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**Kakai Tonga 'i 'Okalani  
Nu'u Sila**

**Tongan Generations in Auckland  
New Zealand**

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**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology at the  
University of Waikato  
2007**

**Hamilton, New Zealand**

# Abstract

This thesis is written in the format of a three act play. The author has elected this structure to frame the ethnographic data and analysis because it seemed befitting for telling my own life story alongside the memories of three generations of my matrilineal and patrilineal Tongan family residing in Auckland New Zealand. Thus, actors and scenes play out the thesis storyline in three parts where each act is titled *Prologue*, *Dialogue* and *Epilogue*.

The *Prologue*, part one of this three act play, is three chapters which sets in motion the main actors – the research participants, and the scenes – the ethnographic context in which data was collected. It represents an ethnographic mosaic of memory and meaning as co-constructed by actors in recounting how they make sense of their place, their time, in a transnational history, that is, a family of stories among three Tongan generations residing largely in Auckland New Zealand.

The *Dialogue*, part two of this three act play, is four chapters which maps out the theoretical and ethnographic territory that actors and scenes border-cross to visit. By this, I mean that research participants are political actors subject to social factors which shape how their memories and ensuing meanings are selectively reproduced in certain contexts of retelling the past and its relevance to understanding the present.

The *Epilogue*, part three of this three act play, is the curtain call for the closing chapter. It presents an ending in which a new ‘identity’ entry made by the youngest Tongan generation creates possibilities for social change not yet experienced by prior generations residing in Auckland New Zealand.

This thesis is woven into an overarching argument. Here, three generations of my matrilineal and patrilineal Tongan family residing in Auckland New Zealand intersect through two modes of memory and meaning. First, family reconstruct collective memories of ‘identity’ and ‘culture’ to make sense of how their ancestral origin, their historical past, is meaningful in their transnational lives and lifestyles. Second, inter-generational change among Tongan family residing in Auckland New Zealand is a social-political product of the transnational condition experienced by ethnic-cultural groups categorised as ‘minorities’ in the developed world.

# Note on Thesis Format

As stated in the abstract, this thesis is written in the format of a three act play. Therefore, different fonts have been used for different texts that appear in the thesis script. Such a writing strategy was elected to signify to the reader visual distinction between the analysis, which constitutes the larger part of the thesis script, and the ethnographic data collected from fieldwork conversations with three generations of my matrilineal and patrilineal Tongan family residing in Auckland New Zealand.

For example, when part of a fieldwork conversation appears in the thesis script, the font is noticeably different and *sometimes* single spacing has been used. Also, fieldwork conversations are arranged in different ways; some conversations are assembled like poetry stanza (as the example below illustrates) or a short story, some discussions between participants are written like a play to resemble an actor's script, while other fieldwork excerpts are cited in a standard thesis format.

Probably my Granddad is more Tongan

My Grandma, my Granddad, they're from different classes  
 My Grandma, her family they were quite liberal  
 Is that the word?  
 Liberated?

Their Dad was a rich *Palangi* [White] dude  
 I don't know what he did  
 And their Mum was a Tongan noble or something like that  
 So they were quite high class

Whereas my Granddad he was like from this little village out in the *wop wops*  
 [bush]  
 Where he had to ...  
 Well, he didn't have it as easy as my Grandma  
 He had to rough it

# **Thesis in a Nutshell**

This thesis explores the interplay between social memory and history among Tongan generations in Auckland New Zealand. The analysis unpacks how family memory, the life of 'me' in my family, travels, transitions and transforms among first, second and third generation Tongans living predominantly in Auckland. The thesis thus argues that the social life of memory and history among Tongan families in New Zealand is sensitive to transnational lifestyles and inter-generational change.

Part One's Prologue unfolds over three chapters the actors and associated surroundings critical to the thesis storyline. It argues that memory and history among Tongan generations ebbs and flows throughout familial relationships in flux, altering its course in routes of social change that reconstruct who I am in respect to others of kin and affine situated in a shifting national and transnational ethnoscape. It locates and dislocates a discourse of Tongan identity within the parameters of a Pacific Peoples history in New Zealand questioning intra-Pacific power differentials that confine and define movement beyond border controls of ethnicity and culture.

Chapter Four disentangles ideological conversation interlaced in theoretical terrain which feeds cultural politics in contemporary New Zealand. It analyses the subject positioning of inter-generation Tongan memory merged and emerging among a history of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. It argues that memory among Tongan generations converges with and diverges from the social memory reinvented and accepted as popular discourse of Pacific Peoples.

Chapter Five unpacks the motion and movement in identity stories from three Tongan generations. It traces origins of family memory interwoven in a discourse of remembering, forgetting and reinventing the past to make sense of the present. It argues that inter-generation memory negotiates social fracture and familial conflict in various ways to accentuate cohesion, continuity and connection.

Chapter Six analyses the politics of doing identity work among three Tongan generations of family memories, stories and life histories. In this context, the chapter unravels how identity reinvention becomes a strategy for validating discourses of family strength, stability and security. It argues that doing identity work constitutes a politicised ideology and practice, engaged in conscious and unconscious processes of relationship and environment change.

Chapter Seven situates interaction between memory and meaning among three Tongan generations in New Zealand engaged in the transience of social life. It examines points of entry, transition and departure in which social memory and its history of interpretative meaning intersect, collide and conflict among family stories. It argues that an emerging ethnographic mosaic of Tongan identity stories evokes and echoes the complexity and ambiguity of social life. Intricacy is thus mediated by memory and repositioned in stories of us, cultural truths of family, the stuff of ‘me’ and my life in my family.

Chapter Eight’s closing curtain rotates to the story’s beginning. Retracing inter-generational change in Tongan identity stories which situate ‘me’ in relation to family, it recaps interpretative meaning drawn from an origin past to make sense of the complex, shifting ‘stuff of me.’ In present day *Aotearoa* New Zealand, my life in my family is revised, reworded and reworked to maintain consistency with a subtext that induces power and persuasion – reading ‘me’ in my family in respect to an origin imagined and willed into existence and persistence – Tonga.

# Dedication

*This work is dedicated to my children  
**Toakase Raukura, Ani-Kāterina Rerewai, Rewi Maniapoto Keeti (Gage)**  
Save your memories  
Share your stories  
And in your travels  
Others may share theirs*



***Toa** in her last year at school – looking forward to leaving home in 2007 for tertiary study  
**Rewi** in tupenu and ta'ovala with his name woven at the bottom made by Grandma Siu – my Dad's Mum  
**Ani-Kaa** in an 'Apifo'ou College jacket – my Dad's high school in Tonga  
(**Ani-Kaa** is also wearing a black eye, bruised forehead and ankle brace from a front row rugby scuffle)*

*Te Kauwhata North Waikato  
Aotearoa New Zealand  
March 2006*

# Acknowledgements

To my matrilineal and patrilineal families to whom my story belongs

***Famili Kaho***

*Tongaleleka, Mounga'one 'i Ha'apai*

***Famili Tuivakano***

*Nukunuku, Fatai, Vaotu'u, Matahau 'i Tongatapu*

***Famili Hala Fangu (Malingi mei Fale Lahi)***

*Kolomotu'a 'i Tongatapu, Makave 'i Vava'u*

***Brown Family***

*Highlands – Scotland, Ngāti Awa, Tuwharetoa ki Kawerau – Aotearoa/New Zealand*

***'Aiga Tofae***

*Fale Vao, Fale Fa – Upolu, Samoa*

***Famili Mailau***

*Kotongo/Kolonga 'i Tongatapu*

***Famili Soane-Mailau***

*Fatumu 'i Tongatapu*

***Famili Pulu***

*Ma'ufanga 'i Tongatapu, Kolonga 'i Tongatapu*

***Famili Ongomaiola Ma'u-Kalani***

*Kolomotu'a 'i Tongatapu*

To my Mother and Father, Patricia Brown and Seminati Pulu  
The love you give an only child is remembered

To my husband, Brandon Amo Amo, for sharing my life  
Your memories and mine are woven

To my children, Toakase Raukura, Ani-Kāterina Rerewai and Rewi Maniapoto  
Your lives have made me

To Mike Goldsmith, Peter Gibbons and Dick Bedford  
Thank you for believing in me

To my friend, Lisiate Fa'aoso, for inspiring me  
To believe villages can achieve greatness

# Acknowledgements



*(Left to right) 'Aloua Mailau, Lisiate Fa'aoso, Halatu'u Ha'amala, (front) Rewi Maniapoto Keeti (Gage) Amoamo: one village-born granduncle, two village-born uncles, one New Zealand-born grandnephew/nephew. Three generations descended from Kotongo, the Catholic settlement of Kolonga 'i Tongatapu, taken at Lisiate's club rugby game for Marist Palmerston North in Aotearoa New Zealand, April 2007.*

*You've been so kind and generous  
I don't know how you keep on giving*

*For your kindness  
I'm in debt to you*

*For your selflessness  
My admiration*

*For everything you've done  
You know I'm bound*

*I'm bound to thank you for it*

**Natalie Merchant, Kind and Generous**

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## Note on Glossaries

The following four language glossaries translate Tongan, Māori, Samoan and hybrid terms into straightforward English. ‘Hybrid’ was employed to signal that the terms of reference, identity expressions and axioms listed in this glossary are socially constructed acts of speech, that is, language manufactured for use in context specific conversation in New Zealand by a diverse spectrum of individuals and groups (e.g. ‘slang’ used by Tongan secondary students and young adults as well as **Kiwi** or New Zealand English colloquialisms). Glossary terms are *italicised* in **bold** script in the thesis text. Moreover, in the thesis text an in-text glossary appears alongside glossary terms to allow the reader convenient access to ‘brief’ English translations. However, more intricate and detailed translations of Tongan, Māori, Samoan and hybrid terms feature in the language glossaries.

The four language glossaries translate terms and adages in the social context of their production. Thus, I have re-consulted many of the ‘official’ participants who contributed ideas, memories and stories to this thesis on the meaning which their words and images intended for readers and listeners to *pick up*, not pick at.

My thesis is not a linguistic work. It is an ethnographic mosaic of my family’s social memory and history co-constructed by my ‘Self’ and three Tongan generations living in **‘Okalani Nu’u Sila**. Therefore, speakers themselves are the experts on their own lives. And in saying this, it is the contextualised memory and meaning of the language that ‘We’ use to speak of our lives that is recorded here.

# Tongan Glossary

## ***Afakasi***

Transliteration of the English hybrid term, half-caste.

## ***‘Alu kai kui!***

Go eat your Grandma!

## ***Anga fakatonga***

A system of culture and power known as the ‘Tongan way,’ or the correct Tongan way for individuals and groups to conduct their relationships.

## ***Anga kovi***

To speak and behave in a way that conveys bad manners or to show that one has not learnt the appropriate way to conduct amicable, goodwill relationships in public.

## ***Api***

The allotment of land designated to a family for their homestead.

## ***‘Apifo’ou***

The name of the Catholic co-educational secondary and intermediate school for years 7-13 students in *Ma’ufanga* village of *Tongatapu* located in the estate of *Nopele Fakafanua*.

## ***Atalanga***

The name of Tonga Government House in Remuera suburb of Auckland City, New Zealand.

