So you become not only a [professional occupation] in my own right...you become an immigration officer, an expert, a social worker, you become a lot of...health experts and a lot of things....And you give of your time, you give of your money...a lot of things. And there's not many graduates in our community, so you become a resource person for a lot of people. And you do it...Why?...Because of this *alofa* thing. I think I can say validly it's very strong.

...to me it's *ekālēsia*...things like that, so you've got to be committed to what you've found, and for me its being a bible class leader as well as a Director, so that means coming every Sunday, being committed to my class, praying for each child in my class. That's what I believe...it's being committed to PIC. Also being faithful in going to Church even though sometimes it's boring and I can't understand it....But to go....And also just serving...I really love to serve people in this Church.

Perhaps the most significant perception of what it means to be a Newton christian is encapsulated in the statement by one member, "I feel proud that I went to PIC, 'cause if I didn't I wouldn't feel so proud about being Samoan." This is an example of the direct correlation of Newton Church with a Samoan identity for some members, and a declaration that Newton Church represents for them their roots and a firm foundation from which to consider, work out and negotiate their identity.

I feel so proud about where I come from...spiritually and...physically. I just can't imagine myself anywhere else. Even though I see myself as a charismatic christian, I wouldn't ever consider leaving and going to one of those *pālagi* charismatic churches, or even charismatic Samoan churches. There's something more at PIC...I mean where PIC came from...it was the very first wave of PIs that came to New Zealand. That's important, because you need to know where you came from in order to know where you're going. It's the foundation, and without it you'd be adrift, foundationless...and you'd be in limbo. That's how I feel. You know...I just couldn't imagine myself anywhere else. Because it's a sense of belonging.

Reconciling being a christian with the strong cultural focus of obedience and discipline of Newton Church in terms of bible class leaders/teachers and parental *fa'aSamoan* aspects is still problematic with a few members.

I think it's very hard to be a christian in our Church today. In years gone by it was easier to practise being a christian and leading others to christianity, but I think now in the '90s, I believe that christianity has gone out the door with how people deal with issues within this Church, and that I think people base a lot of their decisions and ideas...on their own thinking, rather than praying about it. I just feel that decisions are made to better other people...to benefit from it, not as a Church. So to be a christian within PIC Newton now, is very hard.

I've had the experience of the holy spirit and God just gave me this real desire to come back and patch a few things up...and the desire to be in bible class...gave me this wider perception of Church as the body...everyone...*'autalavou*, bible class, Sunday school...I was just more or less limiting myself to certain things...so I came back and joined leadership in 1992.

Can culture be separated from christianity in the context of Newton Church?

I turn now to how members themselves perceive the relationship between *fa'aSamoa* and christianity. The older members talk about their understanding that in the pre-Christian era Samoan people already had strong spiritual belief systems, and that it was the attraction of what *papālagi* could offer in terms of more power--education and material goods, which made conversion attractive.

In our own Samoan villages...and our beliefs in the gods, our own gods and deities....See we were a god-fearing people...*before* a new God came in, Jehovah. When Jehovah came we were already attuned to worshipping someone or something, and Nafanua being a god in her own right predicted a lot of these things. So we were already...we were very easily christianised, and I think also that when the missionaries arrived, our people could see the power that could be attached to this religion. The power to be able to read and write...you know...the power...access to those....So we're no different from other people who were missionised in that...they could see that they can benefit from this new power coming from the outside...and they would grab it. The language itself has to adapt to the times, otherwise it will be like Latin - a dead language.

Well you see what we've got in Samoa is that we've Samoanised the church, christianity. Because when christianity arrived, we already had, in our own lives as Samoans, the basis of christian lives. I think one of the main things why we took to church very, very quickly...is that...what the church message was...is the way we structured our own society as a people...you know...this question of love [*alofa*]...is one of the cornerstones of most societies.

Other older members point out the power of the *matai* as being bestowed by God, and on the other hand the transformation of this power to ministers.

My understanding of *matai* is whatever *matai* does or says goes through God. That's where I see the link, if you're out for yourself you're most likely to fail. It's I think the God and *matai* thing.

In the *fa'aSamoa*, if you break it down, the church always comes first. That's my understanding of it. My understanding of Samoan culture is the church is always the first, the minister is always first, and it doesn't matter how many types of people or how powerful...when the church minister talks or says things, the respect for God through him is paramount.

Younger members, aware of the history of Newton Church and its struggle for existence in its earlier years, are more political in their views of this relationship. These members are critical of the colonising influence of christianity on Samoan people and perceive the need to reflect on this tenuous relationship as pertaining to the New Zealand context only—that island-born Samoans do not see this relationship as conflict because for them christianity is integral to parental *fa'aSamoa*. NZ-borns however are continually assessing the importance of either or both and are continuously challenged by them in their day-to-day challenges, struggles and experiences—their interactions with both their *'āiga*, elders, peers and *pālāgi*.

The idea that culture and christianity are inseparable, that they go hand in hand is repeated again and again. Most members through their experiences with *'āiga* and Church have found a place for both and all members seemed at ease with the seeming paradox that this relationship posed. Statements such as cultures are God-given, that christianity has a Pacific expression and a Samoan christian as opposed to a christian Samoan, are present in members' reflections and affirmations of the dynamic interaction between the *fa'aSamoa* and christianity. Members refer to this as a balancing act, being able to balance both, depending on the context.

It's hard living in New Zealand, being from Samoa, there are times when *fa'aSamoa* applies and sometimes it doesn't. There's a place for it but it doesn't mean you cut it off from the christian culture....You tie it in, there's a place for both.

I appreciate the fact that the church has been colonised...but I think that Samoan culture is so strong in the first place that it doesn't allow itself to be taken over, and secondly, the very way in which the missionaries went to Samoa and used the *matai* system unfortunately proved to be their downfall, in what they were trying to achieve, total assimilation...and I think that's why it's become totally enmeshed...and its not really separate.

These views are expressed by young and old alike as is an awareness of the conflict that can arise by unequal weight given to culture rather than christianity. The latter view is expressed usually in the context of the financial commitment of NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* inherent in *fa'alavelave*, and predominant in male perspectives.

I think *fa'aSamoa* and christianity can work. But it's the way that it's carried out where people can twist it....It can work 'cause what I've seen the end results have been pleasing to both sides...and a lot of peace can be created...sometimes people twist it, and can cause a lot of division and arguments. I suppose that's the way it's used.

I think it's an exchange of both. I can see that western ideas have really influenced the structure of the church, and it's the structure of the church that sometimes gives them away. All the rules and regulations...but Samoans have always found a way to get past those rules, and it's the freedom of being able to do that, that I think is good.

And the only qualms I have about the *fa'aSamoa* is that when a family is having to give money, and they know that they can't afford to give money, then it makes them in debt...and I think that's a foolish type of carrying out *fa'aSamoa*.

Those few members who felt that culture and christianity should be treated as separate entities talked about keeping indigenous and political issues separate in order to avoid the conflict and tension which may arise. They maintain that combining *fa'aSamoa* and christianity is a romantic, uncritical, and dangerous idea because claiming that they cannot be separated implies that you are a "bad christian", and implies that christianity is static and "cannot change". Rather, for these members, "culture gets in the way of your christian walk" and the relationship should be examined in particular historical, theological and cultural contexts to be truly understood. Only a few male members felt this way--one a New Zealand-trained minister, which explains the need to delineate these two aspects

clearly--most female members acknowledged their dynamic relationship and the interconnection with each other.

We had strong *fa'aSamoa* background with a strong christian one. Yes, I could...separate the two then you can really work at your indigenous issues, your political issues and then those issues don't become so clouded and hazy and often very tense...I find for me that that helps. It balances our debates, it's more specific when you're talking and doing exchanges that are challenging and open....It's very dangerous to say you can't separate the two because it means it then presupposes that God can't do anything to change it, or that we're so inflexible that we can't let the holy spirit move us.

I think that here in this Church they combine christianity with their culture and culture with their christianity. I think that Christianity should be on its own, 'cause it's something that's between you and God....It's for you and God and if you allow your culture to come into it, then you sidestep from what God is trying to show you, and then you bring in these things and say, Well look part of our culture allows us to do this and so maybe God will...you know....So I believe that culture shouldn't be together with our faith....

Culture v christianity: dichotomy or dynamic sphere of interaction?

"...it's the testing of a good stomach to be able to survive."

It's like taking the elements of a culture that's had a christian layer placed over the top of it. I compare it to eating, like there's a whole lot of things in front of you, and some things you'd digest better than others. And the things you don't digest, you won't be eating much of....And it has to swallow and chew it over and digest. Because...it's the testing of a good stomach to be able to survive.

When the perceived tension between culture and christianity was discussed by members of the ESG, it became apparent that there was no clear boundary separating one from the other. Moreover the culture versus christianity debate gradually transformed into discussions of parental, NZ-born and secured *fa'aSamoa* versus Church. This was interesting because, while it was logical to equate culture with the general concept of *fa'aSamoa* as a Samoan life-way, equating christianity with Newton Church seemed extremely problematic. This indicated to me that the boundary between *fa'aSamoa* and Church would be even more ambiguous. For most the two concepts were indistinguishable. Some pondered over being a Samoan christian, or a christian Samoan. Those who tried to

separate the two concluded that only at Newton could the two concepts become not so clearly defined. Most accounts indicated the relative ease with which both could be and should be reconciled. From some of the perceptions of the ESG, Newton Church truly provides the empirical evidence for the Samoanising of christianity, and represents a site of decolonised christianity. Members' notions of PIC church as village supports my observation that Newton is a site of decolonised christianity. New Zealand scholars (Pitt & Macpherson 1974) from sociological research carried out in the '70s aptly describes the PIC as taking on the functions of a Samoan village for many Samoan migrants. Indeed my own research shows that from the early fifties to the seventies Newton Church was indeed the spiritual, cultural and secular focus of most Samoan migrants, the parents and grandparents of the today's ESG members. Many of the secular functions of Newton (covered in Chapter Three) have now passed from ministers in the '60s and '70s, to the NZ-born generation in the '90s, who work in the wide range of bureaucratic agencies and Departments. The main function of the Church now is to meet the *cultural* needs of its community, and to a certain extent the spiritual function of Newton Church has become diluted. Indeed because of the overall pervasive dominance of the Samoan influence at most levels of Church organisation, the institutions and processes of Newton still mirror the workings of a Samoan village. And it is interesting to work this through.

Members definitely equate the ministers with *matai*; granting the senior minister, or *toea'ina* with the most powerful *matai ali'i* status. If the senior minister has the *ali'i* status then the *tulāfale* status is embodied by the deacons and elders of the various ethnic groups. Similarly the *faletua ma'ausi* (wives of *matai* and/or ministers) are represented by the Womens' fellowship groups, and form the backbone of the Church as mothers and grandmothers and informal leaders of the younger members of Newton. During regular monthly *fono*, the *matai* council or elders' combined Session meet--matters are discussed, disagreements are ironed out, and decisions are made by consensus decision-making. The other elements of the structure, however, are more problematic. The official '*aumāga* (young untitled men; strength of the village), who enforce the wishes of the *matai*, and the *auluma* (unmarried women of village) in this context combine to be represented by the '*autalavou* which is made up of both young and old, single and married '*āga members and families. Finally, (and here is where the dilemma arises for ESG elders and members) there*

are the children. The children of the village are represented by the Sunday school and bible class. However, in some contexts the ESG is still structurally regarded as one of 'the children' also, and this ambiguous position produces conflict for some ESG elders. What is interesting is the 'nesting' or 'wheel within a wheel' concept where we can attempt another village analogy with the 'children' faction of Newton church--the Sunday school, bible class and ESG--and the concept of "spiritual feeding". While the *matai ali'i* remains the same, the 'unofficial' *'aumāga* is most certainly those involved in the charismatic, born-again influence within the bible class. These people control the youth element of Newton, and can be likened to disciplinarians or gate-keepers who sort out who can belong to the Church/village. This dual, nesting, hierarchical framework continues to undermine the position of NZ-borns within the Church.

In making this analogy the cultural/secular has become the spiritual and the spiritual has become the cultural/secular. What is certain is that lines of demarcation are not at all clearly defined. Nonetheless I have endeavoured to show why this is so. Newton Church is not a typical New Zealand Presbyterian church, but neither is it an indigenous model transplanted in New Zealand as many perceive the EFKS to be.

It is obvious from the narratives and discussions in this chapter and in previous chapters that because parental *fa'aSamoa* is based on *'āiga*, and associated concepts of *alofa*, *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo* and *feagaiga*, perhaps more than any other non-western culture the indigenising process of western christianity has seemed such a 'natural' progression for Samoans, and a perceived wholehearted 'conversion'. For as in the *fa'aSamoa*, principles of *'āiga*, *matai* and *fa'alupega* systems bolstered by associated concepts of *alofa*, *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo* and *feagaiga* directly correlates with christian principles of love, strict adherence to rules governing behaviour (bible), humility and serving others, and the emphasis on fostering family relationships. The Samoanising of christianity has come full circle to such an extent that boundaries of culture and christianity, *fa'aSamoa* and church are indistinguishable--no longer a perceived dichotomy, but a sphere of mutual dynamic interaction.

What is also coming through too is the diversity, when you talk about Pacific theology, that's at its broadest level and I think we need to look at the boundaries and they also indicate very specific cultural theology. So Samoa has got a theology

that has also got its roots terminally going outward and so therefore they...have different roots. So I would have thought my NZ-born roots have developed a theology connected back to that Samoan root...but it's the cultural...that then gives it that edge with that Christian theology.

4

A COCONUT THEOLOGY: A THEOLOGY OF *FA'AALOALO* AND *TAUTUA*

O le ala i le pule, le tautua

(Samoan tenet of power and authority through service)

A winner mentality

Newton Church has nurtured a winner mentality. Being the first, oldest and largest PIC, it has produced a pioneering, and fiercely competitive spirit among the Newton Church Samoan community. This is borne out to a large extent by Newton as mother-church to younger branches and parishes and its reputation for always contributing the most financially at *fa'aulufalega* and similar events, and always composing the best choir songs at these occasions. The success of the Sunday school and bible class choirs and individual successes of its members at music competitions and community events, the prominent placings of its members from first to third place not only locally, but nationally, in annual Sunday school examinations are matters of pride. This is a difficult reputation to live up to by anyone's standards. So much so, that if young people feel unable to live up to these "winner" expectations, then they will have a time out period, and will probably not return to the Church until they feel that they have something to contribute to the Church in line with the winner mentality, or when they feel that they want their own children to benefit from or experience this winner mentality. Notwithstanding this, they retain intermittent membership as "Sunday christians" or by attending the numerous weddings, funerals, baptisms, christenings, special occasions, and other *fa'alavelave* of friends and 'āga members. The winner mentality is also associated with commitment to Newton *fa'aSamoa* in helping parents and grandparents, not only financially, but in terms of time and service to personal 'āga as well as Newton commitments and 'āga. This winner mentality spills over into why some young people *osooso solo* to other more progressive denominations,

where members feel that they are driven by their need to missionise, or become pioneering missionaries as their forebears have.

It is only by examining the historical content contained in these narratives that one can identify how this winner mentality, so carefully nurtured by the founders and mentors of Newton, was so necessary for this migrant church to survive in New Zealand. Later, charismatic influences introduced to Newton in the early '80s intensified this winner mentality into unrealistic expectations for its young people and became the cause of much dissatisfaction among the youth. Although the charismatic element is still present in the Church in the '90s, its influence has been marginalised and tempered because its proponents are still considered to be "young" in socio-cultural terms, and is present among some bible class members leaders only. To many members of the *ekālēsia*, the charismatic influence represented a *papālagi* element in its individualistic focus on the salvation of the one as opposed to all, and its disdain of "traditional" Newton christians. This ideology conflicted directly not only with Newton's conservative congregational christian theology, but also with the cultural values and focus of Newton *fa'aSamoa*.

Notwithstanding the time out periods outlined above, Newton is regarded as home for many NZ-borns, regardless whether their parents and *'āiga* are current members or not, or whether their parents are alive or passed on. They consider their roots to be at Newton and its community their family. Their role models are the forebears, leaders and elders of Newton Church, and their Samoan identity instilled by their own *'āiga* is bolstered by the powerful Samoan identity of the Newton Church *'āiga*. Their Church *'āiga* includes not only the Samoan *ekālēsia*, but also the Cook Island, Niuean and Tokelauan/Tuvaluan *ekālēsia*. Thus the intra and inter-ethnic cultural influences and kinship links coupled with the spiritual and secular function of Newton Church, reinforced by Newton *fa'aSamoa* and theology of *fa'aaloalo* and *tautua* serve to support and instil a quiet assertiveness and confidence in members of the ESG, and its young people in the Sunday school, bible class, and *'autalavou*. Their experiences reflect in how NZ-borns cope with the outside world of school, the workplace, and wider New Zealand society, and in turn to reinforce a NZ-born Samoan identity.

I conclude that what is most salient about Newton's winner mentality is that it is *culturally based*. That is, it is bolstered by the very assertive and strong Samoan identity

inherent in the structures and operations of Newton Church. Those young people who exude this winner mentality claim that they have been good Samoan children and have "been *tautua*" and "*fa'aaloalo*" to their parents and grandparents. In other words Newton *fa'aSamoa* has developed and nurtured what I define as the real "coconut theology"—a theology of serving, a theology of *fa'aaloalo* and *tautua*.

The most common gloss for coconut theology that members' give is that it is a critique of *pālagi* theology from a Pacific Island perspective. My redefinition of a coconut theology as a theology of *fa'aaloalo* and *tautua* is an attempt to open new insights as well as to acknowledge the changing setting that NZ-borns are in. It is an attempt to indigenise theology in the context of Newton Church and to empower NZ-borns by critically examining the relationship between Church and parental, NZ-born and secured *fa'aSamoa*, and the wider implications of christianity and culture.

All the preceding narratives on inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic/inter-generational and cultural opposition and conflict experienced by members have bearing on whether young people, NZ-borns of Newton Church decide to stay, to leave, to have time out periods or float. When discussing the future, members are divided as to whether Newton PIC Church will remain as Newton PIC as it is today. They commented on how and why the Church does not cater for the 90s, on the importance and significance of Newton Church and Newton *fa'aSamoa* in negotiating their personal NZ-born identities, on the crucial factor of future leadership of Newton and its ability to maintain the mother-church status and role for the increasing number of other PIC branches being established in New Zealand, and in Auckland especially.

In talking about how the Church does not cater for the 90s, members dwell on the Church's inability to "change with the times". One member expressed it as "too much of the same old, same old...". Many members recall their own rebellious younger days when they would "rebel against authority"—their parents, elders and teachers, and claim that it is difficult to stem the flow of disgruntled, disillusioned NZ-born teenagers leaving the Church, as they did when they had their "time out" periods. For so many of them the easy way out was to leave the Church and immerse themselves in all the diverse alternative lifestyles that wider New Zealand society had to offer. Still harder for those that stayed were their experiences of trying to negotiate their identities of NZ-born/island-born,

I think they are leaving because the Church is not specifically addressing their needs and where they're at. I think young NZ-born go through a period where they reject parents and their cultural values and because the Church is associated as being the foundation...therefore it makes sense to chop it. The Church also becomes a battleground during times of change, so a lot of NZ-born feel that parents have been exploited by the church, feel that their parents' money has been mismanaged by the Church and through taking a European individualistic way of looking at issues of management, and also in theological terms, they feel that the Church is a hypocrisy.

...our Church is perceived as a Church where you always have to give, the giving of your time, the giving of your labour, the giving of your everything and there's no receiving, and that's where I find for me the challenge is, is that we need to move away from all this giving to the Church, and this role of the Church in like giving to people...to find out...and what do you need? What are we doing in terms of trying to create jobs or trying to form a little network that helps people...I think the people have done enough giving, they need to start receiving from the Church.

Many members speak about the frustrations of unsuccessful attempts to update existing institutions, e.g., the Sunday school and bible class in order to meet this new generation of "street-wise" kids who quickly become bored with old teaching philosophies and pedagogies. They talk about the lack of vision of present church leaders and elders and warn yet again of imminent moves by the youth to more charismatic churches.

I think this Church needs to catch up with a lot of things. It doesn't offer anything for the kids in the 90s. We're still using old teaching methods, we're still antiquated in our whole approach. Nothing much has changed in fifty years, and unless you have a real love of the place and a real love for God, you won't stick around, you'll go to another place, where you can get these things. It might be a sports place that plays sport on Sundays. It's a big thing and I don't know why we don't exploit that ourselves. Sport is something that...people can communicate...with each other. All relationships can be strengthened through sport. Samoans excel in sport. If we could bring this place into the 90s somehow we could make it a place where it is competing with the outside groups I think you'll find a lot more would stay. A lot more would come in.

Other significant accounts deal with events which have resulted in a mass exodus of large numbers of people because of the unwillingness of leaders and elders to change their

ideas about administration of various institutions. While these events are significant in terms of people leaving the Church, the most recurrent theme concerns the constant trickle of young people who leave. For a large portion of members their leaving was not due to major upheavals or conflict per se, but a natural attrition of sorts where members just float out and back in. These members talk about the more liberal attitudes of parents--the fact that church "wasn't pushed" on them, the different priorities that NZ-borns have in terms of financial pressures--the realistic need to pay mortgages and bills rather than respond to unrealistic expectations in terms of *fa'alavelave*.

These kids have got mortgages, deposits to raise, kids to think about....It's a low on their priorities. Their parents are dragging some of their resources anyway, but they're getting sick and tired of hearing, Oh there's another *fa'alavelave*....It's not like a village in Samoa where your '*āga*...you're involved in those...but you're involved in *every* '*āga* in this church. If someone dies in the church we all get involved. Well we're the *malosi* of the village.

Some of them stay [at Church] 'cause of pressure from parents, but not all of them....some of them it's in their hearts to serve God, you know, they're with the holy spirit and faith.

Members' narratives emphasise how being a member of Newton has helped them negotiate their own identity and supported them during their own individual identity journeys as NZ-borns. Members with secured identities and their "confluence of understandings" about the significance of Newton Church assess this importance as "without the church we're nobody...just a leaf floating against a stream...". This significance however has not been realised over a short period of time. For most it has taken a years of experiences, of emotion, conflict and turmoil to have reached this point. The full impact of the meaning of Church for these members is by no means clear cut. Rather the complexities that surround their diverse life experiences and the role the Church has played for them as they have left and come back again reflect the realisation that they are not just individuals, but "part of the whole", "part of a greater wheel". Hence they have a sense of well-being, rootedness and security in being recognised as contributing members of the Church. These positive feelings of achievement, whether as Sunday school, bible class or ESG members, manifest themselves in the confidence and self-assurance of

young people both as individuals and members of various groups within the Church. Members state that this nurturing and fostering of young people is the legacy of the Rev. Sio, who while "he cracked the whip at times", also allowed young people the comparative luxury of freedom of expression.

Members express the desire to "bring our kids up in the Church", to expose them to both cultural and christian aspects of the Church. There is the idea that their own secured identity and understandings of a secured *fa'aSamoa* was shaped by their Church experiences, and this is something they want for their children. One member whose spouse is not Samoan emphasises that "apart from my 'āiga connections, taking my kids to Church is the only way I can expose them to the *fa'aSamoa*...otherwise they would be engulfed by my [spouse's] culture....I want them to know their Samoan identity". Others take their children to Church so that they can "have a choice". Many express the notion that they "have turned out okay"--have made the right "choices" and want their children to be exposed to the same choices that they had when they were young. "This is better" states one member "than having no choice at all". They do not want their children to be led astray by other life-styles, to become a "lost tribe out there", but to be guided by the only Samoan lifestyle in the New Zealand context, apart from personal 'āiga ties, that they can offer their children--Newton PIC.

Without the Church, we're nobody, and I've felt that. Many times that I'm away from Church, and I never get to Church for three or four months, I feel as if I'm a nobody. There's nothing, it's purposeless. Going to church is like home. You come into a body that's part of you, and you're part of the body. Outside of it, you're a nobody...absolutely a nobody, a nothing...just a leaf floating against a stream. That's how I think about it....The problem with our kids was that they were too old, when I tried to get them back, they were conscious. I should have done it when they were five or six, but they were twelve and they were conscious of being different, and people looking at them. This is the time now.

I brought our children back to Newton because I spent four years in [...] and that was a good experience of being with a Samoan parish....It's been eight years away. What I've enjoyed about bringing [children] here has been...and I know it sounds really selfish but it's one way of explaining who I am and why I've done this.

Because we've noticed, that's why we brought them back here, because I was very aware we were moving around a lot, I was scared that [...] was [missing] the Samoan component. I was very aware too that he was going to grow up without a

circle of friends, a solid identity.

One member, a childless successful professional by all accounts, sees his one failure in life, which will "go to the grave" with him, as not succeeding in bringing his nephews and nieces up in the Church. The driving force behind this thinking is the realisation that Newton Church provides the foundation of a NZ-born identity in the New Zealand context. One mature member makes the observation that "we will never be anybody in this world until we go back to being a Samoan with our people".

It doesn't matter where you're born, it's the strength of the parent to guide you in the right place. If the parents are weak and letting their kids go that way...when I think back...what I think has been a missing link in my life, would be that I didn't go to 'aukalavou...that I didn't go to 'aufaipese. Because if I had done that, my Samoan would have been better....We will never be anybody in this world until we go back to being a Samoan with our people. That's the bottom line.

Some members talk about the legacy of Newton Church as empowering them to be experts at "schizophrenic" living. Newton Church from this perspective has acted as a safety-valve for young people who are confused about their identity and their relationship to Church. Having time out periods has allowed them the time and space to deal with these issues. The freedom to share the pioneering spirit of their parents and grandparents in establishing separate programmes to cater for the young has consolidated this confidence, and members proudly boast that they are the "makers of the future".

...back home, we're nice, good little Samoans because our parents say, Don't do this, don't do that. Outside the door, we're a kiwi...you know...and you take part. So the amazing part about it is that it's not that many of us in the mental homes....Because we've managed with that very well and accomodated it...the new world.

I would just say that...it was important that we remember the good things about our culture....But that we don't depend on anyone else to show the future for us. We are the makers of the future. We make the future....The amazing thing is that sometimes you think everyone else has a better idea than you...and then you find out that your ideas are the only worthwhile ones.

Even when members have been away from the Church, or who have joined other *pālagi* churches, the influence of Newton Church in their pedagogies and epistemologies carried through in their interaction with parents, 'āga, Church community, and *pālagi* people and institutions remain strongly *fa'aSamoa*. The focus is thus heavily directed towards aspects of 'āga, alofa and tautua, and consensus decision-making..

But there's certain things I keep that are obviously the influence of the PIC....like...fundraising....And someone said to me, Oh that's the PIC style of doing things, whereas to me it was a sensible way of doing it....

There is quite widespread uncertainty about the future of Newton Church now that the "old guard" has gone. Nevertheless members of the ESG are quite clear as to what sort of leadership they perceive is required to take Newton into the 21st century. Despite the restructuring into a PIC synod, and the ESG's initial exclusion from this structure, there is definitely an optimism that the ESG will play a major part in the new structure of Newton and that future leadership will be more along consensus-type decision making. Members continuously speak about their role individually, and collectively, as guardians of Newton Church's well-being and future. They perceive the most crucial factor in the continued success of Newton Church as good future leadership—a leadership which will combine the dichotomies and dualities of old/new, traditional/contemporary, culture/spirituality, young/old, Pacific Island/New Zealand, status quo/change, Presbyterian/PIC, island-born/NZ-born. Although members are critical of some aspects of the Rev. Sio's ministry and leadership in terms of his partiality and bias, "especially as he got older", towards parental *fa'aSamoa* and Samoan ways of doing things, there is no question that in their view, only he was able to reconcile most if not all of the preceding conflicts. They describe him as a strong leader, the protector of Newton Church, the guardian of the *fa'aSamoa*, who "had a heart for young people".

I know that some things will change, like the old leadership is changing now, and the old formal layer of the cake will be gone...and suddenly we'll be into a new situation with people who...haven't *had* to go down and meet people on the boats when they first arrived here, and haven't *had* to suffer through that period....And it's a whole new ball game.