## ***Arrgghh – tuku laupisi e?!***

Stop it – stop talking rubbish eh?!

## ***Aveave***

A waist garment worn at funerals made from bandanas to signify the death of a high-ranking person.

## ***E!***

Verbal exclamation that stresses the speaker’s message.

## ***‘Eiki***

Superior or elevated in status over others.

## ***E ta’ahine, ko Kolonga ko e! Hoiaue!***

Oh my goodness, you’re a Kolonga girl!

## ***‘Eua***

The name of an inhabited island located off the east coast of *Tongatapu*.

## ***Faikava***

To participate in a *kava* session.

## ***Faito’o***

To treat or cure with Tongan medicine.

## ***Faiva***

Tongan performing arts.

## ***Faiva Tonga***

Tongan performing arts.

## ***Fakama ‘aupito***

An experience which has caused grave embarrassment.

***Faka'apa'apa***

The ideology and practice of respect determined by a Tongan system of culture and power.

***Fakapo'uli***

To lose control of one's emotions and temper.

***Fakapo'uli e?!***

They've lost control, eh?!

***Fakasesele***

Madness or to speak and behave like a 'crazy' person.

***Fakataha***

A meeting.

***Fakatevolo***

Demonic, satanic or to express an evil attitude in one's speech and behaviour.

***Fakatonga***

A system of culture and power understood as the 'Tongan way,' or the correct Tongan way for individuals and groups to conduct their relationships.

***Fala***

A woven mat.

***Fale Kalapu***

A building site where Tongan men convene to consume *kava*. Literally translated into English, *Fale Kalapu* means club house.

***Falekoloa***

A small shop.

***Famili***

Transliteration of the English term, family.

***Famili Kaho***

Transliteration of the English term, the Kaho family.

***Famili Tonga***

Tongan family or relatives.

***Famili Tonga 'i 'Okalani***

Tongan family or relatives living in Auckland.

***Fanau***

Family or one's close kin.

***Fie' eiki***

For one's speech and behaviour to demonstrate the kind of arrogance in which they perceive themselves as 'superior' to others.

***Fie' haa***

To show off.

***Fie' 'ilo***

The type of speech and behaviour in which a person is inquisitive, observant or possibly nosey.

***Fie' kai mu'a***

The type of speech and behaviour in which a person is overconfident, big-headed and ignorant.

***Fie'lakepa Nopele***

The Noble Fie'lakepa

***Fie'lahi***

The type of speech and behaviour in which a person is showing off or attempting to impress others by their own self-importance.

***Fie'Palangi***

The type of speech and behaviour in which a person is ***Palangi*** like or Western oriented in their social values and everyday practices.

***Fie'poto / Fie'poto 'aupito***

The type of speech and behaviour in which a person mistakenly believes they are knowledgeable and intelligent. However, the impression they convey to others is they lack knowledge and are unaware of their own ignorance.

***Fie'vale loi***

For one to act as if they are unaware of social tensions informing relationships between individuals when in actuality, they understand actors are embroiled in disagreement.

***Fine 'eiki***

An old lady.

***Fono***

A village meeting announced by the town officer. The town officer may fine families, especially the family head – ***tamai***, the father – for non-attendance at a ***fono***. The ***fono*** is facilitated by the town officer with the assistance of, and in collaboration with, the Noble's ***matapule*** and the village ***matapule***. The Noble may be present. In his absence he will tender his apologies. The Noble's participatory role differs among Tongan villages and is context dependent – that is, determined by the kind of relationship that has transpired historically, and in the political conditions of the present, between the Noble and the village, particularly in respect to the village leadership (i.e. ***matapule***, town officer, town committee, landholders especially families with large land holdings, clergy, church committees).

***Fonua***

Land.

***Fonua vale***

An identity reference that suggests Kolonga is a village of uneducated people. Their uneducated status stems from engagement in plantation work and produce sales rather than schooling and the acquisition of formal qualifications.

***Fufua'anga***

The name of the ***Kalapu Faikava*** located in ***Fasi Moe Afi*** village which is part of Nuku'alofa township.

***Fula***

The consequences of eating food prepared by one's ***mehekitanga***, the Father's sister, which has a familial sanction placed on it that orders and structures relationships. The Father's children are prohibited from eating food prepared by their Father's sister because it is considered ***tapu*** – off limits to them. A breach of this social prohibition will incur physical sickness.

***Ha'a***

Clan or social group whose kinship ties are manoeuvred to become a functional work unit that reproduces 'specialised work' or 'resources' as a social-economic contribution to a wider group or larger gathering.

***Ha'a Kanokupolu***

The clan or social group affiliated to the ***Kanokupolu*** rule or the system of culture and power that has prevailed in modern Tonga's history.

***Ha'amo***

The name of an island in the ***Ha'apai*** group north of ***Lifuka***, the largest and most populated island.

***Ha'a Takalaua***

The clan or social group affiliated to the ***Takalaua*** system of political or vernacular rule that prevailed alongside the 'sacred' reign of the ***Tu'i Tonga*** and has thus ceased from power since modern Tonga's inception.

**Hahake**

The eastern district of *Tongatapu*.

**Haka**

To bake food in an earth oven.

**Ha'u mei fe 'i Tonga?**

Where are you from in Tonga?

**Heliaki**

A speech act of speaking on a subject by making metaphoric reference to a different topic of discussion.

**Hihifo**

The name of the Western District in *Tongatapu*.

**Hoiaue!**

Oh my goodness!

**Hoku famili**

My family or my kinship connections.

**Hou'eiki**

The ruling class – that is, the monarchy and the nobility.

**I aa!**

A colloquial expression for saying, “Oh, get away with you!”

**'Ie Tonga**

A finely woven mat. Many **'ie Tonga** are made in, and imported from, Samoa. Originally, the term **'ie Toga** or **'ie Koga** was a Samoan reference to Tongan mats.

**Ii**

A fan.

**Ikale Tahi**

The sea eagles. The name of Tonga's national rugby team and a brand of local beer.

**Io, mo'oni 'aupito!**

Yes, that is so true!

**Io, ta'ahine Kolonga!**

Yes, a Kolonga girl!

**Kafa**

A woven belt which binds a **ta'ovala** – waist mat.

**Kafi**

To be sneaky and deceitful.

**Kafi kaakaa**

To be a deceptive cheat.

**Kai**

Food or to eat.

**Kai Lau**

A type of Tongan war dance.

***Kai mu'a / Kai mumu'a***

To push into the limelight and present one's self as a most knowledgeable and skilful person. To others, the witnesses and recipients of such a person's speech and behaviour, it becomes glaringly obvious that in fact this person is not clever *but* the contrary – that is, extremely dim witted.

***Kainga***

Kin or kinship ties.

***Kaipola***

A feast at a gathering.

***Kakai Tonga***

Tongan people or Tongan generations.

***Kalapu***

Literally translated into English, ***Kalapu*** means club. ***Kalapu*** is a colloquial reference to a ***kava*** club where Tongan men convene to consume ***kava***.

***Kalapu Faikava***

A mixed term that uses a transliteration (e.g. ***Kalapu*** = club) and indigenous language (e.g. ***Faikava*** = a social ceremony or ritual in which men convene and consume ***kava***). A ***kava*** club with Tongan male affiliates who participate in consuming ***kava***.

***Kanokupolu***

The name of the ruler to which the current ***Tupou*** monarchy and the system of culture and power that presides in modern Tonga traces its history.

***Kape***

A type of vegetable eaten as a staple food in household diets.

***Kapekape***

To swear or use profane cursing.

***Kato***

A handbag.

***Katolika***

Catholic.

***Kautaha***

Transliteration of the English term, 'company.' ***Kautaha*** also refers to a commercial enterprise.

***Kava***

Traditional drink consumed by men at social and ritual gatherings.

***Kavenga***

Traditional gift giving enacted at ceremonies and rituals.

***Kele'a***

A conch shell blown to signify an occasion.

***Kelekele***

An area of land where ownership is named as either belonging to a Noble, the King or the Government of Tonga.

***Kiekie***

A woven waist adornment for females.

***Ko au ta'ahine Kolonga***

I am a Kolonga girl.

***Ko e haa?!***

What?

***Ko e haa me'a?***

What's that thing?

***Ko hoku mali ha'u mei Kolonga 'i Tongatapu***

My wife is from Kolonga in Tongatapu.

***Kolo***

Town or in town.

***Koloa***

Traditional Tongan wealth.

***Kolonga 'i Tongatapu***

Kolonga village in Tongatapu island.

***Kona***

For one's speech and behaviour to indicate they are under the influence of kava.

***Kotongo***

The name of the north eastern area of Kolonga village demarcated as the Catholic quarter with a Catholic church and school site and household allotments for families.

***Kupesi***

A pattern that features on *ngatu* – traditional bark cloth.

***Lakalaka***

A type of Tongan dance performed with men and women.

***Lali***

A drum made from a wooden log.

***Lau***

To gossip.

***Laupisi***

To talk rubbish or nonsense.

***Lesi***

Pawpaw.

***Loi***

A lie or to tell a lie.

***Lohu***

To pick the ripest fruit from a tree.

***Lu***

Corned beef and coconut cream cooked in *talo* leaves.

***Mahino?***

Do you understand?

***Makapuna***

Grandchild

***Mala'e***

A cemetery.

***Manioke***

A type of vegetable eaten as a staple food in household diets.

**Ma'olunga**

A person's status being higher in rank when compared to another's within a context dependent social unit such as a family.

**Matapule**

A titled orator.

**Me'a 'ofa**

Social reciprocity shown through gift giving.

**Mehekitanga**

The Father's sister.

**Meke**

A type of Tongan dance performed with **ii** – fans.

**Misinale**

Missionary or the congregational donations given to a church and the clergy.

**Mohe uli namuku**

The type of body odour generated from sleeping at night without first bathing. This insult is a form of character assassination. As a moral judgement, this slur inflicts offence by saying one's stench is a reflection of poor character in failing to bath at night before sleeping. Such low moral behaviour is directly attributed to the way in which one has been socialised by their family.

**Mounga'one**

The name of an island in the *Ha'apai* Group.

**Mu'a**

The name of the District which encompasses Lapaha and surrounding villages in *Tongatapu*.

**Ngatu**

Traditional bark cloth.

**Niu**

Coconut/s.

**No'o 'anga**

The shark hunters.

**No'o 'anga mei Kolonga**

The shark hunters from Kolonga.

**Nopele**

Transliteration of the English word, Noble.

**Nuku Nopele**

Transliteration of the English term, Nuku the Noble.

**Nuku Nopele mei Kolonga**

Nuku the Noble from Kolonga.

**Nu'u Sila**

Transliteration of the location, New Zealand.

**'Okalani**

Transliteration of the location, Auckland

**'Okalani Nu'u Sila**

Transliteration of the location, Auckland New Zealand.

**Pala**

A sore that contains pus or is weeping.

**Palangi**

An identity reference comparable to **Pakeha** in a New Zealand setting (i.e. White, European).

**Palupalu**

A fund raising **kava** session where money is raised for a specific social purpose or cause.

**Puaka lahi**

A big pig.

**Puaka tunu**

Roast pig on a spit.

**Punake**

A composer of Tongan performing arts.