From the ESG perspective Newton has two choices--to remain as a migrant church or to become an established church in Aotearoa. This sector is only too aware that future Newton Church members may not all be from the Pacific Islands as in the past, but from the expanding NZ-born Pacific Islands population.

The question put to me by Rev. Sio which initiated my research journey has come full circle. The prevalent explanation at the time was that young people were being wooed by the excitement of more charismatic churches, such as Elim church. I pondered over this for a long while. Knowing that I was one of these 'unfortunates' who had 'left' the church during my teenage years, a time when the charismatic movement had not yet begun at Newton, I could not help but question the truth of this explanation. I was surprised to learn that most members of the ESG had had similar periods in their lives where they had had a break or "left" the church. All the ESG members in my focus group had left and come back to Church at some time or other for various reasons. But there were many more others still on the outside, not ready to come back in, on the fringes waiting, watching, and getting older.

Although some young people actually do leave Newton never to be seen again, their numbers are very small relative to the ESG community. Most members who "disappear" have either moved across to the *'autalavou*, to consolidate their *fa'aSamoa*, or they are having a time out period. Only a few are moving across to outside influences (other denominations, other lifestyles) on a permanent basis.

I have come to understand that young people seldom leave Church permanently. Rather, they have time out periods, and these time out periods represent a temporary, physical leaving only. The spiritual and cultural contact with Newton remains intact. One of the reasons for this is that Newton is considered to be home for many of these young people. Another reason is that older members of families and *'āga* who still remain part of the Church, continuously reinforce, and relentlessly promote their child's, children's and grandchildren's reintegration back into the Church system.

Young people have time out periods for a myriad of reasons. Some of these are the

lack of spiritual feeding, parental expectations, financial commitments, time commitments, peer pressure, pressures to become leaders, personality clashes, a critical education, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic and generational conflict, opposition to leadership styles/administration, Newton being unable to address perceived needs. However, their loyalty to Newton remains intact until they are ready to return, usually when they feel they are ready to take on leadership/elder responsibilities, or when they are older, with a young family. For those who return when they have children, they "wanted their kids to have the same choices" they had when they were young. They wanted to expose their children to Newton because Newton had been such a positive influence on their own lives.

Again, the young people are not leaving *en masse* to go to other churches on a permanent basis. The term that members use for this temporary experimentation with other denominations is *osooso*. Most people who have permanent time out periods never become members of other churches, but remain dormant members of Newton Church.

This is the crucial part that Newton Church has played in the identity journeys of NZ-born Samoans. Once one has been baptised into Newton Church one is forever a member regardless of the number of time out periods. That is to say one forever remains a member in the minds and memories of the 'āiga and church *ekālēsia* who are active members. In this perspective then one can never actually "leave" the Church. Newton Church's children remain consciously or not, forever bound to Newton Church. The child is brought up in this particular Church and incorporated into the Newton 'āiga, and indeed the Newton *nu'u*. The Church is a second home, an extended family, a moral community and the venue of sociality or face-to-face social relations, where day-to-day *fa'aSamoa* and relational arrangements contained within Samoan conceptions of *vā fealoaloa'i* and *vā tapuia* can be played out. It too contains within it the tensions and conflicts of families and communities, at the same time that it gives refuge, strength and identity.

PART THREE

A 'DISTANCED' ANALYSIS OF THE IDENTITY JOURNEY

"...the purpose is to bring to a conscious level conflicts and resistances which have remained unconscious, owing either to their repression by other psychological forces or...to their own specific nature, which is not psychic but organic or simply mechanical....the conflicts and resistances are resolved...because...knowledge makes possible a specific experience, in the course of which conflicts materialize in an order and on a level...leading to their resolution" (Lévi-Strauss, 'The effectiveness of symbols' 1963:198).

"...culture communicates; the interconnectedness of cultural events itself conveys information to those who participate in those events...my purpose is to suggest a systematic procedure by which the participant observer anthropologist can set about decoding the messages embedded in the complexities he [sic] observes" (Leach, *Culture and communication: The logic by which symbols are connected* 1976:2).

"During the liminal period, neophytes are alternately forced and encouraged to think about their society, their cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain them. Liminality may be...described as a stage of reflection" (Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* 1967:105).

The third part of the thesis is a theoretical excursion into the 'distanced' discourses of anthropological theory and ethnicity theory to further investigate the identity journey verse. In Chapter Six I draw on structuralist discourse, as expressed in the works of Lévi-Strauss (1963), Van Gennep (1960) and Turner (1967) to explore how individual identity is shaped 'in the mind'. In Chapter Seven, the analytical frame provided by ethnicity theory is used to investigate how identity 'of the group' is shaped.

CHAPTER SIX: THE IDENTITY JOURNEY AS *rites de passage*

If I am I, simply because I am I, and thou art thou simply because thou art thou, then I am I and thou art thou. But if I am I because thou art thou, and thou art thou because I am I, then I am not I, and thou art not thou. (Rabbi Mendel of Kotzk [cited in Epstein 1978:1])

The subjective experience of a NZ-born Samoan identity, outlined and analysed in Part Two as the identity journey is based on the following identity verse:

"I am a Samoan...but not a Samoan
To my *'āiga* in Samoa...I am a *pālāgi*
I am a New Zealander...but not a New Zealander
To New Zealanders...I am a bloody coconut at worst - a Pacific
Islander, at best.
I am to my Samoan parents...their child"

This identity verse viewed literally, appears to present us with contradiction, that of chaos or confusion within an ordered structure and society. The first two lines of the verse--the Samoan identity couplet--expresses a declaration, and at the same time a denial, of a Samoan identity. Similarly, the next three lines of the verse--the New Zealander identity couplet--expresses a declaration, and at the same time a denial, of a New Zealander identity. An exploration of these two paradoxes--being/not-being Samoan, and being/not-being a New Zealander--lends itself to the structuralist analysis.

Structuralism, the school of anthropological theory most identified with the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963), uses the sound systems of language as conceptual models for the process of human comprehension and the communication of culture (see also Leach 1976). Because of their interest in ideas rather than objective facts, structuralists tend to be more concerned with what is said than with what is done. For those who adopt this approach, the directly observed interactions between individuals are regarded as "acts of communication" rather than "economic transactions" (ibid.:5). In this way, by focusing on

the communicative aspects of transactions, one can restrict the variety of parameters that one needs to take into account. "Within this limited frame of reference, individual items of observed behaviour and individual items of custom can be treated as analogous to the words and sentences of a language..." (ibid.:6). Lévi-Strauss argues that as people impose a rational order in the way they perceive a succession of sound, so too do they presume orderliness in the domain of culture. We can, therefore, use the way people interpret speech as a way people model their world. That is, on the basis of internal models of reality, models built in our minds, people give meaning to the things they experience and the events they see. Thus, human thought patterns are seen to be the origin of the myriads of patterns of human culture. The ultimate aim of structuralist analysis, therefore, is to describe the fundamental structures of human cognition.

I refer here to the structure of ideas, a concept largely attributed to Lévi-Strauss (1963, see also Leach 1976:5), rather than the structure of society, and the identity journey as 'internalised models in the mind'. But I do not claim that it is any sort of universal model; rather, I argue that the structure of ideas is useful in analysing my research data. Although there has been much criticism of Lévi-Strauss' structural analysis, mainly with regard to its supposed synchronic disregard for evolution and history (Badcock 1975:105), its reliance on linguistic method to analyse culture (ibid.:110), its singular focus on the deep laws of binary oppositions (Turner 1992) and the claim that it is little more than a Cartesian heresy in the history of psychoanalysis—a mere footnote to Freud (Shalvey 1966:117), structuralism as a theoretical approach is relevant to the analysis of my data.

First, cognisant that the identity verse is meaningless and confusing to most people but at the same time totally logical and rational to other NZ-borns, I needed a theoretical model that could help explain this phenomenon. Secondly, structuralism provided a method whereby I could consider the form and content of the verse—not only to expose the structure of the paradoxes contained in the overt linguistic expression of the verse, but also to explore the symbolic level of meaning in terms of the differentiation between the preconscious mind, where memories are preserved but not always available to the individual, and the unconscious mind, which is always empty—alien to mental images which pass through it (Lévi-Strauss 1963:203). The viewing of the identity journey as *rites de passage* (Van Gennep 1960, via Turner 1967, and my extension of Turner) allowed for

further theoretical excursions, I thus focus on the meaning behind the identity journey ritual and rites of passage, and the cognitive changes it produces.

Interpretation of identity verse

The Lévi-Strauss celebrated technique of myth interpretation (1966 [developed from Jakobson 1956]) which necessitates understanding of the approximate equivalent concepts of: Symbol/Sign = Metaphor/Metonymy = Paradigmatic association/Syntagmatic chain = Harmony/Melody (Leach 1976:13) is based on the premise that although metaphor and metonymy, paradigmatic association and syntagmatic chain, are combined, the 'meaning' depends upon *transformations* from one mode to the other and back again (Leach *ibid.*:25). The formal principles of the method are straight forward. Lévi-Strauss first breaks up the syntagmatic chain of the total myth story into a sequence of episodes and then assumes that each episode is a partial metaphoric transformation of every other. If we accept these assumptions, Leach states that:

...it follows that the analyst who seeks to decode the message embodied in the myth as a whole (as distinct from the surface messages that are presented by the stories in the individual episodes) must look for a pattern of structure (which is necessarily of a somewhat abstract kind) which is common to the whole set of metaphors. The final interpretation consists of reading this derived pattern as if it were a syntagmatic chain. The procedure involves a double switch from the metonymic mode to the metaphoric and back to the metonymic (*ibid.*).

What we end up with is an abstract structural sequence of the myth of which each of the original elements was an imperfect manifestation. Metaphor is thus transformed into metonymy. The basic principle involved is one which is common to all verbal expression and all ritual activity. When messages are conveyed through speech, the time interval between the beginning of the utterance and the end is so short that any time factor involved tends to be ignored. Correspondingly when ritual performances are interpreted we are liable to forget that events which are separated by a considerable time interval may be part of the same message (Leach 1976).

In applying the Lévi-Strauss schema to my research data the mythical story—which is the identity verse—although not linear in form with events occurring in sequence (syntagmatic chain linked by metonymy), can nevertheless still be broken up into episodes A,B,C.: the various challenges to ones identity as Samoan, New Zealander, the child of Samoan parents and the associated memories, emotions and experiences connected to each challenge as explicated in Chapter Four. Each episode (challenge) is then assumed to be a partial transformation of each of the others. Each of the sub-plots refer to simultaneous events, and the result 'added up' to produce the result X. In jargon, by the first of these steps "the original 'syntagmatic chain' is transformed into a 'paradigmatic association' (metonymy is converted into metaphor)" (Leach 1976:26). Thus $A+B+C=X$. As compared with the details in the original episodes A,B,C, the elements in the summary additive story are abstract, a structural sequence. In jargon, the summation process converts the "'paradigmatic association' into a 'syntagmatic chain'; metaphor is transformed into metonymy" (ibid.). In this case, an individual triumphs over the obstacles and hardships experienced by challenges to their self-identities in acquiring a 'secured identity' over time. Let us now consider this in more detail.

A. Samoan identity couplet:

**"I am a Samoan...but not a Samoan...
To my 'āga in Samoa...I am a *pālāgi*..."**

Rejection of Samoan identity occurs in instances where the NZ-born is called or referred to as *papālāgi* by 'āga or other island-born Samoans. Their separation takes the form of mixed expressions of *fa'amaualalo*, *ita* and *fa'amaualuga* (see Part Two), and in adopting mannerisms, dress and behaviour reflecting their difference. In New Zealand, NZ-born disdain for FOBs expresses this detachment. From behaviour aimed at fitting in with the *fa'aSamoa* to that of asserting difference and emphasising *papālāgi* sides or tendencies, this liminal period of confusion and disregard for the social framework that went before is exacerbated by repeated rejection. For instance, when the PIC Church denies the NZ-born their Samoan-ness (see previous chapter), when NZ-born claims to

Samoan-ness is challenged or questioned by ministers, island-born elders, or Session, because they are behaving *fa'apālagi*, by speaking out when they are not supposed to. Their act of detachment in leaving or breaking away from Church structures and other *fa'aSamoa* authority is accompanied by feelings and emotions of confusion, self-abasement and anger. For many a conflict mode is adopted where their confrontational stance in "taking on" the authority figures and/or structures, are seen as displaying the very *fiapālagi* tendencies they are being accused of.

B. New Zealand identity couplet:

"I am a New Zealander...but not a New Zealander..."

"To New Zealanders...I am a bloody coconut, at worst
- a Pacific Islander, at best..."

'This period of liminality begins when NZ-borns become aware of being perceived as 'not-New Zealanders'. They become aware of racist sentiments expressed in school policies, curriculum and pedagogies, and by teachers or their *papālagi* peers. The symbolic detachment from this earlier fixed set of cultural conditions is evident in feelings of inferiority, debasement, confusion, anger, rage etc. In some cases there is a denial, affirmation, or a mixture of both, of Samoan identity, and self-identity claimed as New Zealander, Maori, "multicultural", 'other', etc. Identity confusion remains, however, and is indeed reinforced by exposure to repeated challenges during the liminal phase, e.g., experiences of racism that continue as members leave schools and become part of the work force. During this period the individual shows little regard for what was previously considered normal, and may choose to either opt out of the *fa'aSamoa* and become socialised into *papālagi* lifeways in order to become "more-New Zealander-like", identify with other marginalised or outcaste groups such as political liberation groups or gangs, or remain in "limbo". The desire to be recognised by mainstream New Zealanders not as a FOB but an educated, "civilised" Pacific Islander may become paramount because the NZ-born is only too aware that to the uninformed *pālagi* eye "we all look the same". Whether triggered by challenges to Samoan or a New Zealand identity, this marginal period of

confusion is an antithesis of the individual's notion of self before the events of separation, and represents a period of ambiguity and liminality.

(i) Operators

The operators, which impose some form of order on this chaotic liminal period, are also in action in more normal periods. But during this marginal period they reach their fullest expression, as limitations become less restrictive. Binary oppositions during the liminal phase proliferate: Samoan/New Zealander, FOB/NZ-born, youth/elders, *'āiga*/friends, black/white, male/female, *fa'aSamoa*/'kiwi' lifestyle, *tautua*/freedom, *alofa*/greed, *usita*/'i/disobey, rich/poor, loud/quiet, young/old, *fa'aaloalo*/assertiveness, work/*kafaovale*, individual/community, Church/other lifestyles, 'born-again'/traditional christian, autonomy/powerlessness, control/chaos. During the identity journey ritual the NZ-born seeks to reconcile these contradictions and conflicting choices within his/her own self-identity. Another operator is the repetition of common themes. These recurring strands are the identification by members of perceived oppression at several levels. One is the theme of NZ-borns as inheritors of two worlds and fully competent in neither resulting in the confusion experienced by being neither Samoan nor New Zealander. Another is the theme that although legally a New Zealander, one is discriminated against because of being physically identifiable as Samoan. This situation is exacerbated by the visible negative image of Samoans (*vis à vis* Pacific Islanders) as educational failures and as the criminal element of New Zealand society, portrayed in a variety of much publicised media. Yet one is not a 'real' Samoan either because one was not born in Samoa, and is unable to speak Samoan fluently and is inept in the *fa'aSamoa*. Another theme is the NZ-born as the embodiment of their parents' expectations in coming to New Zealand and their demands on them to become symbols of success, particularly, the pressure on NZ-borns to do well at school. But perhaps the most dominant theme is the persistence of the *fa'aSamoa* and the strong influence of Newton Church on this community of 'New Zealanders'.

C. "I am to my Samoan parents...their child"

When the individual reaches a level of understanding of a New Zealand identity in the context of also being Samoan, an aggregation occurs. The NZ-born, while appearing to return to his/her former state, has in fact incorporated the whole range of experiences (drawn from ordering devices or operators) which occurred during the confusion between the usual cultural orders. The liminal period constitutes for the NZ-born a state of change in which the reincorporation sees him/her re-enter into a different understanding of normality, i.e., his/her level of awareness of identity necessitates a different consciousness, one which sees him/her take on different everyday behaviour and values—a quite different state as compared to the original state of normality, that is, the pre-ritual and preconscious state (see Fig.6.1,p.335). It means a new self-identity which consists of a gradual reincorporation into New Zealand society as a New Zealander, but also acknowledging one's Samoan-ness, and a gradual reincorporation into Samoan society, but also acknowledging one's New Zealand identity. In the context of the ESG it means feeling okay to be a middle-class, upwardly mobile professional because, although acutely aware of and having adopted some New Zealand middle-class values/behaviour, the member also has reclaimed and maintained core Samoan values/behaviour—a secured *fa'aSamoa*—in the New Zealand context. Moreover for most members it also means directing their status as professionals towards a commitment to helping their "people" in areas of welfare, education, law and employment. Their different world view and epistemologies and active involvement in their *'āiga*, Church and communities means that they have not divorced themselves totally from being Samoan, and, despite the anguish, are giving their own children a Samoan identity. This resolution has meant commitment to using their *papālagi* skills and knowledge in supporting Church administrative, policy and organisational issues (if allowed to) combined with the understanding that the Church is run in a very *fa'aSamoa* way. For individuals return entails a gradual reincorporation back into *'āiga* and Church networks and gradual understanding and acceptance of the obligations and commitments the Church and parental *fa'aSamoa* require. Members have spoken about setting up *mafutaga* for their *'āiga*, or express their desire to become *matai* or ministers and missionaries and be more involved with their *'āiga*. Most are also committed to

involving their own children in *ā'oga 'amata/Samoa* to learn Samoan and teaching them Samoan values and behaviour.

The only statement in the identity verse which is factual and which does not express a contrary is contained in the last line and is the only truly stabilising operator in this mix. It holistically incorporates both previous Samoan and New Zealand rites of passage in representing the space where conflict experienced in the identity journey can be negotiated and its import realised. Inherent in this operator are recurrent themes of stability: home and *'āga* as the site of *alofa* and nurturance, Samoan identity supported by the stories and influence of the mothers and grandmothers of *tautua*, *fa'aaloalo* and *feagaiga*. Undoubtedly parental *fa'aSamoa* as understood and practised by parents is passed on to children, as is the importance of Church and to *usita'i* and having to be satisfied with parent responses to questions with "*Pauā*" (Sua'ali'i-Sauni 1997). Yet, these stabilising influences are not always present. Some parents have more liberal attitudes towards the status and importance of parental *fa'aSamoa* in the lives of their NZ-born children.

Throughout this opposition, signs are used as tools of being and not-being. Pejoratives such as 'coconut', and '*pālāgi*' become signifiers to link individuals to stereotypic images. These signs, typically more common within the New Zealand context, are juxtaposed alongside familiar Samoan signs and stabilising operators, reinforcing new identities. This system of signs and symbols acts logically to shift social reality 'in the mind' and alter the explicit cultural reality, culminating in a self-satisfying NZ-born Samoan identity for some. Others may never reach this secured identity. This shift in relationships is resolved through the *assessment* of both oppositions, i.e., *opposition* to being perceived as a *pālāgi*, or a non-New Zealander as opposed to one's self-identity as Samoan and vice versa (A plus B, B plus A above), and their *resolution* (in C above), culminating in X, i.e., a *reconciliation* of these oppositions, the abstracted additive version of the verse—a secured identity.

Leach points out that what is observable is a "structural transformation" of this model in the mind (1985:221) and that this internal model is seen as an unconscious and logical system, with innumerable ordering principles, or operators. These operators are made up of a programme of signs, that is, semiotic systems of binary contrasts, dualities, repetitive patterns, etc., which together constitute societal and cultural possibilities. These

semiotic codes appear in human experience as language, kinship relations, myth etc., and, most importantly for my analysis, in ritual.

The identity journey as *rites de passage*

In "The Effectiveness of Symbols" (1963:186-205), which is the analysis of an 18-page transcription of the incantation at a Cuna medicine ceremony, Lévi-Strauss attempts to bridge two levels of consciousness: the deep laws of binary opposition and the powerful curing effect of the shaman's myth. He defines the preconscious as a reservoir of recollections and images amassed in the course of a life-time--an aspect of memory--and implies that although these elements are preserved they are not always available to the individual. According to this perspective then, the unconscious is always empty and imposes structural laws upon inarticulated elements which originate elsewhere (impulses, emotions, representations, memories). He states:

We might say, therefore, that the preconscious is the individual lexicon where each of us accumulates the vocabulary of his personal history, but that this vocabulary becomes significant, for us and for others, not only to the extent that the unconscious structures it according to its laws and thus transforms it into language....The vocabulary matters less than the structure....But the structure remains the same, and through it the symbolic function is fulfilled (1963:203).

Lévi-Strauss successfully bridges the two levels of consciousness, mirrored in the curing effect of the shaman's incantation, and in so doing illustrates the practical application and power of heightened consciousness (Turner 1992:13). More importantly he posits that in the analysis of myth, form takes precedence over the content of the narrative and that myth represents a quest for remembrance of things past. I contend that the identity verse operates in much the same way in that during the identity journey the memories and experiences kept in check in the preconscious mind of unsecured members remain as unconscious except when they are (re)stimulated by an event(s) or anecdote(s) over time thus evoking impulses and emotions, which when (re)activated are structured by the unconscious to become articulated elements--the heightened consciousness or new levels of awareness (meaning, understanding) indicative of a secured identity.

I was struck when listening to members speak of their identity journeys how they resonated with claims of changed consciousness. This in turn led me to think about the identity journey in terms of ritual and rites of passage. Members spoke about their changed consciousness, how certain experiences had changed their lives, that they were not the "same people as before", that symbolic occurrences and events had had significant impact on them, that they had "rebelled" as adolescents over both expected *papālagi* and Samoan values, norms and codes of behaviour, that over time they had changed their way of "thinking about and doing things". I concluded that for them these experiences had initiated changes of consciousness which in turn had changed their values and behaviour, their understandings of parental *fa'a Samoa* in the New Zealand context, and more importantly had contributed to new self-identities. Moreover, despite these experiences occurring in both private/individual and public/social, and in *papālagi*/Samoan spaces, they were similar in pattern and closely resembled 'rituals'. Given that ritual is defined as "formalized behaviour or activity in accordance with rules and procedures specified by society" (Bullock, Stallybrass & Trombley 1988:749), or a culturally-patterned, repetitive, prescribed order of sacred rites, I concluded that in a sense I was dealing with *anti-ritual*, as members had not voluntarily taken part in them, nor were these rituals recognised, acknowledged or sanctioned by either *papālagi* or Samoan society. More importantly, these rituals--changed behaviour and the emotional turmoil prompted by being called "coconut", "*papālagi*" or "Pacific Islander"--had been *enforced* or *imposed* on members. Therefore, my use of ritual is extended and defined as a culturally patterned, repetitive, proscribed, *enforced* order of rites which *produce* transition. I also observed that the changes in awareness of members during and after these enforced rituals focused primarily on *changes in consciousness* (which in turn activated some changes in behaviour, attitudes and appearance, e.g., dress). That is, their experiences highlighted the expressive or emotional content of ritual.

The *rites de passage* analogy which I intend to use is problematic in that the traditional function of such rites are social designs to make identity changes explicit to both the person who is changed and other members of the society. I use the concept in an inverted way, and I will now examine this further. Turner's exposition of rites of passage has enabled me to think through the identity journey via a partial analogy--and I must

emphasise that it is a heuristic model only, not a parallel process. I use rites of passage in a broad sense, more in line with Turner and his concept of liminality (1967), than with Van Gennep's discussion of ritual transformation which occurs during rites of passage (1960), and I extend the notion of rite of passage from the more usual, traditional marking of life cycle events to those events which change personal/group cultural identity (ibid.). This analysis is therefore not concerned with those rites signifying other changes in status of members such as puberty, marriage, occupation, etc. Rather, they concern entry into new consciousness--new levels of awareness of a group which members designate as 'NZ-born Samoans'.

Van Gennep's conceptual pattern of initiation rites can also serve as a model for individual identity transformation, as a 'sacred' transformation between 'profane' states. During these rituals the person leaves their profane (hereafter referred to as normal, everyday) existence and enters a sacred (hereafter referred to as abnormal, unusual) realm, to sooner or later return to an altered existence. The transformation thus consists of three phases. The first phase is that of *separation*, which embodies symbolic deportment that separates an individual from a preceding set of cultural conditions and understandings. The individual is not reincorporated into the principal culture until the third phase, an achieved or ascribed state of *aggregation*. But it is during the intervening second phase--the *limen* or *liminal period*--that most of the symbolic shifts take place. This ambiguous liminal phase of unlimited creativity serves as the ritual's core agent of transformation. It employs semiotic systems of binary contrasts, dualities, repetitive patterns etc. to their fullest extent as alternate possibilities being expressed. Liminality during the identity rites of passage is therefore the primary focus of my analysis, examining the 'not Samoan-not New Zealander' or "transitional being" or "liminal persona" (Turner 1967:95).

In *The Forest of Symbols* (1967:93-111) Turner considers some of the sociocultural properties of the liminal period. He states: "If our basic model of society is that of a 'structure of positions', we must regard the period of margin of 'liminality' as an interstructural situation" (ibid.:93). He describes rites of passage as indicating and constituting transitions between states, and defines "state" as a "relatively fixed or stable condition"--social constancies such as profession, office, rank, etc. (ibid.), and "transition" as a "process", a "becoming". Turner holds that state also includes "culturally-recognised"

conditions, such as those which connote a person's culturally recognised degree of maturation, or a person's physical, mental or emotional condition (ibid.). It is this definition of state which I use also.

Turner likens the rite of passage to a "journey" and the ritual subject to a "passenger". The first phase of separation comprises symbolic behaviour signifying the detachment of the individual from an earlier fixed point in the social structure. During the intervening liminal period the passenger is in an ambiguous state. In the third phase the journey is completed, and the passenger is reincorporated back into the social structure. Turner points out that during liminality "passengers" (or "neophytes"/"initiates") are withdrawn from their structural positions and therefore from the values, norms, sentiments and techniques associated with these positions. He states:

During the liminal period, neophytes are alternately forced and encouraged to think about their society, their cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain them. Liminality may be...described as a stage of reflection (ibid.:105).

The liminal period as described by Turner induces periods of spontaneous creativity, inspiration, and expressions of unbounded imagination (sometimes involving role-reversals). These experiences are influenced by or drawn from experiences during everyday times, just as the interpretation of everyday experiences is affected by what happens in the liminal period. Turner states that there are no rules in this period, and instead of structure, there is anti-structure. From this liminal period proceeds a gradual "coming down". At this point the person undergoing the ritual is reintegrated back into the normal world albeit as a different person (1967:93-95).

Translated for the purposes of this study, and recognising the dual identity bind that NZ-borns experience (a Samoan identity and a New Zealander identity), the individual who has undergone the identity journey ritual does not return to the same normal state or fixed point in the social structure which existed before the ritual. The liminal period for members constitutes a state of significant change, hence aggregation or reincorporation sees them re-enter into different levels of awareness, or heightened consciousness. That is to say for some the level of consciousness is at a 'different' plane or 'level of awareness', along with other 'traditional' changes of status as an adult, married person etc. Therefore theoretically,

on reincorporation, while the individual is seen to resume his/her previous position as a member of society in both identity systems, it is the individual's levels of consciousness which has been dramatically altered by the liminal period. Each repetition of the enforced separation ritual followed by periods of liminality serves to heighten the levels of awareness (See fig. 6.1).