**Putu**

A funeral.

**Siale**

A type of sweet smelling flower.

**Si'i!**

Verbal exclamation in which the speaker expresses irritation with whomever their dialogue is targeted at.

**Sikotata**

Excretion from a toddler that falls on the ground when the child is running around and playing outside.

**Sio ki hena**

Look at that.

**Siu ki Halakakala**

The name of a shark hunting ground close to 'Eua island.

**Soke**

A type of Tongan war dance for men and women.

**Ta'ahine poto lelei!**

Such a clever girl!

**Taimi e?!**

Tonga Times, eh?

**Taimi – lau!**

Gossip from the Tonga Times.

**Takuilau**

The name of the Catholic co-educational secondary and intermediate school for years 7-13 students in the **Mu'a** district of **Tongatapu**.

**Talavou**

Beautiful, particularly the beauty of a person's physical features.

**Talo**

A type of vegetable eaten as a staple food in household diets.

**Tamasi'i Kolonga**

A Kolonga boy.

**Ta'olunga**

A type of Tongan dance performed by a female. The historical origins of the **ta'olunga** are traced to Samoa.

***Ta'ovala***

A woven waist mat.

***Tapu***

A social prohibition or familial sanction.

***Teipilo***

To pass wind noisily.

***Tofi'a***

Inheritance such as a Noble's estate.

***Tokaikolo***

An abbreviation for the name, *Tokaikolo Mamafo'ou*. *Tokaikolo* is a break-away Tongan church derived from the Wesleyan Church.

***Tonga ma Tonga***

Tonga for Tongans.

***Tongatapu***

Literally translated as the 'sacred south,' *Tongatapu* is the name of the largest island in the Kingdom of Tonga located south of the *Ha'apai* group.

***Tu'i kafi***

To be the King or Queen of deception.

***Tu'i Kanokupolu***

The social and political reign of the *Tu'i Kanokupolu*, a system of rule in modern Tonga which is contextualised in, and exemplified as, the family history of the present *Tupou* monarchy across four generations of rulers.

***Tu'i Tonga***

The 'sacred' reign of the *Tu'i Tonga* who was remembered as the ancient ruler of Tonga and for some centuries, affiliated territories in Samoa and Eastern Fiji, before the current *Kanokupolu* rule of modern Tonga.

***Tukuhau***

Rates paid to the Government of Tonga on land.

***Tuku kata, e?!*** 

Stop laughing eh?!

***Tupenu***

A wrap around garment worn under a *ta'ovala* – waist mat.

***Tupou***

The family name of the current monarchy.

***Ufi***

A type of vegetable known also as yam which is eaten as a staple food in household diets.

***Uli uli***

A reference to Black Americans.

***Ulu pala***

An insult that accuses one of having sores on their head.

***Ulu pala vale kua***

An insult accusing one of having sores on their head which has caused 'dumbness' permanently afflicting them with 'stupidity.'

**Umu**

An earth oven.

**Uta ko e!**

You're from the bush!

**'Utu-longo'a-a**

The name of the coastline along Kolonga village. Historical accounts suggest the **Tu'i Ta Tui**, one of the first **Tu'i Tonga**, named the coastline when his fleet used this location as a docking site. The name is a metaphoric reference to the crashing waves resounding against the rocky coast at night which the **Tu'i Tonga** considered noisy and quite frightening when trying to sleep. **'Utu-longo'a-a** has emerged in contemporary times as a name that signifies the 'village' character of Kolonga people – that is, noisy and quite frightening.

**Uta**

The 'bush' or a social and geographical setting that is rural, non-urban and village-like. In addition, **uta** describes a family's allotment of land in the 'bush' for their plantation.

**Vala**

A **tupenu** – a wrap around garment.

**Vale**

To appear dim witted and unintelligent.

# Samoan Glossary

## ***Fa'afetai lava***

Words that express gratitude and thanks.

## ***Fa'apasifika***

A social construction of a system of culture and power understood as the 'Pacific way.' This system of culture and power imitates the ***fa'asamoa*** construct and is intimately tied to a Samoan-centred interpretation of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.

## ***Fa'apouliuli***

To express speech and behaviour considered socially unacceptable because one's actions and intentions are 'dark' natured or 'dark' tempered.

## ***Fa'asamoa***

An identity reference to a system of culture and power commonly spoken of as the 'Samoan way.'

## ***O le a?***

What?

## ***Malu***

Female traditional body art.

## ***Manu Samoa***

The name of Samoa's national men's rugby team.

## ***Manu Sina***

The name of Samoa's national women's rugby team.

## ***Pe'a***

Male traditional body art.

## ***Puletasi***

A two piece outfit for females that consists of a wrap around skirt and top.

## ***Samoa mo Samoa***

Samoa for Samoans.

## ***Soga'imiti***

A traditionally tattooed male.

## ***Tala***

Transliteration of the English term, dollar.

## ***Talofa***

A Samoan greeting.

## ***Tatau***

Traditional body art.

## ***Tufuga Tatau***

A traditional body art tattooist.

# Māori Glossary

## **Haka**

A type of war dance performed by Māori.

## **Hākari**

The feast or last meal shared between 'home' people and their visitors at a funeral (after the burial of the deceased).

## **Hapu**

A sub-tribe.

## **Hawaiiki**

An origin place located in the Pacific Ocean where Māori tribes trace their ancestral ties.

## **I haere a Rewi ki Tonga ki te tutaki ki te whānau o tona whaea**

Rewi has gone to his Mum's people in Tonga.

## **Iwi**

A tribe.

## **Kaiako**

A teacher.

## **Koro**

A grandfather or an elderly male relative.

## **Kui**

A grandmother or an elderly female relative.

## **Kura Kaupapa Māori**

The 'official' translation of this term employed by state bureaucracy is Māori total immersion school, a name which is written into New Zealand's Education Act 1989. Two of our children attend a Māori immersion provider in the North Waikato. This school caters for years 1-13 students; that is, primary and secondary students. Years 1-8 students are fully immersed in **Te Reo Māori** as the medium of learning and teaching in the classroom. Years 9-13 conduct their range of subject classes through a bilingual medium according to the language in which the curriculum for a specific subject is taught at secondary level (i.e. English as a compulsory subject in New Zealand secondary education is taught in the medium of English language. Māori as a subject choice in New Zealand secondary education is taught in a Māori total immersion provider by the medium of Māori language) (see <http://www.rakaumanga.school.nz/>).

## **Mahau**

A shelter or porch which fronts an ancestral meeting house.

## **Marae**

A bounded area for a meeting house and its associated surroundings which belong to, and are identified as, a Māori social group (e.g. tribe or sub-tribe) or a conglomerate of groups such as **marae** in the Auckland Region that are patronised by multiple tribal groups.

## **Nehu**

The burial of the deceased at a funeral.

## **Ngāti Whatua ki Orakei**

**Ngāti Whatua** tribe whose tribal territory is in the Orakei area of the Auckland Region.

## **Ope**

Visitors that arrive at a **marae** to be welcomed on by the ceremonial enactment of a **pōwhiri**.

## **Pakeha**

An identity reference which distinguishes White New Zealanders, particularly individuals and groups descendant from nineteenth century European settlers (mainly British).

## **Pakeha tupuna**

A **Pakeha** [White/European] ancestor or group of relatives to whom one traces their descent.

**Pōwhiri**

The ceremony performed by a group considered to be **tangata whenua** [people of the land], people who are indigenous to a geo-political territory, to welcome a visiting party by the ritual exchange of speeches/sentiments.

**Raupatu**

The colonial act of land confiscation.

**Rohe**

An area of land or territory that belongs to a tribe or group of tribes who share ancestral ties to a common **waka**, a canoe that travelled to Aotearoa carrying tribal ancestors.

**Tainui ki Manukau**

Māori tribes descendant from **Tainui Waka** (canoe) whose tribal territory is located in the Manukau area of the Auckland Region.

**Tangata Moana**

Literally translated into English, **Tangata Moana** means ‘People of the Sea.’ Employed in academic media and literature as an identity reference for Pacific Peoples, **Tangata Moana** relates to the indigenous status of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand to ancestral origins in the Pacific Islands embodies and expresses their ‘difference’ from the histories of other social groups that constitute the contemporary nation.

**Tangata Whenua**

Literally translated into English, **Tangata Whenua** means ‘People of the Land.’ Employed in public and academic media as an identity reference for Māori, **Tangata Whenua** signifies the indigenous status of Māori in Aotearoa / New Zealand embodies and expresses their ‘difference’ from the histories of other social groups that constitute the contemporary nation.

**Tangihanga**

A funeral which generally (but *not* always) takes three-days from death to burial.

**Taniwharau**

The name of the rugby league club in Huntly township, North Waikato, predominantly supported by Māori families indigenous to the **Waikato-Tainui** tribal area. The name **Taniwharau** is taken from a tribal identity aphorism, **He piko, he taniwha**. This is a reference to the Waikato River being home to many **taniwha**, mythical river creatures that inhabit the bends and nooks in the river’s meandering waterway. **Taniwharau** hence means many **taniwha**.

**Te Reo Māori**

The Māori language.

**Te Whakatohea Marae**

A **Marae** that belongs to the tribal group named **Te Whakatohea**.

**Te Whare Tipuna**

The ancestral meeting house.

**Whakairo**

The carvings that adorn a traditional meeting house.

**Whakaputa mohio**

An individual whose behaviour and speech expresses self-righteous belief that they are knowledgeable and intelligent when their discussion and attitude shows the opposite.

**Whānau**

Family or relatives.

**Whānau Māori**

Māori family or relatives.

**Whānau Pani**

The immediate family/grieving family at a funeral.

**Wharekai**

The dining hall/kitchen.

# Hybrid Glossary

## ***After schools***

To receive an after school detention for attitude and conduct in a New Zealand mainstream secondary school.

## ***AID***

Agency for international development.

## ***Angus***

To express anger.

## ***ANZAC***

An anachronism that means Australia and New Zealand Armed Corps: **ANZAC** Day is a statutory holiday in New Zealand commemorated on 25 April. It is a national day held in remembrance of the New Zealand armed corps who fought in the Battle of Gallipoli in World War 1.

## ***Aussie***

An Australian.

## ***Bending the rules***

An individual or group who engages in social life on their own cultural terms to the point that the rules and norms of the dominant culture do not apply or seem relevant to them.

## ***Bloods***

A hybrid reconstruction of a Black American gang named the Bloods. In an urban Auckland context, the Bloods represent a youth gang where membership is predominantly Samoan males.

## ***Bomb-est***

A modification of the colloquial term, 'Da Bomb' (see this glossary for explanation).

## ***Bro' Town***

An animated cartoon series by *The Naked Samoans* which screened on Television New Zealand in 2004 – 2005.

## ***Brown Brady Bunch***

To be the Pacific equivalent of an American television family from the 1970s called 'The Brady Bunch.' The 'Brown Brady Bunch' implies that one's family is 'wholesome' and maintains 'traditional' family values.

## ***Bush***

A person/group considered rural and village-like in their speech and behaviour and whose identity-basis emphasises the maintenance of cultural 'tradition,' Native land tenure and indigenous language.

## ***Bush kanaka***

A person who is considered village-like, rural and non-sophisticated in their speech and behaviour.

## ***Comparing apples and oranges***

The two items measured against each other are in many ways so different there is little substance for comparison.

## ***Cracking up***

To laugh raucously.

## ***Crips***

A hybrid reconstruction of a Latino American gang named the Crips. In an urban Auckland context, the Crips represent a youth gang where membership is predominantly Tongan male.

## ***Da Bomb***

A Black-American colloquialism which has been appropriated globally by English-speaking youth to refer to an event, a material object or people/a person being highly prized and socially valued.

## ***Dark horse***

A person who does not occupy a favourable position to win a competition.

***Dawn Service***

A commemoration service held at dawn on **ANZAC** Day, 25 April, where the laying of wreaths at national monuments erected in remembrance of 'The Great War,' World War 1 1914-1918, takes place across New Zealand towns and cities.

***Export Gold***

A brand of New Zealand beer.

***Fie' pots***

An anglicised version of the Tongan term **fi'e' poto**. **Fi'e' poto** describes a person who expresses their confidence and knowledge but in actuality they come across as lacking in knowledge and skill.

***FOB***

Fresh off the boat.

***Fobby***

To express speech and behaviour considered 'fresh off the boat' or grounded in a migrant's social values.

***Fresh styles***

A person who is considered to be a 'migrant' to New Zealand from a Pacific Islands nation and whose speech and behaviour is informed by their primary socialisation in a village and small island environment.

***Fronted***

To confront or be faced with an issue or a dilemma that requires problem solving.

***Get away with***

To push social boundaries to achieve an ends.

***Gone bananas in Nu'u Sila***

The proliferation of memories and stories when they are sorted and shifted from the historical context of social life in Tonga and selectively rearranged for their knowledge, power and usefulness in a New Zealand setting.

***Go where angels fear to tread***

A person who is walking on 'dangerous' ground in terms of engaging in relationship tensions and social conflicts.

***Hard core***

To go to the extreme.

***Hard out***

A **Kiwi** youth culture colloquialism which generally refers to people/a person working to full capacity to achieve an ends. This term can also refer to an event functioning at an optimum level of success.

***Hina***

Generally the name 'Hina' is used in everyday language to refer to a **ta'ahine Tonga**, a Tongan girl. Ani-Kāterina used this name as a local reference to Hina, the shark goddess, to whom Kolonga shark hunters would call when shark hunting.

***Hit the roof***

When a person shows they are irritated by another's speech and behaviour.

***How are yer cobber?***

An imitation of Australian accented English for asking in social conversation, "How are you my friend?"

***Hum drum***

A dull and uninteresting lifestyle.

***In house***

Local knowledge which is specific to, and understood by, a group of people who share identity ties and common living circumstances.

***Island Bling***

A colloquial term which means a culture-specific construct, such as chiefly titles derived from traditional power and knowledge, is the present-day equivalent of Black-American jewellery (e.g. gold chains and diamonds).

***Jeff the Māori***

A character from the animated cartoon series named **Bro' Town** who represented the satirical caricature of an urban Māori male youth. **Jeff the Māori** is a Samoan-constructed stereotype of Māori culture and language loss, low social economic status, education underachievement and immorality (i.e. **Jeff the Māori's** Mother is characterised as a 'gang mole,' a Māori woman who provides sexual gratification to Māori men who are members of a gang).

***Kava Bowl***

An American based website which specifically targets Tongan internet users.

***Kiwi***

A New Zealander. This identity term conveys a colonial inscription, that is, the 'real' New Zealander is **Pakeha**.

***Laughing Samoans***

A comedy duo of two Samoan males based in Wellington who have produced a digital video for sale of their live act.

***Level playing field***

A social construct in which it is imagined that the ideal society practices equality among all individuals and groups who constitute the nation.

***Live to tell the tale***

The storytelling conversation of a person who has survived an ordeal.

***Lol***

An anachronism: LOL = Laugh Out Loud.

***NCEA***

National Certificate for Educational Achievement.

***NRL***

National Rugby League.

***Off the cuff***

Spontaneous dialogue that emerges in a moment of social engagement.

***Oh-tee-tee***

An abbreviation of 'over the top' which means a person's speech and behaviour is excessive.

***Once bitten twice shy***

A person who is reluctant to engage in certain social relationships after experiencing past political conflict and fall out which has altered their perception of a person or a specific group of people.

***Out-staunch***

To aggressively show through attitude, speech and behaviour that one or one's identity group is tougher, stronger and superior to another identity group.

***Otahu***

An abbreviation of the suburb, Otahuhu.

***Otara Fleamarket***

The Saturday fleamarket held at the shopping centre in Otara suburb of Manukau City.

***Pakeha-fied***

To suggest that an individual or a group are Westernised in their tastes, values, speech and behaviour, or that an indigenous cultural system has become Westernised.

***Palangi-fied***

Similar meaning to **Pakeha-fied** (see this glossary for explanation).

***Palas***

An anglicised version of the Tongan term **pala**. **Pala** are sores that contain pus or are weeping pus.

***Pare***

An abbreviation of Pāremoremo, a prison located in North Shore City of the Auckland Region. **Pare** is anglicised in speech to sound like 'Parry.'

***Pidgin-ised***

To suggest that an indigenous language is now spoken with the use of English words/terms to the point that its original form is no longer recognisable.

***PI's***

Pacific Islanders.

***Peeps***

One's people or the social group to whom one belongs to and identifies with.

***Plastic***

A colloquial term for one who is considered culturally inauthentic, spurious and fake in respect to their membership claim to belonging to an ethnic-cultural identity group.

***PolyFest***

The 'official' brand name of the Auckland Region's secondary schools' performing arts festival held annually in Otara suburb of Manukau City. The main ethnic and cultural groups that host competitions on independent stages are Māori, Samoan, Cook Islands, Tongan and Niuean.

***Post-op***

Post operation.

***Ref***

A referee or umpire.

***Saa***

Samoa or a Samoan person.

***Saas***

Samoans.

***Sacked***

To be fired from a job or to have one's employment contract terminated.

***School C***

An abbreviation of the term, School Certificate. School Certificate was a former state qualification awarded to Year 10 secondary school students for passing state examinations.

***Selling out***

A person who compromises their social values for political or economic gain.

***SKY Sport***

**SKY** is a cable television company in New Zealand. **SKY Sport** screens three television channels on professional sports.

***Snapped***

To be caught out doing something that one should not be doing.

***South A.K.***

An abbreviation of the location, South Auckland.

***Spread the Word***

To have a widespread influence in history and its remembrance in the present.

***Spin a yarn***

To tell a story.

***STEAM***

A programme targeted at encouraging Māori and Pacific secondary students in Years 10 and 12 to study science, technology, engineering, architecture or medicine at the University of Auckland.

***Suss out***

To investigate or closely inspect the political context of relationships which constitute a social-cultural environment that one is about to enter and engage in.

**Tech**

An abbreviation of the word, Polytechnic.

**The All Browns**

A play on words taken from the New Zealand national rugby team, 'The All Blacks.' The reference to 'brown' instead of black or white signifies identity difference in contemporary New Zealand's ethnoscape. That is, **The All Browns** is a team of 'brown' Māori and Pacific students.

**The Coast**

An identity reference to families from Te Whānau-a-Apanui **iwi** [tribe] and the **hapu** [sub-tribes] which constitute its geo-political territory.

**The evils**

To throw someone a malevolent gaze or dirty look.

**The Maka's**

An identity reference that Rewi invented to speak of my matrilineal first cousin's nine children in conversation. My cousin, the father of nine children, is named Maka (his first name).

**The Naked Samoans**

A group of males actors, four Samoan and one Niuean, who performed the voices for characters in an animated cartoon series named **Bro' Town** which screened on Television New Zealand.

**The real McCoy**

An authentic and original version of cultural identity.

**The rest is history**

A reference which means one is aware the course of action they have chosen will incur political consequences that are inevitable.

**The Shore**

A reference to North Shore City in the Auckland Region.

**Tongan mojo**

One's identity prowess or their strong connection to Tongan ethnicity and culture.

**Track record**

A person's history of participation in community organisations and kinship groups.

**Uni**

An abbreviation of the word, university.

**USP**

The University of the South Pacific

**Wanna' be / Wanna' be's**

An individual or group who want to be someone or something they are not.

**Wop Wops**

A reference to a village, settlement or place of dwelling located out in the 'bush,' the rural districts or outer-islands, a long distance from 'town' or the main urban centre.

**Word sure gets around fast in the islands**

Storytelling descriptions of people and their actions is the effective mode of communication that predominates in small island societies.

**You're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't**

One is bound to confront social tension and conflict whether they decide to raise a contentious topic in discussion with others or defer from speaking.

# PART ONE

## Prologue

### *Scene One*

# CHAPTER ONE

## ME IN MY FAMILY

Social memory is the means by which information is transmitted along individuals and groups and from one generation to another. Not necessarily aware that they are doing so, individuals pass on their behaviours and attitudes to others in various contexts but especially through emotional and practical ties and in relationships among generations ... (Crumley 2002, p. 39).



*My matrilateral nephew's twenty first birthday*

*Tina Leka, Siaosi, Mum, Ani-Kāterina and Toa (obscured far right)  
Otahuhu, Auckland  
January 2006<sup>1</sup>*

## Origin Story

Probably my *Granddad* is more Tongan

My *Grandma*, my *Granddad*, they're from different classes

My *Grandma*, her family they were quite liberal

Is that the word?

Liberated?

Their Dad was a rich *Palangi* [White] dude

I don't know what he did

And their Mum was a Tongan noble or something like that

So they were quite high class

Whereas my *Granddad* he was like from this little village out in the *wop wops* [bush]

Where he had to ...

Well, he didn't have it as easy as my *Grandma*

He had to rough it

By Ani-Kāterina Amoamo<sup>2</sup>

## Family of Stories

My fifteen year old daughter began unwrapping how she understood her Tongan identity, its origin story and relationship in her everyday life. Her opening lines revealed *Granddad* was “more Tongan” and her grandparents were from “different classes” and ethnic-cultural backgrounds (Bourdieu 1977, 1979; Davies 1993; Crow 2002; Bauman and Briggs 2003). I had asked Ani-Kāterina what it was like to live with my parents in Auckland and attend secondary school. She responded to my question but not in the language I imagined she would select; more, by word images that I may have grasped at her age and confided in a close relative whom I trusted with my thoughts (Bott 1957; Beck-Gernsheim 2002).

Her utterance unlocked my own memory of how during childhood I would wrestle and reason through the meaning of divergence and difference in my Tongan family (Barth 1969, 1972). An ephemeral moment let me see my child in me and me in her. I felt connected, not alone in grappling to understand why I was constructing stories, writing culture and performing identity. My daughter's courage to tell her story, which silhouetted mine, urged me to believe that creating a thesis could travel beyond

analysing words, counting and stringing them in straight lines and tidy paragraphs of black print on white pages (Abu-Lughod 1991; Ableman 1999).

Like many families with ancestral ties to the Kingdom of Tonga we have interwoven stories from three generations to explain who we are as kin, where we are descended from and what these relationships to people and place mean to us whilst living in *Aotearoa* [New Zealand], New Zealand (Frank 2000; Bozic-Vrbancic 2004). What attuned me to Ani-Kāterina's dialogue was how it blended in my memory and related me to her as mother and daughter by lived and living experience.