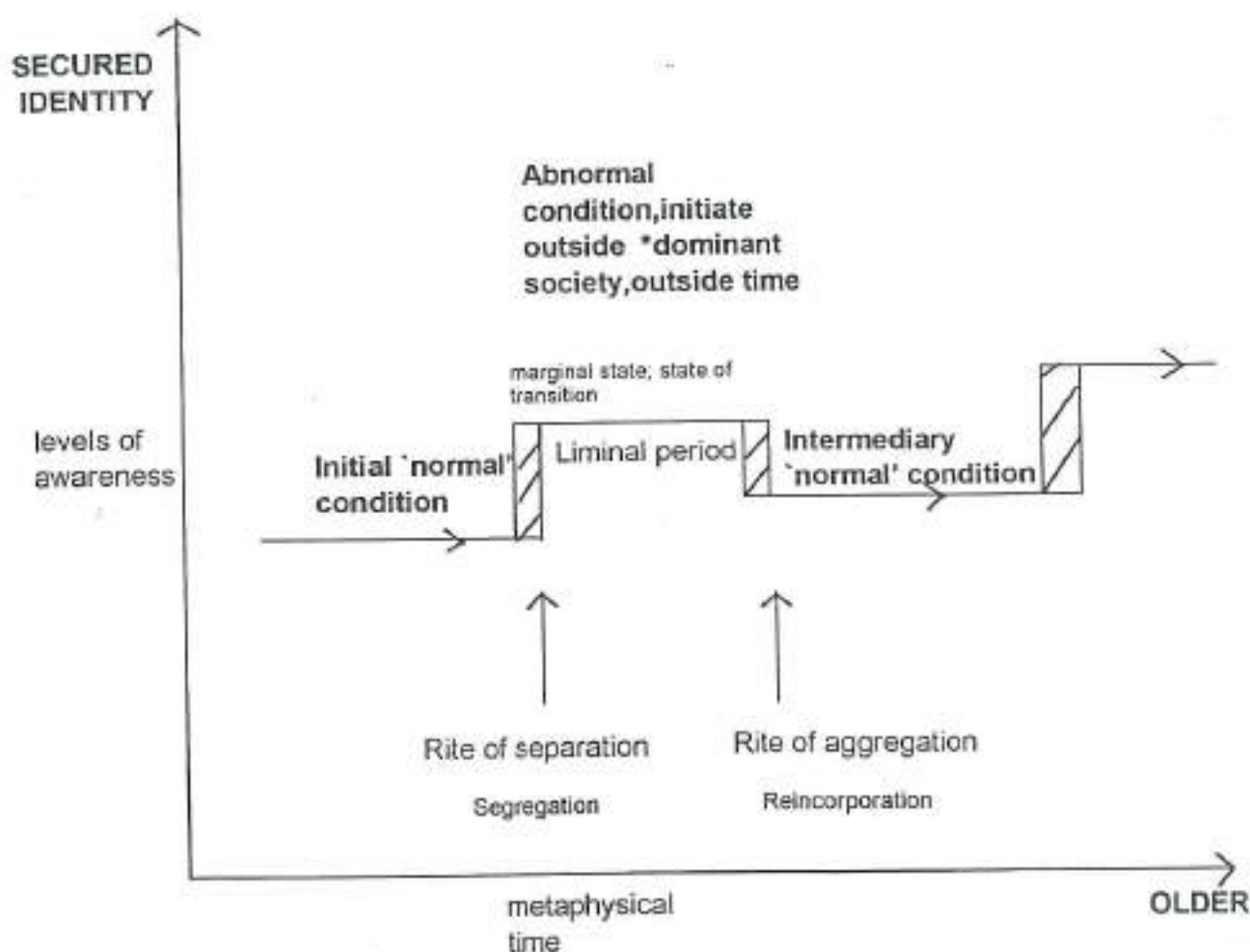


Figure 6.1: Identity rite of passage in metaphysical time (adapted from Leach 1976:78)

If we juxtapose Van Gennep's general *rites de passage* transition phases with the specific experiences and behaviour of my focus group we will be able to categorise the

social and experiential response types of inter and intra-ethnic interaction.

In *Status Inequality: The Self In Culture* (1990), De Vos states:

Underlying all human behaviour, whatever the cultural context or social circumstances, are basic psychological mechanisms shared by us all. What differs with socialization experiences related to group status and cultural background are the emphases influencing the complex balance among these mechanisms (ibid.:227).

One of these "emphases" according to De Vos relates to conflict in allegiance or belonging not only to one's place in the status system, but also to internal conflicts over the priority to be given to past-, present-, or future-oriented forms of self-identity (1982:8). He defines a present-oriented identity as a concept of membership as citizens in a particular state or as a member of a specific occupational group, a future-oriented identity as membership in a transcendent, universal religious or political sense, and a past-oriented identity as a concept of the self as defined by one's ethnic identity, based on ancestry and origin. He states:

Individuals presently dissatisfied with the social status accorded them as a minority group may seek to leave their group. They may choose either to adopt a future-oriented religious or political group thereby gaining admission to a new group, or they may emphasize their ethnic past and exert pressure to change the collective status of the group...(ibid.:10).

In examining the processes of the conscious experience of self in culture, it is helpful to apply Van Gennep's rites of passage model to a classification of responses to ethnic minority status to help us explore the perceived differences in individuals and groups in how they adapt to various societies. De Vos states that these differences depend on how the minority is accorded social status by the host society, how integrative features of a past culture result in well-adaptive responses, and how the cultural background of the minority group may influence the readiness for minority members to directly identify with--or keep their distance from--a majority host society.

The legal policies as well as social ascriptions of a host society (its relative willingness to accept or fully accord equal status to particular ethnic or racial

minorities) intersects with if or how members of a particular minority group maintain some sense of separate individual or group involvement (ibid.:230).

To illustrate the value of considering differences in coping mechanisms discussed in Chapters Four and Five as they influence forms of ethnic adaptation and identity, I considered juxtaposing Van Gennep's transition phases with my schema of the experiential phases of the identity journey ritual in terms of challenges and levels of awareness. This schema--the experiential phases model--attempts to chart a sequential pattern of three phases of possible alternative responses during the identity journey (see fig. 6.2).

The focus is on the management of the "consciousness of difference" in regarding the concept of ethnicity as an element of culture (Vermeulen and Govers 1994:4). In the first phase of experiential progression I posit *realisation of difference*. At a personal level, members have various and diverse responses to being made aware of "difference" from mainstream New Zealanders and members of 'āiga in New Zealand and Samoa.

Second, in coping with this transition the next stage involves various strategies used by individuals and members in *coping* and *acting out difference*. The behaviour and attitudes of members during this phase reveal distinctions separating less adequate from more adequate forms of adjustive coping. Coping responses vary but what is clear is that identity confusion does not allow for commitment or conviction in developing a consistent identity.

Finally, in coping specifically with the liminality of this transition period, there is an observable maturational progression which develops into a self-consciousness which helps members to adapt to a complex society in a pluralist sense. This final phase implies transition to a final achieved, *secured identity* phase, in which past, present and future-oriented identities are reconciled, reclaimed and maintained.

Thus Van Gennep's first transitional phase, *separation* corresponds to my first phase of *realisation of difference*. His second transitional phase of *liminality* is analogous with *coping* and *acting out difference*, and his third, *aggregation*, with *secured identity* respectively.

Van Gennep's Rites de passage transition phases	Separation	Liminality	Aggregation
Experiential progressions during identity journey	Realisation of difference	Coping, and acting out difference	Secured identity

Figure 6.2: Chart of *rites de passage* transition phases and experiential progressions of identity journey

The first phase represents the beginning of the identity journey for members. In the second phase, *liminality* and *coping and acting out difference*, the defensive social and personal coping mechanisms are used when dealing with members of the dominant groups (island-borns, elders of the Church, mainstream New Zealanders). In this transition phase there is internal confusion and lack of resolution of a stable identity owing to inability to reconcile chaos and contradiction in the apparent ordered situations in both *papālagi* and Samoan space. This phase represents efforts by individuals and groups to cope with their non-recognition as being part of 'a group'. They define themselves as not-New Zealanders, and/or not-Samoan. Coping mechanisms for challenges to members' identity as Samoans in the context of visits to Samoa consist of acting out attitudes of *ita*, *fa'amaualuga* or *fa'amaualalo*. In the context of Newton Church they consist of leaving or taking time out periods from Church and/or 'āga for short, lengthy or permanent periods.

The second phases *liminality* and *coping and acting out difference* are analogous in that conflict becomes the focus of still other sets of coping mechanisms. In this categorisation, there is denial or resistance of equal status as a New Zealander and as a Samoan. The passing mechanism is used where members have become more *papālagi*, Samoan, or Maori (in some cases), e.g., embracing charismatic or born again religions or sects as an extreme example of passing into dominant *papālagi* Christian society, as opposed to joining 'autalavou as a way of passing into Samoan society. Passing into New Zealand society is also acted out in opting out of parental and NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* and Church networks and becoming either social outcasts or adopting a middle-class New

Zealander lifestyle devoid of any Samoan influences. This ambiguous liminal state of unlimited creativity is the core agent of transformation, where the rebellious nature of adolescence is at full flight. During this state role reversals may occur where NZ-borns experiment with being a 'bad' Samoan and New Zealander and where previously 'bad' behaviour is adopted. For young people this means opting out of *fa'aSamoa*, rebelling against parental *fa'aSamoa* and *pālagi* authority structures, experimentation with drugs, alcohol, promiscuity and marginal lifestyles. But in all cases this occurs outside of the realm of 'āiga and Church networks. The duration of this period of liminality varies--it can be a perpetual state of denial or confusion for some, for others a transient learning experience.

The final phases of *aggregation* and a *secured identity* represent a state of orderly internalisation of conflict, chaos, and confusion evident in the other two phases. This categorisation assumes the presence of a Samoan persistent identity system, i.e., a separated past-oriented ethnic identity and a still-viable sense of separate group belonging regardless of the degree of active participation within the dominant society. It also assumes a willingness to also be an active member of New Zealand society as a Samoan in terms of a present and future-oriented identity. As a result of this maturational and experiential transition where members are older, and may now have children of their own, they return to Church and 'āiga; accept and understand a secured *fa'aSamoa*; accept *matal* titles for their 'āiga; want to be, and their children to be part of Newton Church's winner mentality; operate intervention strategies to cope with *fa'alavelave*, e.g., *mafutaga*; want their children to *tautala fa'aSamoa* and to learn about parental *fa'aSamoa*. At the same time members understand that they are also active members of New Zealand society, in that they are people who can be perceived as successful, upwardly mobile professionals, representative of middle-class New Zealanders. In this capacity, they have coped with their new self-identities by choosing professions and career paths which enable them to help "their" people in their capacities as teachers, lawyers, doctors, ministers, police officers, Government Department clerks and managers, etc. For some these careers and professions have been forced upon them by parental insistence; for others, they are jobs that they have gravitated towards during their liminal phases in their exploration of a self-satisfying identity.

Liminal sites of identity *rites de passages*

Another significant point which only structuralist analysis has allowed me to point out has to do with the site of these cultural, identity transformations. What is interesting about the identity journeys of members of the ESG is that these rites of passage have occurred while they have been members of Newton Church. What I mean by this is that most members of the ESG have been through the process of transition and have attained a secured identity, i.e., reached aggregation where they have reconciled their Samoan identity in the New Zealand situation. For many, their liminal period involved leaving the Church and having time out periods, as well as adolescent rejection of *papālagi* and parental *fa'aSamoa* authority structures. For some members time outs or 'getting a life' have included experimentation with drugs, alcohol, and marginal life-styles. When these members have chosen to engage in these behaviours, they have gone away from the realm of 'āiga and Church. When they tire of this experimentation and are ready to return to some form of stability and a secure identity, the Church has provided the "rock" or "anchor" or "home" apart from personal 'āiga to return to. While inside the Church NZ-borns experience opposition to the oppressiveness of Samoan hegemony and see it as a "battleground of change". While outside the Church, NZ-borns experience liminal periods where new experiences and understandings--both positive and negative--are gained. In other words, they have been able to reconcile the contradictions of the ritual more easily because they are members of Newton Church. Newton Church, as a site of decolonised christianity, provides for members' spiritual, secular and cultural needs. It is where a member's personal 'āiga networks are brought together and provides a consolidated cultural base for NZ-borns. The Church is a *mediator* in helping members to transcend both conflicting situations--inside and outside the Church.

For NZ-borns who do not belong to PIC, EFKS or other churches with a strong Samoan presence, the identity journey ritual will be more difficult to handle because of the absence or diluted influence of stabilising factors ('āiga, traditional authoritative structures reinforced by church) in sustaining a Samoan identity (see Tiatia 1997, Payne 1991:100-111). Those NZ-born who are not affiliated to Newton, PIC branches or EFKS Churches

have only their own personal *'āiga* networks (which may or may not be active in parental *fa'aSamoa*) to help them through the liminal processes of identity confusion. Moreover even if they are not experiencing the same sorts of issues because they are not exposed to the church (or denominations where there is a strong Samoan component) in which these dilemmas become significant, at some time or other in their lives they will indeed be subject to either overt or subtle racist attacks by *papālagi* and accusations of being *papālagi* from their island-born *'āiga*. It is most likely that this largely reduced spiritual and cultural support system will not be able to sustain an individual from the onslaught of the contradictions and oppositions which these identity journeys entail, and these NZ-borns may—consciously or unconsciously—be experiencing an identity crisis in a perpetual state of liminality. Moreover, support may be sought after by these NZ-borns in other models most likely drawn from *papālagi* society, such as gangs or other marginal groups, which often reflect and operate on anti-Samoan and anti-establishment mores (*Staunch: Inside the gangs* in Payne 1991:100-110).

Structuralist analysis provides a way to investigate the paradoxes contained in the identity verse. By making conspicuous the constituent elements of the identity journey, and the communication of the identity journey contained in the verse, we can extrapolate structuralist concepts of operators, polarities and binary oppositions, the role of symbolism and the repetitive acting out of models. Moreover, by viewing the identity journey as an extended ritual containing a series of rites of passage, the structure of the ritual experiences of identity confusion can be exposed. Through this theoretical framework, the identity journey can be seen as a ritual with a series of sequences which communicate very salient and pivotal themes of a NZ-born identity. The transition caused by this ritual is sometimes accelerated and stressful on the individual, especially during the liminal periods, and particularly qualifies the identity journey as a creative rite of cultural transformation in terms of changed understandings of parental, NZ-born and secured *fa'aSamoa*, and unsecured/secured identities for this group of NZ-borns.

Structuralist theory, as a way of understanding the identity journey of NZ-borns, shows how the "disordered" liminal period of identity confusion fits into the "ordered" structure of ritual transformation. Operators of binary contrasts and oppositions, the repetition of key themes of oppression and the role of symbolism, all act as ordering

devices to calculate various possibilities of societal existence. It suggests that through these *rites of passage* NZ-borns negotiate their identity in a revised society 'in the mind'. In this context structuralism allows us to describe shifts in the explicit *level* of reality, and by viewing the identity journey as a ritual event, using a structuralist theoretical model, the dichotomy of chaos and confusion within an ordered structure can be reconciled. Moreover, the various challenges to and levels of awareness of identity as expressed in a subjective analysis of the identity journey in Part Two, can now be understood as *rites of passage*, representing different levels of successive normal/liminal/normal states, in the distanced structuralist model.