In multiple ways, my three children and I have co-constructed social memory, creating an inter-generation relationship to validate why our Tongan identity materialises as intertwined social fabric (Bryman 1998; Greenfield 2000; Burrows 2001). Our origin stories are remembered in glimpses of the past manufactured into memory, story and history throughout our lives in the present. A prominent source of yarn is the social fabric spun by my parents' reproduction of their experience of, and emotional tie to, 'home' (Crumley 2002, pp. 39-52). Memory reconstruction is therefore a social practice of drawing meaning from the past, from an origin place and bygone lives, to reaffirm 'me' in connection to us, ourselves, our lives in the present (Benhabib 1992; Beverley 2000).

Cultural memory, in the case of remembering a family's Tongan descent in spectres of history and its relevance today, alludes to continuity through ancestral affiliation (Bishop 1996; Green 1998). Even if social memory is reinvented from fragments of an origin place and remnants of lives *before* and *beyond* ours, its truth value is determined by its acceptance, usefulness and meaningfulness to those who claim its remembrance (Cattell and Climo 2002, p. 27).

For my family living in '*Okalani Nu'u Sila* [Auckland New Zealand] recollections of, and attitudes to Tonga are persistently in flux, busy in the process of *being* transmitted and *becoming* reworked among three generations. Ways of thinking, speaking and behaving underpinned by beliefs and values that we understand as linked to a shared Tongan origin, our family past, are continually re-evaluated in our lives, sometimes reinvented and at other times made redundant by forgetting. My thesis therefore explores and contextualises transitory experiences, musings and feelings that express how social memory and history are given meaning in a moving culture of everyday life, an inter-generation culture of lives in New Zealand and relationships to Tonga (Bishop 1997; Chamberlayne, Bornat and Wengraf 2000).

Public and academic media have increasingly braided New Zealand Tongan families into the Pacific experience in post-World War II New Zealand. A narrative of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand has predominantly interlaced the social memory and contemporary experience of Samoans, the most numerous Pacific ethnic population, or specifically Auckland Samoans, the largest site of the most numerous Pacific ethnic population (Anae 1997, 1998, 2001). To a lesser degree, other Polynesians are conflated into a Samoan-centred and Auckland located image of Pacific Peoples (Anae, Anderson, Benseman and Coxon 2002; Park and Morris 2004).

As a consequence of demographic privilege, the concept of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand is bound to an aesthetic crafted by the Samoan-Polynesian living in Auckland story (Macpherson 1984, 1985, 1991, 1994, 1997; Macpherson and Macpherson 1999). The big picture agenda is to pass through points of common intersection – migration, resettlement and New Zealand-born generation – to illustrate a history of development and change (Macpherson 2001, 2004). The intellectual irony is that in the presence of globalisation, an epoch where local identities have proliferated as sites of resistance, the ‘sociological imagination’ (Mills 1970) has shrunk the Pacific (Wallerstein 1974, 1979, 1990; Sklair 1991; Smart 1993; Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst 2005).

At a glance, my thesis is a family record of stories from Tongan generations in New Zealand. It examines how culture and power reproduces identity narratives that are sensitive to transnational lifestyles and inter-generation movement (Butler 1997a, 1997b; Cowling 1990, 2002). At a deeper level, my thesis probes the social life and meaning of family stories (Finch and Mason 1993; Ellis, Kiesinger and Tillman-Healy 1997; Doane 2003). It unpacks memory of an origin homeland, the significance of remembering and forgetting and how the discourse of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand affects Tongan constructions of identity and the connections and relationships that materialise in a system of culture and power (Friedman 1994; Archibald 1999, 2002; Finlay 2002).

In mapping roots and routes of remembering, forgetting and reinventing, this work explores my centrality in a storyline composed by family and conducted by me (Goff 1959, 1981; Gergen 1994). By comparison, my narrative of oscillating ‘in-between locations of culture’ (Bhabha 1994) as a Tongan woman with Māori and Samoan ancestry and a Tongan female anthropologist writing from the edge of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand is also filtered through the pages (Giddens 1991, 1999; Funaki and Funaki 2002). By no means am I imagining myself a disinterested objective scribe. I am the author of this thesis and have written myself as a “value-laden actor” (Goldsmith 1989: p.

4) in and out of the script according to how and why I want to depict a scene, a sequence, a series in social exchange, and to reinterpret its meaning to the reader (Gillies and Edwards 2005). This does not suggest I have sidelined reflexivity or am unaware of the power of my own authorship but rather, that as “all discourse is at once selected” (Foucault 1972, 1991b) I am a selector, editor, creator and storyteller of memory and history.

The prologue sets the stage introducing me as the main actor in relation to family, friends as well as acquaintances. Thus, ‘official’ stories have been blended with ‘unofficial’ interruptions to reconstruct ethnographic sites in which to play out scenes and, in some settings, perform social life dramas. As an anthropologist, I have developed an appreciation that knowledge gathered from fieldwork is context-dependent (Wagner 1981). Knowledge is constructed from social experience and recollection which influences how information is assembled, selected and sorted so it makes sense to oneself in relation to others, whether these others are a receiving audience of written, spoken and body language or a group whom one is speaking of or, in my situation, speaking as. This thesis has constituted my family as ‘the field,’ my life as the field, so the border between private and public, personal and professional is blurred, murky and for the most part, indistinguishable (Byrne-Armstrong 2001).

My family revealed in fieldwork conversations that knowledge transmission among generations does not take place in a free flowing open exchange. Acts of requesting and conveying knowledge incur social cost, a type of social reciprocity. There is an expectation between a transmitter and recipient that shapes their social responsibility to each other and the nature of an exchange. The way in which the interplay between cost and reciprocity is understood is context-dependent and shaped by enquiries which engender possibilities, prospects and opportunities for social transactions to transpire. Questions that influence cost and reciprocity in fieldwork exchanges with family are “who are you?”, “what do you want?” and “why do you want to know?”, “what will you do with my memory?” and “how will my knowledge be transmitted, remembered and reinterpreted among generations?” (Connerton 1989; Chase 1995; Ceglowski 2002).

Knowledge co-constituted through inter-generation relationships therefore becomes sanctioned according to social value. The greater weighting of social value attributed to the exchange of knowledge, the more likely its movement among generations is affected by gate-keeping: that is, the practice of individuals accredited

with rights to speaking, knowing, censorship and dissemination. Inter-generation knowledge is thus validated, queried and tweaked through contextualised forms of truth value and in turn reinvented to serve a purpose, agenda and desired meaning (Pierre 1989; Denzin 1997).

My reason for erecting an ethnographic backdrop here is two-fold. Foremost it gives rise to possibility; that my family will read the prologue and see how their situated dialogue and shifting memory was framed in a snapshot. Concomitantly, it is important that an autoethnography of 'me' and characters critical to this thesis is presented so the following chapters are relational in respect to the storytelling order, knowledge agenda and analytical picture. Social scientific language can appear coded and in places incomprehensible to a lay-reader. In saying this, I hope that if any part of this thesis makes sense to my family then it would be the prologue in which they can read themselves and their stories in relation to each other and the writer who has been entrusted with interweaving social memory of kinship, culture and history (Fine 1994).

Just as a boundary separating private and public life has become obscure while creating this thesis so too has the border that distinguishes individual and collective memory (Harrison 1999). My individual memory is relational, merged and emerging in stories which explain who I am and what my experiences mean through relationships with others, both kin and affine. Social memory is therefore a reference I have used to interpret the impact of familial relationships on remembering, forgetting and relaying identity stories (Fentress and Wickham 1992). Social life, by comparison, is the way in which I think, feel and act upon social memory or the "stuff of me" (Archibald 2002, p. 66), the identity stories immersed in, and arising from, how I engage, experience and understand relationships (Hoskins and Arvay 1999).

It may be useful to explain my interest in how and why identity stories are reproduced, revisited and reinvented in Tongan families living in New Zealand. My research enquiry was influenced by late entry into anthropology for a Master's degree. Enrolling in a doctoral thesis I came to realise that students and staff viewed me as a source of Tongan (and at times Māori) insight although I had not studied Pacific anthropology as an undergraduate. Weary of becoming exclusively confined and defined by Tongan ethnography, fieldwork in Tonga and among Tongan communities throughout the Pacific Rim, I travelled a maze of identity markers. A makeover of shifting and contextually interchangeable terms, names of 'Self' reference in relation to

'Others,' reproduced an identity work in process positioned as an act of resistance staged against stagnant, frozen classifications (Fogelson 1982; Davies and Harre 1990).

On official forms I identify as a New Zealand-born Tongan woman (Kolonga 'i Tongatapu, Tongaleleka 'i Ha'apai) with Māori (Ngāti Awa, Tuwharetoa ki Kawerau) and Samoan (Fale Vao, Fale Fa) ancestry who is the mother of three children to my Māori (Te Whakatohea, Te Whānau-A-Apanui) husband of seventeen years (Massey 1993; Marsh 2001). These messy overlapping markers have created spatial distance and disassociation from Tongan homogeneity, if only in my own social imaginary (Mitchell 1983; Mouzelis 1995, 2000). Reclamation of selfhood and self-dignity over my ethnic and cultural heterogeneity, if anything, stirred hope that I could transcend uniform ideals of ethnicity and culture and resist captivity as any less Tongan, any more **Palangi** or any way deficit (Craw and Hubbard 1993; Narayan 1993).

It was not solely the idea that Tongan culture represented a homogeneous construct that discomfited me. More, it was that the power and persuasion of culture as sameness and stability enabled a discourse of cultural loss lodged in deficit theory to win out as the 'natural' order of progression for generations born and raised in global diaspora (Fabian 1983; Baudrillard 1994; Clifford 1994; Morton 1998a, 1999, 2002; Morton Lee 2003; Paa'u 2002; Pearson 2005). For me to go beyond the structural constraints of Tongan culture as insipid uniformity, immovable class, mass conformity and social standardisation meant telling my story, a chronicle spurred by my daughter's opening in this thesis (Gergen 1991; Gergen 2002).

My first memory of Tongan difference in the 'field' was negotiating a working space for feeling inhibited that I speak English with a pronounced **Kiwi** [New Zealand] accent and speak mispronounced rudimentary Tongan with a pronounced **Kiwi** accent. Concluding five years of awakening in the field I am still self-conscious of my linguistic crudeness but not diffident or apologetic. From first encounter to thesis destination the difference is that I have learnt to endure in my space of inhibition, to engage with its social disjuncture and most notably, to appreciate the temporal awkwardness and learning value of time spent in its presence.

Before entering the field, however, I imagined that 'real' fieldwork (especially in Tonga) required formal Tongan speech and courtly behaviour embellished by an extensive familiarity with the **Ha'a Kanokupolu** [House of Kanokupolu] and its modern governance during the **Tupou** [current kingship] monarchy (Gifford 1971; Smith 2002). I surmised that this kind of contextualised history was an entry

prerequisite for securing the permission and patronage of the social elite to exist as new life on planet Tonga (Butler 1997a). Related to this discourse were *Tu'i Tonga* [ancient kingship] and *Ha'a Takalaua* [House of Takalaua] accounts of territorial exploits, assassinations and intermarriage to Samoa and Fiji which traced traffic flow between islands and across ocean; the kind of ancient history that I thought may take me centuries to remember and recite like 'Atenisi [Tongan University] (male) scholarship performed by self-invented *matapule* [orators] and *punake* [composers/poets] (Mahina 1986, 1992; Campbell and Coxon 2005).