The identity journey is about the developmental subjective experience of the self. During the identity journey, there is a separation out of self from nonself, when one defines oneself as not something else. What is interesting is that if and when a secured identity is reached internally, in one's mind or in the minds of a group of like-minded individuals, this can have practical effects on lived reality (Lévi-Strauss 1963). In my research context, change in the Newton Church structure is effected by the construction of a secured identity, a collective NZ-born Samoan identity which the ESG have constructed as the sixth ethnic group in the proposed Synod structure (See Chapter Seven). At an individual level, overt behaviour will change with the individual's new heightened understanding or consciousness of their identity or, at the journey's end, their secured identity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONSTRUCTION OF A NZ-BORN SAMOAN IDENTITY

...ethnic [groups]...are informed and substantiated through individual consciousnesses. The ethnic group is an aggregate of selves each of whom produces ethnicity for itself....It is the self's consciousness which has primacy in the creation of ethnicity, in rendering boundaries meaningful, in the interpretation of ethnic identity (Cohen 1994:76).

This chapter is concerned with NZ-born Samoan *group* identity. The methodology I employ is drawn from Spicer together with insights gleaned from De Vos (see Chapter Two). I extend Spicer's concept of opposition to explain splits or dynamics *within* a group and to show how opposition can also be differentially expressed against, as well as perceived by, members of the same ethnic group. My use of opposition therefore involves a group's response to the perception and treatment of them by members of their own ethnic group as belonging more to the dominant society.

Finally, I examine the symbols which characterise the *fa'aSamoa* as a 'persistent identity system', and Samoans as an 'enduring people'. In doing this, I argue that for New Zealand-born Samoans the desire to be identified not as *papālagi* or New Zealander but as Samoan or NZ-born is evidence of a Samoan persistent identity system, and that the ethnic solidarity of this particular group of NZ-borns is a result of opposition mounted by island-born Samoans of the Church community. The strengthening of ethnic solidarity in this instance is achieved by the construction of a NZ-born Samoan identity.

According to Cornell (1995:5), an ethnic identity is a label, and in making an ethnic identity claim, we label ourselves or others. But it much more than just a label. As Cornell states:

...we name ourselves and others, and in so doing assign a place in a classificatory scheme. But in the process of naming or labelling we invariably do more. The label is a referent, a symbol...a condensation of knowledge, facts, fictional accounts,

assumptions, attitudes that describe what it means to be a particular type of person....it is...an entire narrative...it becomes our story (ibid.).

Where did "NZ-born" come from?

There is a scene in Wendt's short film *Auckland Fa'aSamoa* (1980) which encapsulates this new phenomenon of the '90s, this new "label", this constructed ethnic identity. In this scene the possibility of a Samoan subculture in New Zealand is touted. The look on the young NZ-born woman's face in response to this suggestion is one of those "ethnographic moments". The look of utter amazement at the audacity of even the suggestion of the emergence of a Samoan subculture reveals the tenacious grip of Samoan conservatism as the cornerstone of Samoan identity, and this only some twenty years ago. Yet today, in the space of only one generation or so, on radio talkback shows, the television programme *Tagata Pasifika*, in Auckland University research essays and Masters theses (Utumapu 1992, Oloi 1996, Tiatia 1997), and in the recent maiden speech of a Labour MP (Mark Gosche in *NZ Herald* March 1997), the existence of a NZ-born Samoan identity is clearly emerging. This "new" identity is also clearly evident in my study. The following is a much simplified, condensed and specifically contextualised description of this phenomenon.

What does "NZ-born" mean?

To 'āiga and Church

To 'āiga, in Samoa and recent island arrivals, NZ-borns are on the one hand *papālagi*, and on the other family members who may or may not *tautala fa'aSamoa* fluently, who have had different *papālagi* socialisation experiences and who therefore may not participate in normal Samoan activities and practices. They are also a source of amusement and ambivalence, perhaps even derision, envy and antagonism. They represent younger members of the 'āiga who therefore have to defer to parental *fa'aSamoa* and participate in *fa'alavelave* despite their shortcomings in not being Samoan enough. To the

Church community and elders, NZ-born means the youth element of the Church represented in the Sunday school, Bible class and ESG. They are young people who *tautala* NZ-born, and who may be losing their Samoan culture because they are so entrenched in the New Zealand way of life in terms of education, careers and values of *papālagi*. They are to be tolerated but ultimately are there for their convenience. They are not a threat to their authority and autonomy in Church administration and policies at present, however they do have some useful skills in law, accountancy, management etc. that can be called upon if the situation requires it. They are their children, nephews, nieces and grandchildren and *'āiga* and therefore are their source of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo*. They are taught to *usitai* at all times and encouraged not to question the status quo. During times of *fa'alavelave*, they will be called upon to contribute financially and in any other ways required of them.

To NZ-borns

Being NZ-born signifies the existence of a unique identity defined by the following attributes and experiences. Their preferred language is English although they can *tautala* NZ-born. They are being brought up through the *papālagi* education system and are aware of two different knowledge systems which sets them apart from their parents and island-born *'āiga*. They have access to two different life-styles and oscillate between the two or embrace one while denying the other. They experience identity confusion at not being accepted by Samoan *'āiga* or New Zealanders and adopt coping mechanisms to remain sane. They do not deny their Samoan-ness, and their self-identification is an apology for not being able to *tautala fa'aSamoa* fluently. Their (non-)understanding, consciously or sub-consciously, of parental *fa'aSamoa* is couched in terms of NZ-born *fa'aSamoa*. Those with secured identities and an understanding of secured *fa'aSamoa* are able to reconcile the contradictions and cope with challenges and opposition mounted by Samoans and New Zealanders to their perceived self-identities, specifically the coping strategy of securing professions, occupations and career paths which involve them in helping other Samoans by being NZ-born.

Is NZ-born a new 'subculture'?

The emergence of a NZ-born Samoan subculture in New Zealand, and its implications for NZ-borns, island-borns and others is a complex matter. Confusion arises in viewing a NZ-born ethnic identity as presented in the condensed, simplified summary above, and a NZ-born subculture, as analogous concepts. If we are to agree with the popular definition of subculture as "a cultural group within a larger culture, often having beliefs or interests at variance with those of the larger culture" (Allen 1990:1213), then people who identify themselves as Samoan do indeed constitute a subculture of Samoan people within the whole New Zealand population, defined as a people with their own language, hierarchy of values and characteristic modes of appearance and behaviour that expresses "visible and symbolic resistance to real and perceived subordination" (Bullock, Stallybrass and Trombley 1977:824). But the question then arises: Do NZ-borns represent a subculture within their own "larger culture"—the Samoan culture, the *fa'aSamoa*? This particular problematic element of subcultural analysis can best be understood by considering the following example which traces the events leading up to the construction of a NZ-born ethnic identity in the context of this study.

In Chapter Two I introduced Spicer's concepts of 'opposition, 'persistent identity systems', and 'enduring peoples' (1971, 1980) as crucial to a broader understanding of 'a people', their history and identity. In the following section I take on Spicer's challenge in examining the phenomenon of persistent identity systems by describing and systematically investigating a specific instance of opposition of a minority group to attempts at incorporating it into the dominant society. However, the seemingly enforced incorporation is not by the dominant group itself as one would expect, but from the 'dominant' group of elders and authority systems from within the same ethnic group as the minority one. The minority group is the ESG of Newton Church (see Chapter Three).

Their common experiences of New Zealand *fa'aSamoa* and being NZ-born Samoans within Newton Church, growing up together in the Church, and being children and grandchildren of the first wave of Samoan migrants to New Zealand are what binds the members of the ESG together into a cohesive proactive group. However, they are as yet an untapped, latent and potentially formidable force within the Newton Church structure. The

ESG exists, its members control the Sunday school and Bible class and youth activities of the Church, and yet its involvement heretofore in the 'real' power structure has been minimal for several reasons. First, the Church is reluctant to acknowledge that the NZ-born represent a sub-group within Newton Church and insist that NZ-born be part of the larger Samoan ethnic group. If this is the case, then why did the Church leaders form the group and allow the group to exist and why did they incorporate the group within the church's management structure? The answer is first, that perhaps tension between the group which the Church originally set up and the group which has emerged may be caused by divergent goals and aims. Clearly, the ESG has been allowed to exist as a separate group with a voice in management matters in order for Church leaders and elders to acknowledge and harness the *papālagi* expertise of its members for their administration, education, legal and business acumen. This inclusion is also owing in part to the status of some ESG elders as *matai* in their own right. But in other areas of Church work, particularly that focusing on Newton *fa'aSamoa* activities, the ESG as a group has no say. Rather, the ministers, Samoan and combined Sessions, and elders within the Samoan group (and therefore more senior *matai*) and other ethnic groups take precedence in all decision-making areas, even though matters are debated at combined Session meetings. In respecting the *feagaiga*, ESG leaders and *matai* remain silent. Second, the Church is opposed to the appointment of a NZ-born minister. Third, NZ-borns are reluctant, given their *papālagi* status and youth, to commit themselves fully to the ESG and Church knowing that culturally they cannot be accepted as equal participants in combined decision-making sectors of the Church. In addition, finance and time constraints compromise the involvement of NZ-borns with responsibilities to their professions and personal commitments (many NZ-borns are young marrieds, first home buyers with large mortgages to repay, who also feel obliged to financially assist their parents and 'āiga), and they are ambivalent about taking part in the ESG. This latent force is also being continuously tested with regard to their commitment to parental and Newton *fa'aSamoa*. Even though they may be educated and qualified in *papālagi* terms, it is rather their service to and participation in Newton *fa'aSamoa* that will allow this power to be exerted. This power, previously unchallenged, was sorely tested by the recent restructuring proposals of the national body of the PIC Church (see Chapter Three).

Intragroup Dynamics: The oppositional process within Newton Church

Meleiseā states that "...most people who understand the system and the economic realities of Western Samoan society, agree that the majority of Samoans live by *fa'aSamoa* and prefer to retain its essential elements. The greatest threat lies in the...small though very powerful section of the community who could survive without *fa'aSamoa*" (1987b:234).

This is exactly the threat that NZ-borns in the ESG represent to many island-born Samoans and elders of the Church. The elders and island-born Samoans perceive that NZ-borns have been assimilated as New Zealanders by some sort of 'natural' process. They perceive this as an irretrievable loss and view NZ-borns as bereft of the 'real *fa'aSamoa* and a 'real' Samoan identity. After all, many of them are well-educated middle-class professionals, with middle-class incomes, even though their parents and grandparents were labourers and factory workers. NZ-borns who are not middle class, who are unemployed and on the dole, in gangs or other marginal groups, are still regarded in this way, for they still represent people who have adopted *papālagi* life-ways in not obeying their parents and not becoming "successful" in educational (and therefore financial) terms in order to fulfil the financial demands of the *fa'aSamoa*. Both groups have no need of *fa'aSamoa* to survive in New Zealand—indeed to many NZ-borns *fa'aSamoa* is a burden. Nevertheless, the desire by some NZ-borns to be identified as NZ-born Samoan or Samoan, instead of *papālagi* or New Zealander is real. Why is this so?

The belief among island-born Samoans that NZ-borns are becoming more monolingual, i.e., prefer to speak English rather than Samoan, and monocultural, i.e., prefer to follow a 'kiwi' life-style, and the expressed fear that NZ-borns have lost, or are losing, their Samoan culture is exemplified in the following quote from a senior Minister of Newton Church (now retired).

There is a big gap between the older people and the younger people here...the people who were born and brought up in Samoa are well grounded in the Samoan culture and the Samoan way of life, whereas our children who were born here in New Zealand are in the air. They really don't know what to do; they're living in a grey world, a different world...the real problems...are the children who were born in New Zealand and educated here (the Rev. Sio cited in Pitt & Macpherson 1974:54).

The expectation that one has to be a 'good' Samoan (see Chapter Four) is regarded cynically by some NZ-borns.

I think that's what we are seen as, as an economic resource here....Like we don't share in the spoils as we'd like, like honour and other things....that goes to them [our parents]...and we're kind of left still on the outside. There are people who become *matai*...but why are they made *matai*?....they're just another economic resource I guess so that they can say this person's a *matai* and we can call on that person for different things....But that person doesn't play the part of a real *matai*, for instance like in decision-making, day-to-day running of the family and that type of thing....and so in many ways we're kind of an appendage to what's REALLY going on....

While NZ-born Samoans are seen to be losing their culture, what they have obviously not lost is their ability to actually power the *fa'aSamoa* financially, giving to meet *fa'aSamoa* 'āga obligations, both in New Zealand and in Western Samoa. In practice, it is this aspect of Samoan culture that the Church leaders are afraid that NZ-borns are losing. Indeed the ability to contribute to *fa'alavelave* is directly hampered for many who become unemployed and who are on the dole. And it is this expectation that causes some NZ-borns to opt out of Church (see Chapter Five). Their inability to meet their obligations to 'āga in terms of *tautua* and the refusal by some to give of their time and resources thus become crucial indicators of maintaining a Samoan identity or having a time out period (see Chapter Five). This is what *tautua* is all about. Given that one of the principle tenets of the *fa'aSamoa* is "*o le ala 'i le pule, le tautua*" (The way to power/authority is by serving), whether or not one participates in this practice is crucial to a Samoan identity. Even in Samoa, the village institutions of 'aumāga (body of young/untitled men of a village), and *aualuma* (association of unmarried women of the village) spend time and resources as their *tautua* to their villages (see Fairbairn-Dunlop 1996 and Schoeffel 1995). On the level of 'āga, *tautua* is practised by all members who are able to do so. This is also what *fa'aaloalo* means and it is in this context where the *vā fealoaloa'i* and *vā tapuia* are demonstrated. The ideology of *tautua* is one of the most powerful and challenging in the *fa'aSamoa*. In Samoa those who provide *tautua* and complain about the lack of participation in decision-making are referred to derogatively as

tautua fia matai (serving purely to become a *matai*), or *tautua pa'ō* (lit. fallen service)(Meleiseā: personal communication). In New Zealand, prioritising who they spend time and resources on in order to *tautua* becomes acutely problematic for NZ-borns. Whether *fa'aaloalo* and *tautua* is to be given to their 'village(s)' in Samoa, their 'āiga in New Zealand, or their church, or all three, on limited funds and with other financial obligations such as living expenses, rental accommodation, mortgages, loans and the inflated cost of living in New Zealand are expectations and decisions which many NZ-borns are unable to cope with. The extent of time and resource obligations further compound this dilemma. For some it is much easier to opt out of the *fa'aSamoa* and church.

ESG Opposition to PIC Restructuring Proposals

In Chapter Three I described the historical context of the development of a PIC Synod. This new structure is a composite of current indigenous church structures borrowed directly from Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau, which would effectively give Pacific Islanders of the PIC freedom to express their faith fully in their own cultural terms. What is interesting about this proposed structure of the Synod is that there is no accommodation for the ESG of Newton PIC. The ESG was quick to point out the inherent difficulties in this undertaking:

To disregard the needs of our NZ-born youth, to try and exist in a vacuum, cocooned from reality, would be a recipe for disaster. We are not in Samoa, Niue or the Cook Islands or Tokelau - We are in Aotearoa, and it will be foolish to think that a church structure borrowed directly from the islands (warts and all) will remain 'traditional', or have the same effect in Aotearoa as it did in the Islands. Pacific Island institutions, and the...problems/solutions associated with their continued existence are contextual, and cannot be transplanted across time and space. As with the *fa'aSamoa*, *fakaNiue*, *fakaTokelau*, *peaKuki Airani*, which has been modified by our parents and grandparents...the proposed structure of the Pacific Island Church Synod must be creatively modified to suit Auckland, Aotearoa, November 1994, and hopefully for future generations (ESG Submission 1994:7).

Construction of NZ-born Samoan identity by ESG

In response to this restructuring proposal, the ESG prepared a submission (see Appendix Seven) which in effect constructs their own NZ-born identity, to justify their inclusion in the proposed Synod, as a sixth ethnic group, in partnership with the Samoan, Niuean, Cook Island, Tokelauan and Tuvaluan groups of the PIC.

Traditionally the role of NZ-borns has been one of 'bridging' the gap between the world of our Pacific Island parents, and the new world of the *palagi*. As intermediaries between parents/ 'āga/kin/communities and the state, we have grown up with two quite different types of world views, and two quite different types of knowledge/power systems. Like our Pacific Island ancestors we have taken freely from the one to enhance the other, knowledgeable in the fact that change was/is/forever will be inevitable, and yet still confident that the cultural identities of our parents would remain intact throughout this process, buffered by the church/ 'āga/kin institutional networks, which have remained staunchly in place. It is *our* cultural identities as NZ-borns, however, which has been questioned, undermined, ignored, and yet to weather the storm. We are part of our parents/grandparents worlds, while living in a *palagi* world. As intermediaries we have become quite comfortable in this well-worn, rather schizophrenic role, sensitive to our parents' cultural and social needs in our home/family/church environments, yet aggressive, and proactive at school/universities/work in the *palagi* world in order to...survive the harsh reality of living in NZ, Aotearoa. And all the while continually meeting our social, cultural and financial commitments/obligations to our 'āga and extended families, both here and in the Islands (ESG Submission:2).

Acknowledgement of the ESG would mean their formal inclusion in the new PIC Synod structure. If acknowledgement is not forthcoming, the PIC Church leaders would be in fact denying the existence of their own children and grandchildren within the PIC, but worse still, depriving them of a viable Pacific Island identity as NZ-borns.

This dilemma is not as serious as it may sound. Because there are *matal* in the ESG, the main body of the PIC is indeed deliberating carefully the place of the ESG's involvement in the new Synod structure, although many PIC leaders see the issue as uniquely Newton's. Being the mother-church, its members include mainly first, second and third generation NZ-born Samoans. Other younger parishes have yet to experience this situation, but will have to face problems with their young people that Newton has already

confronted (see Tiatia 1997). Already two other parishes are considering setting up an ESG. The problem is also coming to the fore in New Zealand-based branches of the EFKS. At the same time there is a guarded jealousy and disdain of Newton's ESG as "elitist" by some youth groups in other PIC branches whose ministers and leaders do not favour setting up an ESG.

The ESG submission has highlighted a problem that some PIC leaders were not even aware of, and preliminary meetings of the Special Committee for PIC Synod suggest that ESG proposals are being seriously considered. Meanwhile the ESG are consolidating by nominating new ESG elders and continuing their work for the Church.

The construction of a NZ-born Samoan identity central to the submission is that NZ-borns see themselves as "bridges", "mediators", "intermediaries" and "guardians" for the world of their Samoan parents and grandparents in relation to the wider society. Even more interesting is the political significance of the ESG making a submission in its own right to the PCANZ to contest the major PIC proposal. This reflects a development both of political savvy and opposition to being ignored in this way. Clearly by making this submission, the ESG is staking its claim as guardian, a bridge between their Church, leaders and elders and *'āiga*, and the *papālagi* institution of the PCANZ. These NZ-borns see themselves as possessing the skills, expertise and maturity to "make sense of" and to deal with the chaos and confusion inherent in the PCANZ asserting its dominance over PIC and undermining the PIC autonomy (enjoyed by PIC before the merger with PCANZ) which is threatening Newton Church. There is no identity crisis here. It is not that these NZ-borns are part of two worlds and are comfortable in neither, nor do they see themselves equally as Samoans and New Zealanders, as some scholars have argued, but more as Samoans in the role of guardians of their *'āiga* and the *fa'aSamoa* as they know it in New Zealand. And in the same way, the ESG also provides a bridge between disaffected youth and island-born elders of Newton Church (See Chapter Five).

It is also clear that the construction of a NZ-born identity by the ESG of Newton PIC counteracts stereotypic images of NZ-born Samoans as monolingual, monocultural, i.e., *papālagi*, or Samoans who are losing their culture--stereotypes created by both *papālagi* (PCANZ) and island-born Samoans who are in positions of authority within the PIC Church structure. These stereotypes serve to enhance the superior political positions of

the PCANZ, the *papālagi* faction, and their insistence on a fragmented multicultural church which would compromise the identity of the unified PIC in New Zealand. The Church elite of traditional Samoan leaders and ministers stand to gain much more status in the new proposed structure of the PIC Synod in cultural or traditional terms, and in real economic benefits from their much enhanced status (ministers as *matai* phenomenon and *toea'ina/pulega* structure of proposed Synod).

The irony of all this is that the stereotypes created by wider New Zealand society that are in line with assimilationist/integrative models and notions which state that culture, in this case the *fa'aSamoa*, is static are being perpetuated by island-born Samoans and elders. By reifying their knowledge and childhood experiences of the *fa'aSamoa*, they create ideologies in which the 'real' *fa'aSamoa* is in Samoa, or only practised by island-born Samoans, and that it is impossible for NZ-borns to practise or understand the *fa'aSamoa*. Consequently they argue that *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand is in a state of 'decline', because NZ-borns are "*papālagi*", or "not Samoan".

The perception of ethnicity as a source of considerable conflict (De Vos 1982, 1990) is evident in this situation. While NZ-borns recognise their past affiliation with their parents' lifeways and parental *fa'aSamoa*, their notions of self come into conflict with their present situation. This particular conflict has been resolved by a form of manipulation—in this instance by the ESG presenting a submission to the PCANZ which has provided a release valve from the emotional turmoil that these NZ-borns are experiencing, albeit by compromising cultural mores. But the matter is far from over.

Admittedly, the ESG's construction of a NZ-born Samoan identity is one which cannot fully represent each NZ-born Samoan's individual identity. It does, however, provide an opportunity for some NZ-born Samoans to give expression to their collective secured identity in a common cause to effect changes in the structure of Newton Church, and to avoid potential conflict.

What is significant about the documentation of this instance of opposition is that NZ-born awareness of their experiences through time, and their historical understanding of events such as these, will form the foundation of enduring "historical moments", and a persistent identity system for future generations of NZ-borns (Spicer 1971).

To return to the question previously postulated: Do NZ-borns represent a subculture

within their own Samoan cultural framework? My answer is equivocally yes and no. Yes, because NZ-borns in terms of language, education and life-style share experiences among themselves which they cannot share with island-born and educated Samoans. But with regard to the institutions, attitudes, values, behaviour and emotional attachment to *fa'aSamoa* and a Samoan identity, a subculture within *fa'aSamoa* for NZ-borns is not as clear. Although NZ-borns strive to distinguish their dual socialisation experiences as unique, this is not to say that this uniqueness is an affirmation of a NZ-born subculture *per se* within Samoan society. Granted that on the surface NZ-borns represent "a cultural group within a larger culture", but I do not agree that they have "beliefs or interests at variance with those of the larger culture". It is not the beliefs or interests that are at variance but rather the *scope*, *range* and *occurrence* of the actual manifestation of these same beliefs and interests that distinguish them--especially for those who unconsciously are caught in, or who consciously choose to participate only in NZ-born *fa'aSamoa* or not at all.

The NZ-born label, while on the surface simply the name of a category of persons, in fact carries within it, unspoken but to one degree or another understood, a story, a narrative, an account, of what it means to be a member of this group. To be NZ-born is to have lived a particular kind of life in particular places, and gone through a particular set of experiences that led to a very particular present. It is a common narrative of opposition, conflict, resistance, confusion, which for most ends in identity understanding, reconciliation and hope for the future.

The collective self-identity constructed by NZ-borns often does not correspond to their identity as perceived by "outsiders", in this context island-born Samoans and New Zealanders. The outsider ones may still make as substantial demands on the individual. How do you live up to the expectations of those who think they know your story, or how do you defy those expectations and reject the narratives that others attach to you? Nevertheless, the NZ-born Samoan label accommodates both stories--"NZ-born" embodies the whole plethora of experiences attached to being socialised into *papālagi* life-ways and "Samoan" embodies the Samoan socialisation experiences consolidated by the *fa'aSamoa* experiences promulgated by 'āga and Newton Church. For NZ-borns with a secured identity to take on a NZ-born identity is to take on both the insider and outsider versions of the identity story, and the NZ-born label represents a clear affirmation of both identity

stories.

An enduring people: a Samoan persistent identity system

The *fa'aSamoa* experienced and practised by NZ-borns in the ESG reflects a Samoan "persistent identity system" in the context of the institution of PIC Newton. Challenges to one's identity as a Samoan act as a catalyst in that the more one is denied this identity, the more reasons this is sought. In this way, slowly but inevitably, other symbols of the persistent identity system are exposed and reclaimed.

Spicer's explanation for the persistence of identity and his concept of opposition (see Chapter Two) are significant because the conditions under which these systems survive can be empirically investigated in the narrated experiences of people. In this study, the narratives of NZ-borns tell how they experience *fa'aSamoa* in New Zealand. Their stories challenge dominant primordial and circumstantial constructions of Pacific Island identities.

The creative attempt by members of the ESG to redefine themselves is an instance of formations which cut across national boundaries and of people not born in their homeland but who identify with it. The ESG is a group which retains strong links with their parents' and grandparents' places of origin and their traditions, but are without the illusion of returning to the past (Hall & Geben 1992). The ESG's new collective identity is based upon a partly-shared history of their forebears and the 50-year history of the Newton Church community. As individuals they have no common mythical or legendary heroes but choose as role models their parents, or founders and former leaders of Newton Church. The ideologies on which their views of the world are based have been provided by their *'āga*, church, communities and New Zealand socialisation experiences. Instead of abandoning traditional ethnic identities in the quest for socio-economic and political equity in their place of birth, this group has retained them along the way, even when some of them have achieved that equity. It is through their successive linkages with 'others', as well as island-born Samoans, that the sense of their own individual and group identity has been forged. Conceptions, often stereotypic, of them by these others, have in turn affected views of themselves and their role in relation to other peoples. The collective identity symbols and their meanings express this cumulation of historical and emotional experience.

On a macro level, for Samoan people, experiences of christianity, colonialism, capitalism, globalisation, all instances of opposition, only serve to energise their persistent identity system as Samoans, and their continued existence as an 'enduring people'. They are Samoan people following the paths forged by their ancestors of the past, and their Church and 'āiga in the present, and as such are continuing the voyage of their ancestors through time and space.

Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity writ into and rising from the depths, Oceania is ours. It is time that we realise this and use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again, and take away our freedom (Eveli Hau'ofa:1993:13).

The analysis of the identity journey narrative using structuralist discourse to understand the process of reaching a secured identity allowed me to examine opposition and contradiction on yet another level. From this I ascertained that the changed models in the mind brought about by a NZ-born's life experiences makes sense of these oppositions and contradictions in the construction of a stable individual and collective secured identity that helps NZ-borns reclaim their Samoan identity and make their existence a more liveable and understandable reality.

The subjective and objective analyses of the identity journey informed by historical insight, and the concept of a secured identity will allow NZ-born Samoans space within which to develop their own concept of self in the *vā fealoaloai* and the *vā tapuia*, the space which divides but at the same time unites children and parents, NZ-born and Samoan born, and Samoan and *papālagi*, in the weaving of their own 'ie toga. Whether NZ-born Samoans are defined as 'papālagi', 'Pacific Islander' or 'bloody coconut', this group of NZ-borns are confident in knowing that they are their Samoan parents' children, and children of Newton Church—parents who have and are experiencing the *fa'aSamoa*, and are continuing to enrich their children's lives with it.

'OUTOU, MĀTOU, TĀTOU (You, We, Us)

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, CONSIDERATIONS

It is my wish that you remain a unified 'aiga, loving one another, nursing the Va between all of you and our village, church and country (Wendt in *Ola* 1991:339).

'I' does not exist, I am not. My self belongs not to me because 'I' is always 'we', is a part of the aiga...a part of the Church, a part of the nu'u, a part of Samoa (Figiel 1996:135).

The original question posited by the Rev. Sio that started my journey, "Why are young people leaving the Church?" now appears to have some answers--answers which can only be understood by considering the juxtaposition of the rejection of NZ-born by island-born with the rejection of Samoans by New Zealanders. Most NZ-borns in the ESG have arrived at the end of their identity journey, but others are still within it--and some may never reach the end. This is my answer to the Rev. Sio's question. And it is those who have made the journey to the end who can assist those who remain within, but only with some understanding of those who have not (and probably will not ever) embark on it.