Alas, I decided to forfeit border crossing; unwilling to risk that my tongue and cheek personality may constrict me from convincingly kissing arse and being believable (Campbell and Coxon 2005).<sup>3</sup> Instead, my acceptance of 'an invitation to remake history' has engendered deeper experiential meaning for 'me' – my life in my family (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1988; Swindler 1995; Borofsky 2000; Tarrow 2005). Ironically, my undergraduate degree was in religious studies and history, two disciplinary fields descendant from gentlemanly scholarship which required attention paid to language rules, disciplined chronological detail and frozen images of 'great men' in time (i.e. Jesus and Governor Grey, *but* not necessarily in this order as I am uncertain who *Spread the Word* [preached] more convincingly among the *Native* and *Settler* populations in the British colony of nineteenth century New Zealand).

Framing memory and experience of Tongan social life as anthropology from below presented an alternative to 'higher culture.' An interpretative understanding that 'culture' is hybridity, a product of movement and change, allowed me to engineer an intellectual-emotional bond to storytelling Tongan lives in New Zealand. Analysing public institutions of symbol, ritual and tradition was collapsed in favour of engaging the in-between-ness of social life (Bhabha 1994; Kincheloe and McLaren 2000; Kemmis and McTaggart 2000). The dislocated and relocated subject positioning of lives which connect and disconnect to narratives and experiences of Tonga was the priority of 'culture' I explored.

It was the 'how' of an 'origin place' in relation to *how* it was resituated in New Zealand that unleashed my interest. The 'how' wedged and perplexed me: how does Tongan social life in New Zealand persist and desist through families of inter-generation memory and history? Anthropological theory was integrated into dialogue and ideas exchanged in graduate classes (Geertz 1973). For me, I could best explain my 'Self' by unpacking an organic suitcase of living experience and relating theory to a labyrinth of

social relationships that bound and distanced me from a global diaspora of Tongan kin and an ancestral ‘home’ of islands.

I was able to spin stories of Dad’s childhood, colourful characters from Dad’s village, Dad’s village transplanted and growing in Auckland and Dad’s kin living in cities across the Pacific Rim (Keefe 1988; Trlin, Spoonley and Watts 2005). I talked of Dad’s life in *Nu’u Sila* [New Zealand], the land of milk, honey and corned beef, or so Catholic priests and teachers misled him to believe as a seventeen year old Tongan schoolboy preparing for metamorphosis (Appadurai 1986)<sup>4</sup> – from Tongan village to urban New Zealand in 1966 (Torgovnick 1990; Small 1997).<sup>5</sup> I had collected a family album of make you laugh out loud stories, happy ending ones with a moral message and tales so ‘real life’ sad they were genuinely moving.

Printed in village and migration epics were my impressions of Mum and Dad and their cross eyed [slash] cross cultural views of each other (Mitchell 1974; Tilbury 1999).<sup>6</sup> My parents and their ambiguous often incongruous social histories which crisscrossed, collided and converted into ‘Tales of the Tikongs’ (Hau’ofa 1994a) *gone bananas in Nu’u Sila* [gone wild overseas] added zest to the colourful compilation album of family mantra.

I was the storyteller for all seasons; a skill that I later found was invaluable for teaching Māori and Pacific tertiary students in New Zealand. My stories drenched in memory seized their interest and stirred engagement with the intricacy, uncertainty and restlessness that seeped, soaked and saturated ourselves in social lives of change (Giddens 1984; Gergen 1991; Benhabib 1992; Burr 1995). If anything else, the tales I told encouraged some Māori and Pacific students to remain inside the lecture theatre and on to graduation, rather than pushing them outside the university entrance and off the class roll (McCourt 2005).<sup>7</sup>

### **Return of the Origin Story**

My public recital of performative identity (Butler 1998) has drawn more on stories of Dad and his *famili* [family], *kainga* [kin] and *ha’a* [tribe/clan]. In academic life this preference was influenced by certain anthropological ideas reinforced by a narrative of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand – the migration, resettlement and new generation triad. Such ethnographic imagery seemed congruent with a mode of enquiry into ‘culture’ that I had adjusted my lens to see my ‘Self’ through (Sahlins 1977, 1985a, 1985b, 1994; Howe 1984; Sampson 1993; Richardson 1997; Robson 2002). Underpinning this logic was a personal motive for privileging stories of Dad and his kin.

Mum and her family were, and still are, complex and sensitive to decode unless they are first sifted through my Mother's relationship to my Father (Baudrillard 1981).

In context, cultural politics which sculpt and shift relationships between performative identities (Butler 1998) and family memories are persistently reiterated, returned to and reworked throughout this thesis. As an introduction to reinventing identity through storytelling I have mapped some volatile ground forged in-between the social memory of family and the history of a social institution. By exploring my subjectivity and identity in reference to an 'ethnography of [Tongan] childhood' (Morton 1996) I have attempted to deconstruct a recipe for tradition by tracing the fluidity of culture and power which seeps through structural confines.

Writing about the authority and superior positioning of a Tongan Father and his family over a Mother and children, Helen Morton enunciates her own position by citing other works on Tongan tradition (1996, p. 126).

[The Tongan] father and his "side" are *'eiki* to his children, and their relationships are marked by restraint, including a number of *tapu*. The father-child relationship is conceptually associated with the chief-commoner relationship, each being used as a metaphor for the other. Rogers has pointed out that there are sayings in Tonga, "made by women as *mothers* and *wives* about the kind of authority a father and his siblings exert over their children, supporting the principle that the father's side of the family is 'superior' to the mother's side." He gives as an example the saying "*Oku te fanau kae pule tokotaha kehe*" (although you have children somebody else has authority over them). That the father and the father's side have *pule* over children reflects "an ideology of children belonging to a patrilineal unit" (1977, 158, 159; emphasis in original). The father and his brothers, all known as *tamai*, have "rights over children, titles, land, houses, and, in the traditional system, political authority" (Bott 1981, 15).

Morton (1996, p. 126) has integrated other writers' impressions of the traditional Tongan father and his kin to describe her understanding of the formal structure that defines familial rank and order.<sup>8</sup> Her inventory has not been imposed over me as a standard measurement of fixed non-negotiable rules by my Father, my Mother and their respective families. A social norm of patrilineal pre-eminence was relaxed somewhat due to a host of reasons.

Firstly, I was not born and raised from childhood to adulthood in Tonga. Geographic relocation in Auckland as part of a two-pronged minority, Tongans and Pacific Peoples, impacted on my parents' life choices and cultural priorities. Secondly, to a certain extent I am descended from a multi-ethnic and cross-cultural marriage. To

explain, my Father identifies as ‘full Tongan’ in terms of citizenship and ethnicity. Immersed in citizenship and ethnicity discourse is his micro-location as a self-identifying ‘Kolonga,’ Dad’s principal village in the *Hahake* [Eastern] District of *Tongatapu* [largest and most populated island in the Kingdom of Tonga]. He also aligns with being an Auckland Tongan and New Zealand permanent resident.

In contrast, my Mother’s Father was *Pakeha* [White] New Zealander, Māori and Samoan and her Mother, Tongan. Mum was born and raised until her early adulthood in Tonga. Tongan law conferred citizenship for paternity. Mum’s Father registered her as a British citizen because he was *non* Tongan by ethnicity and citizenship (Bell 2004b). Years later as an adult woman living in New Zealand, she changed her citizenship from British to New Zealander. My Mother’s patrilineal ethnic and national identity was decided for her by law and social convention (Stoler 1992a, 1992b, 1995). Remnants of patriarchy unfold through my Mother’s contemporary social life in Auckland. At once, she identifies with the ethnicity and citizenship bestowed on her by paternity. However, in a deeper shifting relationship of ‘Self’ and ‘Personhood’ she negotiates Tongan maternity and situates its experiential meaning alongside the spectrum of identity traces that constitute her life story (Morton 1998b).

In Tonga during my parents’ childhood, adolescence and young adulthood my Mother was classified as more *Palangi* and less *afakasi* [half-caste] despite her ability to converse in Tongan and her familiarity with her Mother’s Tongan family. The distinction of more *Palangi* than *afakasi* was contrived because her Father was considered a *real Palangi* due to perceived wealth, employment status, education and upbringing, where he attended Hamilton Boys’ High School in New Zealand. Mum’s Father and his children were partisans of a *Palangi* and *afakasi* sub-group marked by ‘non’ or ‘part’ Tongan status and discernable by business participation in which their ‘place’ was to produce and consume material wealth (Simmel 1978; Stoler 1992a).

Mum’s Mother, ‘Anaseine Kaho, was socially mobile among certain *hou’eiki* [monarchy/nobility] and possessed access to *Ha’a Kanokupolu* circles. This was permitted because of her patrilineal descent line as the eldest daughter of Manase Kaho, a younger brother of Polutele Kaho or Tu’ivakano who was the Noble of Nukunuku and Premier during Queen Salote’s ascent to the throne in 1918. Premier Tu’ivakano afforded his three brothers Siosiua, Sioape and Manase cabinet posts; 1918 - 1920 being the period remembered in Tonga’s modern history when four brothers sat in cabinet.

During childhood, I developed an acute social awareness of my Mother and Father's distinctive backgrounds and translated class difference as corresponding references to ethnicity and culture. From a child's view, my Mother was the middle class daughter of a **Palangi**, Stanley Hosier Brown, general manager of the Tonga Copra Board who died in 1974. She was also a female descendant of the renowned **famili Kaho** [Kaho Family] inheritors of the Tu'ivakano title and estate and by matrilineal intermarriage, family to the current Tuita, Fielakepa and Veikune who are Nobles and Estate Holders where all hold, or have held, ministerial portfolios.

I believe my Father was loved and indulged as a favourite grandson by his patrilineal and matrilineal families who held 'local' status in Kolonga village and the **Hahake** District of **Tongatapu**. His Father's family were descendants of Nuku Pulu, Noble of Kolonga and the longest standing speaker of the house for Tonga's legislative assembly over thirty seven years. Men from his patrilineal family were also remembered as nationally acclaimed sportsmen in boxing, athletics and rugby. His Mother's family were **matapule**, traditional funeral directors and shark hunters.

Dad accumulated his own list of achievements as a head boy, sports captain and dux of **'Apifo'ou** [Catholic] College in 1965, a Government of Tonga scholarship recipient to New Zealand in 1966 and a silver medallist for Tonga in one hundred and two hundred metre sprinting at the 1969 South Pacific Games (Te'evale 2001). In 1967 he set the Tonga national record for the two hundred metre sprint which to this day has stood unbroken for forty one years.