This thesis presents both western and Samoan theoretical understandings and their grounded application in a specific cultural, socio-historical context, a context which has been illuminated further by narrative discourses. In the thesis I explore what Wendt and Figiel have to say about a contemporary Samoan identity in the emphasis on 'āga, church and Samoa. I also examine the dialectical nature of culture/christianity, *fa'aSamoa*/church, crystallised in the Samoanising of christianity, as it has developed in Samoa and its

transformation in the New Zealand context of Newton Church—a site of decolonised christianity. Through a subjective and 'distanced' analyses of the identity journey, I outline how NZ-borns are culturally perceived and constituted in their own societies by 'others' and how they situate themselves.

The approach taken was largely determined by the premise that opposition and conflict is the foundation of ethnicity, and that the articulation of this process by New Zealand-born Samoans of the ESG, Newton Church, represents a series of *rites de passage* which have for some resulted in a secured identity. The identity journey rite of passage for NZ-borns is a "dramatic" experience in the classic sense of *rites de passage* which occur during life-crisis rituals and rituals of affliction (Turner 1967:6). NZ-borns, during the liminal period of the identity journey are structurally, if not physically, "invisible". Neither Samoan society nor New Zealand society provides us with definitions to allow for the existence of a not-Samoan-not New Zealander person. Consequently the liminal NZ-born exists in a confused state of ambiguity and paradox until a secured identity is reached.

Constructing the thesis in three parts seemed an appropriate means of incorporating its three main dimensions in such a way that the contributions of each to the whole, and the ways in which they interact, could be identified, while addressing aims more specific to each part. It also offered the possibility of contributing to the debate between those who expound objectivist circumstantialist approaches to ethnicity and the purely subjective and primordial 'cultural' approaches of the 'native'.

Accordingly, Part One provides the 'Settings' in which I locate myself in terms of my own personal identity, and my relationship with Newton Church and my focus group, examine scholarship on ethnicity theory, investigate further notions of 'insider' as opposed to 'native' anthropology, and provide the historical analysis of the Samoanising of christianity in Samoa by tracing the development of EFKS in Samoa from early LMS missionary influence to its transformation in the Samoan-dominated Newton PIC Church in New Zealand.

Part Two is a micro-level investigation through an ethnographic approach of the subjective experience of identity expressed through ESG narratives of the identity journey, including examination of the conflict experienced by members of the ESG in their experience of the Newton Church, and the culture/christianity, church/*fa'aSamoa* dialectic.

The rich data contained in Part Two provides the 'a'ano (flesh) of the thesis. In it the life experiences of this group of NZ-borns are given full flight in members' narratives--emotion-filled experiences, stories and opinions--as they reflect on their identity journeys. Their struggles, successes, happiness and sadness in arriving at a life story that makes sense, that provides unity, stability and purpose, within a sociohistorical matrix that embodies two much larger stories--those of the dominant society of New Zealanders and those of island-born Samoans--have been given voice. The complex process of understanding how self-identities are reached is delineated in this chapter. Some members have developed an identity they are most comfortable with and an understanding of the identity journey, while others are still at the initial stages of the journey, or somewhere along the path. Wherever they are positioned, the identity journey represents the perpetual fluctuating movement from challenge to challenge over time, and from *pālagi* space to Samoan space and vice versa. The narrative data reveals some characteristic experiences associated with each challenge contained in the identity journey. Each challenge is complex and interconnected to all the other challenges. Until NZ-borns negotiate all these challenges, the crisis of identity confusion or unawareness will persist, whether or not NZ-borns acknowledge this crisis or not. However, for those who have successfully negotiated all challenges and have arrived at a final understanding, a secured identity is reached where they can and do perceive and operate Samoan socio-cultural patterns within and beyond Samoan communities and establish themselves as accepted individuals and contributing members in both social groups--their Samoan 'āiga, Church, communities and New Zealand mainstream society. Their secured identity remains fixed regardless of further challenges that may be experienced. A secured identity means that when NZ-borns are subsequently challenged, they are able to reconcile the oppositional forces behind the challenge(s), and because they have developed coping strategies to deal with them, they are able to remain firm in their conviction that they are NZ-born Samoan, or Samoan.

Themes relating to age, class and gender permeate the narratives and are interwoven with other thematic analyses in the context of the identity journey experiences. The most glaring differences lie in the views, opinions and explanations of the younger (non-secured identity) as opposed to maturer (secured identity) members, which is reflective of the differences in the "levels of awareness" experienced by them. This differentiation provides

the focus of the analysis. However, views which contrast markedly between *matai*/non-*matai* and male/female have been highlighted and explored also, when these differ as a consequence of the way families are organised in the *fa'aSamoa*.

Part Three uses a macro-level 'distanced' structuralist discourse to further analyse the identity journey and secured identities as *rites de passage* to explore how individual identity is shaped 'in the mind' and returns again to ethnicity theory to investigate the construction of an ESG group identity--a NZ-born identity that pressed for structural changes within the institution of Newton Church and the national body of the PIPC. The theme which is pursued throughout is the persistence of a Samoan identity beyond Samoa.

This study has highlighted three major findings. The first is on a heretofore unexplored area of intra-ethnicity studies--*intra-ethnic ethnicity* which has usually been confined to intra-ethnic generational studies only. In doing so it was necessary to examine the links that my focus group had with other Samoans through the church, 'āiga, *fa'aSamoa* and homeland, and how these had become differentially complex by virtue of individuals in this group being born in New Zealand and not in Samoa. In order to understand this complexity I have provided an explanation of how different perceptions of *fa'aSamoa*--parental, NZ-born and secured--are internalised either consciously or subconsciously during NZ-born identity journeys. I also explained how church and culture have become indistinguishable in the *fa'aSamoa* as it is experienced today--that christianity and the *fa'aSamoa* are not dichotomous separable entities, but a dynamic sphere of interaction. I hope that this understanding will assist other NZ-borns in evaluating their relationships with the *fa'aSamoa*, their 'āiga and church, in forging a new self-identity. Should they conclude that they are indeed experiencing an identity crisis, then I hope this thesis will provide a space for working through some of these issues. Similarly I hope that the thesis will help our parents and grandparents understand some of the conflicts that their NZ-born children and grandchildren--diasporic Samoans--are experiencing in terms of identity and the *fa'aSamoa*. I hope, in short, that this thesis will contribute to an improved understanding of socio-cultural inter- and intra-ethnic and inter-generational relationships.

The second finding is at a theoretical level. Firstly, rather than describing Samoans as an ethnic group and therefore entertain that NZ-borns could perhaps represent another ethnic (sub-)group or (sub-)culture (see Chapters Two and Seven), I maintain that it is

preferable to consider Samoans as "enduring peoples" (Spicer 1971) and the *fa'aSamoa* as a persistent identity system (ibid.). In doing this I am thus assuming that the kind of ethnicity this redefinition produces is a dynamic interaction of both primordial and circumstantial views of ethnicity--primordial not in the 'strict' sense of Geertz (1963), Gordon (1978) or van den Berghe (1981), but in my re-evaluation of the notion of primordialism in revisiting the emotional content of ethnicity (Epstein 1978) in contexts of opposition and conflict (Spicer 1979, de Vos 1982,1995), and circumstantial not in the strict sense of the historical materialist and Marxist analyses (Thompson 1989) but in and of the sense that this primordialism is always triggered as a result of an actual event or experience of some social, economic or structural aspect of the environment. Thus in this sense ethnicity is contextual--there are many varieties of ethnic experience, and NZ-born Samoans are continuously involved in the renegotiation and construction of social roles and identities--but what remains at its core is the persistent identity system. In essence then, what NZ-born Samoan ethnicity is concerns an accumulation of identity journey experiences of the Samoan persistent identity system in New Zealand which take into account inter and intra-group dynamics.

Also, when considering the relationship of NZ-born Samoans to aspects of the nationality of their place of birth, it can be asserted that assimilation and multiculturalism may not be the ultimate goal for Samoan migrants and their NZ-born children and grandchildren. Rather, the kind of ethnicity being exerted here may not be primarily concerned with the project of nationalism, but with the maintenance of a transnational community, or a version of Saffran's 'diaspora'(1991)--in which cultural, social and economic advantages can be pursued by Samoan people across time and space.

Secondly, in critically reflecting on the relationship between anthropological practice and anthropological theory, I draw attention to the politics of ethnographic writing, to the impact of a researched audience on both anthropologist and text (Chapter One). I have raised questions of theoretical, ethical, and practical importance for all anthropologists who will increasingly be confronted by a diverse audience of outsiders, insiders and natives who both read and react. Rather than merely re-evaluating the viability of the distinction between "insider" and "outsider", I have also explored the differences between a "postmodern" and "native" distinction between them. In Chapter 1, I demonstrate how I

have personally dealt with the challenges to authority and interpretation that I have faced either during the process of fieldwork and the writing up of the results of my research. I am yet to experience the effect my writing will have on my own community of Samoans in New Zealand.

The third finding is my gradual progression towards the idea that *ethnicity consists of shared experiences* of an ethnic group: shared experiences of a particular persistent identity system, of a particular time, and of a particular place and can thus be applied to other migrant groups in similar situations. In this study, the shared experiences of my focus group exist as a constructed ethnicity as NZ-born Samoans of Newton Church, and also as part of the larger pan-ethnic population of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. The thesis, in highlighting the inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic and inter-generational subtleties regarding culture and identity, demonstrates that contemporary constructed Pacific Island identities are based on persistent identity systems further qualified by the diasporic nature of many contemporary Pacific Islands peoples and the birth of their children on foreign soil. Shared experiences for the group outlined in the thesis consists of the dynamic interaction between church, culture and identity. For these NZ-borns leaving Church becomes synonymous with a temporary opting out of Samoan identity. Time outs, a liminal period in the development of an individual self-identity, then becomes a crucial coping mechanism allowing NZ-borns the space and time to act out and accommodate difference, rather than succumbing to mental "unwellness" in which their emotional and cognitive knowledge of what is does not match up with what they are experiencing in the real world. Time outs allow individuals to respond to challenges in their own way, in their own time, and in their own space, so that over time challenges and consciousness of what is and ought to be can be exposed, reconciled, understood and reclaimed. Moreover it allows these individuals time and space to act out their confusion, anger and rage, and to ultimately regain control of their lives by developing specific coping mechanisms and attaining a secured identity.

The Church as mediator and stabilizer is a substantial reinforcer of Samoan identity in the New Zealand context. The overarching emphasis on '*āiga*, social relationships, and the importance of people through the *fa'aSamoa*, combined with the competitiveness, winner mentality and theology of *tautua* and *fa'aaloalo* promulgated by Newton Church, enables these NZ-borns to be confident with their own self-identities and adept at dealing

with people at all levels. They, in turn, are successful mediators, and ultimately effective teachers and leaders in both *papālagi* and Samoan spaces. More importantly the shared experience of NZ-borns with secured identities provide possible pathways for those who are experiencing identity confusion. Of significance here is that the socialisation experiences of NZ-borns conveyed by their island-born Samoan parents through *tautala fa'aSamoa*, or through English by more liberal Samoan parents, are still in fact, real experiences of *fa'aSamoa*. This is reinforced by NZ-borns' matured understandings of parental, NZ-born and finally secured *fa'aSamoa*, where it is realised that it is not the giving and serving in the *fa'aSamoa* which is problematic, but its scope, extent and frequency, and how this conflicts with contemporary living styles. The most empowering factor for NZ-borns with secured identities is the ability to move across worlds of both *papālagi* and *fa'aSamoa*. Shared experiences as Pacific Islanders in the New Zealand context is another aspect of NZ-born ethnicity. The latter's exclusive experiences are shared with all other Samoans whether younger or older, born in Samoa, New Zealand or elsewhere. They are *not* shared with any other Pacific Islands group. The differentiation in terms of culture, language, philosophies and respective histories far outweigh the one commonality of shared New Zealand educational and socialisation experiences, and links NZ-borns to their '*āga* in New Zealand, in Samoa and elsewhere. In the case of NZ-born Pacific Islanders the only commonality lies in the shared socialisation experiences of their place of birth. How their identities are articulated depends on this factor and the ethnic identity of parents, family and community, and the degree to which this ethnic identity has been instilled in their children through the existence (or non-existence) of a persistent identity system.

By looking at Samoan conceptions of their own identities we will reach a better understanding of such core emotional issues as the confusion and frustration caused by 'identity crisis', 'identity confusion' and inter-ethnic, intra-ethnic and inter-generational antagonisms. In combination with insights gleaned from Spicer, De Vos, structuralist analysis, and resources on Samoan migrants in New Zealand, my research has provided me not only with an explanation of the experiential aspects of life for Samoans born in New Zealand, but also, I hope, a contribution to a better understanding of a NZ-born Samoan identity.

Specifically, these NZ-born experiences support the Samoan conception of self as

holistically comprising the spiritual, mental and physical elements, and yet existing not as an individual, but in their relationship with other people (Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave 1997:83). This NZ-born persona finds meaning only in the relationships--*vā fealoaloa'i* and *vā tapula* with both Samoan people and New Zealanders, and derives its sense of wholeness and well-being from its place of belonging in its *'āiga* and church, its genealogy and language, the New Zealand environment and the Samoan persistent identity system. This NZ-born persona also draws its sense of control and worth when it is able to carry out its appropriate roles and responsibilities as a NZ-born in Samoan and New Zealander spaces.

Returning to the intended contribution of this thesis in providing a sound historical exposition of the Samoanising of christianity in Samoa and New Zealand, and the crystallisation of this process in a NZ-born Samoan identity expressed in ESG narratives, I leave it to my readers to judge the degree of my success. NZ-borns, who have completed their identity journey, do successfully overcome the challenges and complete their rites of passage, and do reach a secured identity in their ability to understand, reconcile and reclaim their own identities in terms of being a Samoan who is not born in Samoa, but born in New Zealand. I have drawn together a range of perspectives and thinking on a subject which is of great importance. I offer a *'le toga* in which strands of subjective knowledge prevalent in my own reflections and the narratives of the focus group interweave with the objective knowledges of western academic conjecture to create a source of history, wealth and identity.

FA'AFETAI