According to the social-economic hierarchy of 1960s Tonga, however, my Father was ill suited to keep my Mother's *alleged* superior company. Tongan men of Dad's generation have asked him with surprise how he met her (Baudrillard 1990). When Dad has explained they met in Dunedin, geographic distance from Tonga was taken to mean the 'real' reason for why the social-economic border relaxed enough to allow him to get close but not uppity.

From what I have been told by three of Mum's older sisters her parents forbid her to marry my Tongan Father. They preferred she allow her child to be raised by them and that she marry a **Palangi** or an **afakasi**. It was believed that my Mother would not adapt to a Tongan husband and his family, nor would she or her child be accepted as Tongan. Mum married Dad against her parents' wishes and for better or for worse, for richer or poorer, I have witnessed what was deemed and doomed an unlikely arrangement persevere through thirty-seven years of conflicting values and conciliatory

compromises. Their relationship prioritised what they conceived as their only child, their only child's wellbeing. Now it is their three grandchildren, my children, who manufacture the social glue that binds a family of generations throughout changing ocean tides.

Some conversations with Mum have allowed me to press for insights on her parents' attitude toward her marrying a Tongan. Inter-generation fall out and relationship fracture between [grand]parents and [grand]daughter was the story I desired to disentangle. The memory Mum is comfortable with telling is that when her Father died in his sleep her older sister Tina discovered him. She also found his bible with a family tree handwritten by him in the front pages. Inserted in the bible was my baby photograph. Perhaps imprints of her parents' unwillingness to consent to her marriage prove too painful to recall, revive and invest in her daughter.

And so I have learnt not to poke in some places for there may be cultural truth in saying that family fracture and fragmentation becomes clearer when left unsaid, buried in the past, repressed and revisited by memory.

And so I have learnt not to poke in *some* places.

## **Why Tell Stories?**

Narrative inquiry differs from other forms of research due to its focus on the dialogical nature of knowledge and its emphasis on the social world as a site where power relations are played out. Meanings are always disputable depending on who is speaking to whom and the power relations either held or perceived to be held within these interactions (Arvey 2003, p. 164).

I have elected to unlock this story as an opening door to the past and how its remembrance triggers fractures and connections in family relationships and cultural identity (Reissman 1993). Morton's (1996, p. 126) account of how a Tongan father and his relatives assume superior status over a child's life is both important to, and splintered from, my Tongan socialisation. The convention of paternal ascendance over maternal ties unveils a context-dependent logic in familial relationships I have experienced first-hand or inherited through my parents and family's memories. But it is the author's reporting style, her premeditated and programmed recitation of static tradition, the overstated homogeneous structure, its linear straightforward sense intended for the consumption of largely non-Tongan readers that does not translate word for word.

To take in Morton's description requires I read her interpretation in reference to my parents' relationships with their families and each other when socialising their child, their grandchildren, on the contextual meaning and movement of Tongan identity practices among our everyday lives. It calls for analysing what I know from an experiential understanding and comparing notes with what I am being told by another about myself and my own kind (so to speak).

My point is that both conservative and non-conservative markers of culture and power are by no means stagnant, motionless constructs unaffected by adaptation and change. Social life travels across national borders and transforms the memory and meaning of 'culture' among generations of Tongan families in New Zealand (Baudrillard 1983). In my case, class and culture boundaries that once partitioned my parents' lives in 1960s Tonga were at once set in motion and subject to negotiation because of migration to New Zealand and the birth of 'me,' their child, their child's best interests, which they decided meant a marriage of charting new territory and challenging rigid traditions to bend, move and reposition.

Recounting my own story which interweaves with my parents' memory and my children's impression of their Tongan ancestry is an empowering process. It is a research strategy that seeks to unearth and release stories in the making, stories that are *becoming*, stories of intricately detailed lives unanticipated from a distance (Richardson 1990). My research preference lies in unravelling the complexity and ambiguity of social life conceived through living experience, moving Tongan 'culture' immersed in a process of imagining and reinventing my 'Self' in relation to family and identity (Wetherell 1998).

This work is a story of my family's strategies for sustaining the Kingdom of Tonga as a signifier for origin, memory and identity. It is a work in motion that tells tales which unfold the influence of familial relationships, agency and desire and a memoir of remembering, forgetting and reconstructing. Culture in this subtext acts in an interrelated role of sensory 'ideal' and politicised construct. Culture and its relationship to power is reproduced in, and transmitted through, the "associated surroundings" of social life which reveal its purpose, use, meaning, limit and vested interest (Mason 2006, p. 18).

This thesis examines my situational identity as defined by the particular, that is, a set of social factors and circumstances which situate how and why an inter-generation family understand and engage with culture and its relationship to power in certain ways.

I am not proposing my story is one of a kind or that the ethnography can not be aligned with other fieldwork accounts of contemporary Tonga and its global diaspora (Barthes 1987). What I am implying is that many Tongan families living in New Zealand engage with similar transitions, travels and transformations (Vaden 1998).

## **Tongan Families Like Mine**

They may reconstruct social memory from inter-generation stories  
But are not automated prototypes of culture

They can experience complex social lives  
But diffuse complicatedness by interacting with it

They record memory of inter-generation tension  
But are reluctant to name it outside of their family

They negotiate their difference  
But know how, when and why a border does not permit entry

They do understand familial fracture  
But idealise cohesion

They are actors of social change  
Yet replicate structure

They will grieve for their loss  
But appear grateful for moving

They are deeply analytical when telling their stories  
But downplay an agenda

They can tell stories they desire their family to remember  
But transmit painful memories when cautious not to stir them

## **Reflexivity in Telling Stories**

Inter-generation stories perform familial acts of remembering, forgetting, making and recording social memory. Stories are analytical tools. They can provide families such as mine with a political device for critically considering what is important or what will be sustained, for reworking what needs modification or alteration, for inventing what is required and significantly, for retracting what is no longer a priority in our changing environments and negotiated relationships.

“As a value-laden actor, I am unable to avoid making judgements” (Goldsmith 1989, p. 6): Michael Goldsmith’s words resonate throughout my work. Value judgements I have made may not correspond with how family, friends and acquaintances see themselves when engaging in their “associated surroundings” (Mason 2006, p. 18) and social relationships. In chapter two (see pp. 45-52) I discuss collaborative strategies which informed my interpretation of the interplay between culture and power. My research approach ‘centred’ engagement in the field by repositioning my ‘Self,’ the ‘me’ in my family related to ‘Us,’ amidst relationships that transpired and their ensuing social expectations and political interests.

Underlying motives that sculpt my analysis and re-representation of the dialogical exchange between ‘the researcher’ and ‘the researched’ come into question and are examined throughout my thesis. My own in-between position as ‘the researcher being researched’ is detailed in chapter five (see pp. 173-181). The ‘audience,’ the recipients of this work are heterogeneous readers and interpreters of information. Although my conscious decision was to use stories and word imagery conducive to how my family understands our interwoven lives, the chapters unfold my ‘imagined community’ (Anderson 1983, 1991) of readers. In my own sociological imagination (Mills 1970) I envision an academic interest group. One ethical consideration is that of social fracture: in this text, the system of social exchange in which an ‘imagined’ readership becomes fractured into family and academia. The author’s dilemma lies in plaiting multiple tastes, canons and interests into one’s preferred writing style to assuage fragmentation for interested parties, family and academia, so that interpretative meaning from the recorded memories, stories and experiences *may* be gathered.

The type of reflexivity I have employed is also subject to context (Steier 1991; Hertz 1997). In chapter five (see pp. 168-173) I disentangle how my own subjectivity and identity is read into the text and thus, woven into co-constructed identity stories. In one way reflexivity is situated: it works in between my desire to collapse patriarchy by

equitably weaving matrilateral and patrilateral stories in negotiation with a type of social reality. Desires therefore confront complex realities riddled in contradictory beliefs and conflicting values.

My political agenda to affirm the social value of my Father's kin, a rural village and diasporic network, to question how and why essentialisms of people and place are popularly reproduced among Tongan generations provides one example. Writing my life in my family has reconstructed situations where 'me' and my social conscience have wrestled with conflicting positions and practices of cultural identity. Reconciling 'myself' as a daughter of Kolonga through paternity alongside 'myself' as a maternal granddaughter of a renowned *afakasi* family with kinship ties to an elite Tongan family has proven a complicated, if not, controversial process. Loyalties to patrilateral and matrilateral family ties *become* set in motion positioning 'me' in-between two *different* value systems of experiencing and re-interpreting culture and identity.

Generally, a convergent expectation prevailed among generations of patrilateral and matrilateral family in which it was believed that either one's Father's family *or* one's Mother's family was the dominant influence in primary socialisation, thus, shaping the way in which one thinks, speaks and behaves in adulthood. For 'me,' the trick to walking a tight-rope of patrilateral versus matrilateral and inter-generational family tensions has been to *negotiate* two *different* subject positions as valuable memories and histories that constitute 'me' while *being* mindful that these 'parts' may play out at odds with each other or read as a synthesis of contrasting locations.

At times, I have experienced indignation at slights, slurs and insults, mostly from Tongans affiliated to villages which constitute the Nuku'alofa area, against my Father's place of birth, Kolonga village, and his Kolonga kin. Often I have overheard Kolonga referred to as *uta* [bush], people from the *bush* considered rough, unsophisticated, uncivilised and uneducated. Such utterances are circumstantially shared with 'me' because the speaker *may* be unaware of my patrilateral ties to Kolonga or elect *only* to acknowledge my matrilateral connection to 'town' people residing in the Nuku'alofa area, particularly in Kolomotu'a where some of the Kaho family live. Offence is intricately tangled in the pinching detail that my Father was constructed as subordinate to my Mother's *assumed* higher status in 1960s Tonga and hence an ineligible suitor for marriage.

The irony is that paternal superiority documented as the traditional foundation of a Tongan family was subverted to a certain extent in the lives of my children and 'me' by

categories of class and ethnicity. In this sense, my Father was deemed an inferior match for my Mother because she was considered a socially mobile *Palangi* who was materially wealthy due to her Father's ethnicity, citizenship and occupation. Adding to this inventory of status was another type of social rank. She was a female descendant of a socially constructed 'superior' Tongan family because of her maternal family's relationship connection to the *Ha'a Kanokupolu*. Thus, my matrilineal family was, and still is in some social contexts, elevated in status and political power to my patrilineal family.

Reflexivity in situated relationships means analysing competing discourses of social memory and history (Potter 1996). For me, it involves realising my desire is to create inclusivity from a family of stories but that such ambition is mediated by experience, memory and history coloured by, and coated in, social inequality and difference. In chapter six (see pp. 232-239) my Mother and Father engaged in conversation in the 'field' (Pollock 2004). Their only child *gazed*, listened and remembered my origin story that made 'me' a social product of *difference* indicative of their past, struggling to blend and balance my 'Self,' my negotiated identity, my family history of social inequality, in the present spectrum of New Zealand cultural politics (Howard 1985; Wachtel 1990; Pound 1991; Heshusius 1994; Tiatia 1998; Hoskins and Arvay 1999).

## **Experts on Culture**

When are you going to interview us, Mum?

We're the experts on culture!

Don't you think?

By Ani-Kāterina Amoamo<sup>10</sup>

The year that I submitted my thesis I felt amiss, thrown askew by my fifteen year old daughter asking me when I would interview them, my three children (Rasmussen 1995; Ribbens-McCarthy and Edwards 2002). "We're the experts on culture! Don't you think?" Her words haunted me. I had overlooked an obvious ethnographic source of cultural knowledge, my own offspring, who saw themselves, spoke and behaved as experts on their own lives. Ani-Kāterina's opening lines in the prologue performed a curtain raiser for a fieldwork conversation. Her memory moulded in mine obliged me to

hesitate and rethink the impact of my life, my words, experiences, interpretations and fieldwork on my children, their lives, relationships, analyses and identities (Ishino 1995).

Children are not passive absorbers of speech, thought, emotion and behaviour (Cowling 2005).<sup>11</sup> They actively engage in social exchange and are political actors, negotiating themselves as moving subject positions among an inter-generation web of relationships. The power granted to adult social memory had allowed me to commit a glaring oversight – I had forgotten that my children were storytellers and actors, a form of memory loss that a child's words can hold a grown-up to (Carucci 2001).

Reworking my thesis at a critical point in time, a period of wrapping up when I thought I was negotiating closure, taught me a valuable lesson in narrative inquiry. On one level I understood that stories act as analytical tools which map travelling theory (Austin-Broos 1987, Clifford 1988), a family's life history over time and through change. Stories, however, may emerge from one generation but are subject to selective rewording, remembering, forgetting and re-enactment by another. Stories change through acts of retelling, they alter according to who is speaking and the audience receiving their message (Ray 1993). I understood this familial code of conduct but had carefully forgotten that theoretical balm can only seep through the surface when applied deeply (Chase 1995; Gross 2000).

My own will to record inter-generation stories and social memory had centred myself and my relationships to adults like me. As a consequence, I had disembodied myself from a past beyond adulthood and covered any trace of childhood memory by sentencing my children's social life to a footnote in a thesis (Pratt 1986; Pollner 1987). My three children's engagement in the reproduction of social memory had thus become an emerging story in process I had touched on, glossed over and purposefully sidelined.

Their stories of 'me' in my family like mine, are not conclusive, complete and beyond transcendence. The difference is that including and valuing their words throughout this thesis may provide an ethnographic point of entry in which they, themselves, can rewrite new chapters in their living experience and its allegiance to social memory and history among generations (Polanyi 1985; Polkinghorne 1988; Halbwachs 1992; Bowman 1997; Rains, Archibald and Deyhle 2000).

## **Over the Past Five Years ...**

### Story 1

Over the past five years creating this thesis my eldest daughter Toakase Raukura entered her last year of secondary school, a Year 13 student at a decile one *Kura*

**Kaupapa Māori** [Māori Total Immersion School] in Huntly, North Waikato. She sat her learner driver's license and mulled over a career in either primary school teaching, Māori immersion education, or Māori journalism. Immersed in a knowledge industry for a new generation, students of **Kura Kaupapa Māori**, Toa found secondary education reassuring because "I can fit in" (as she told me). She pondered post-secondary school telling her Father and me that she did not want to leave this place in her life.

Thoughts of "going to America" (Toa's image) to visit my Father's sisters 'Anau and Liliha in California wandered into talk of "what I'll do when I'm eighteen" (Toa's wish). She wondered whether Grandma Siu, my Father's Mother, would travel to Auckland to visit after "fighting with Grandma" (Toa's view), my Mother, the last time she stayed. Sensitive to inter-ethnic and cross-cultural tension between Māori and Pacific Peoples in contemporary Aotearoa, she developed coping strategies for dodging and deflecting pokes, slurs and sarcasm from her own Tongan family directed against Māori.

The characterisation of an urban Māori teenage boy on **Bro' Town** [a Television animated comedy] performed by **The Naked Samoans** [Samoan comedians] irked Toa. She queried why young Auckland Māori did not collectively assert that **Jeff the Māori** [Māori character from **Bro' Town**] was a debilitating stereotype (Firehouse Films 2005). Her social politicisation via Māori immersion education in a rural Waikato town spoke through her will to question how Māori youth identity was constructed for public consumption. Toa wondered why criticism of **Bro' Town** was not readily aired in mainstream media as she believed that many young Māori of her generation found the social images externalised on screen debasing.

When her younger sister moved to Auckland, Toa worried that Ani-Kāterina might cease from speaking **Te Reo Māori** [Maori language] and forget her Father's **whānau** [family/kin]. She felt anxious that their living apart would fracture their relationship's closeness. Daily contact with her sister was achieved by sending text messages to Tongan cousins in Auckland which were passed on to Ani-Kāterina by word of mouth or telephone.

Even though we fight, Ani's my only sister in this world.

(Toa's words)<sup>12</sup>

## Story 2

My second daughter left home, disillusioned with Māori immersion education personified by low socio-economic families and stifled by a *hum drum* [boring] life in a rural Waikato town. Ani-Kāterina pictured herself “a city girl” (her words) so went to live with her Tongan grandparents in an overcrowded, overpriced and over-inflated North Shore City suburb of Auckland opting for decile ten mainstream education.

At a secondary school where Māori and Pacific students were less than three per cent of the student community, where the Māori language classroom hid behind the science block, where Māori and Pacific languages were not spoken in her peers’ homes and where students were recorded, labelled and boxed in by the lowest retention and qualification completion rates compared to other ethnicities, she began to question structure and power.

Questioning in class landed her after school detentions for ‘attitude.’ Infuriating my Father for acquiring a detention for ‘talking’ while on detention, she refused to interpret a string of *after schools* [after school detentions] (her expression) as a serious disciplinary measure because “It’s all my Māori and Islander mates in there so I’m not alone” (Ani’s memory). She misplaced one mobile phone, the second broken in a disagreement with her younger brother (Ani’s story, not Rewi’s version). Email became the after school medium for talking to her sister, cousins and friends after Granddad imposed a telephone ban for receiving a fifteen hundred dollar Telecom bill listing mobile numbers of Ani-Kāterina’s clan and associates. Camaraderie was found in Māori and Pacific school friends who named themselves *The All Browns* [play on the name, All Blacks] (her term). *The All Browns* played rugby at lunchtime winning a reputation as tough competitors.

She visited Auckland University on a *STEAM* [Anachronism: Science, Technology, Engineering, Architecture and Maths] programme designed to recruit Māori and Pacific secondary students into science, technology, engineering, architecture and maths. Impressed by “a Samoan girl from McAuley College, the only Island girl in engineering school,” she contemplated becoming a structural engineer (her recollection).<sup>13</sup> She followed me to academic conferences to find answers, flicking me a note after I had presented a paper at a geography conference that read, “These people don’t get it! The lady who asked the question she doesn’t like you! Giving you *the evils* [malevolent gaze] when you were talking!”

At Year 11, Ani-Kāterina’s awareness of change and conflict was razor sharp. Her capacity to reflexively question her role in relationships that impacted on inter-generation change was spiky edged. She offloaded to her Father and me that my Father’s Mother, “Grandma Siu doesn’t like me. She likes Toa better than me. Toa’s quiet and does what she’s told. I talk and ask questions. But Grandma, my Grandma, she likes me so that’s kind of fair. Don’t you think?” (Ani’s view, not Toa’s).<sup>14</sup>

### Story 3

My young son Rewi Maniapoto started school attending two decile one ***Kura Kaupapa Māori*** in the North Waikato over one year and settling in at the second school with his eldest sister. He travelled to Tonga eight times, learnt to speak basic Tongan and was often commended for correct pronunciation. He also acquired an experiential understanding that it was politically advantageous to identify as a “town [Nuku’alofa] boy” compared to introducing himself as a ***tamasi’i Kolonga*** [Kolonga boy].

Rewi’s string of school absences were explained to teachers in his Father’s notes, ***“I haere a Rewi ki Tonga ki te tutaki te whānau o tona whaea.”*** In translation, “Rewi’s gone to Tonga to his Mum’s people.” Truancy was a non-issue; no ‘official’ concern was raised. When my Father instructed Rewi to “stay and go to school” (Dad’s words) rather than travel to Tonga with his Mother and Grandma he cautioned, “It’s ok Granddad. I go to a Māori school. The ***kaiako*** [teacher/s] are nice.”

Rewi was awarded an engraved cup for ‘fairest player’ on his first year playing for ***Taniwharau*** [many ***taniwha***, mythical river creatures] rugby league club under sevens. He received a positive Year 2 school report, the year he travelled to Tonga three times.

Some weekends and school holidays he trained in Auckland with Granddad and ‘Uncle Doug’ (Rewi’s All Black Uncle, Doug Howlett). Rewi imagined he would move to rugby union so he could play for the All Blacks like his Uncle or “even play for Tonga if Granddad’s knee isn’t too sore to train” (Rewi’s words to describe my Father’s ongoing ligament injury).

Rewi’s dog Mandy who lives in Auckland with Granddad, Grandma and Ani broke her leg fleeing from a car while crossing the road. Granddad made a splint and treated her with ***faito’o*** [traditional Tongan medicine] because “Tongan medicine works the best” (as Rewi told me). Mandy was arrested by the animal police for roaming the

streets carrying a stolen shoe she had expropriated from the neighbour. The neighbour was unimpressed with Mandy's behaviour and called the North Shore City Council dog catcher. Granddad was unimpressed with the neighbour and called him *fakasesele* [crazy lunatic] over the backyard fence. "Granddad had to pay two hundred dollars to get Mandy out of jail," my son explained.

Rewi's Uncle Stanley (Mum's younger brother) died suddenly in Auckland. Funeral arrangements were made hastily and my three children were expected to 'fit in' with family ritual bereft of any in-depth conversation on what was happening and why decisions had been made. At an evening Church service Rewi worried that Uncle Herbert (Uncle Stanley's older brother) "was so sad he shaked when he was crying" (Rewi's memory). During a family gathering after the burial Rewi announced loudly, "Everyone's here for Uncle Stanley's party but Uncle Stanley didn't turn up!" A few months later in Auckland Rewi explained to Mum, Brandon and I how he had come to terms with Uncle Stanley's memory.

Uncle Stanley's my first uncle to die  
 He had so many Tongan friends  
 When I went to the *kai pola* [feast] with Granddad  
 the *kava* [*kava* drinkers] boys said to me,  
 "Rewi, where's Stanley?"  
 Some of them didn't know he's died  
 I told them though and they did a song for him  
 I think I'll take Uncle Stanley some milk for his coffee  
 But not beer  
 Cos' I think Uncle Herbie's angry with Uncle Stanley cos' he drunk too much beer

By Rewi Maniapoto Amoamo<sup>15</sup>

Rewi's ginger cat Tofa died and was buried by Brandon in our back yard. At Tofa's farewell service Rewi paid respect to Tofa's memory.

Tofa was a very good cat  
 He went for walks with us like cat-dog  
 He caught some rats and birds and rabbits and frogs  
 But I think he was a bit lonely and angry cos' he missed his brother Thomas

By Rewi Maniapoto Amoamo<sup>16</sup>

Turning his interest to communication media, Rewi taught himself to text on his eldest sister's mobile phone igniting sibling conflict for sending texts and consuming credit outside of Vodafone free text weekends. Rewi learnt how to send and receive email and regularly pleaded for his Father's laptop password so he could use his work email. One Christmas he received an X-Box from Granddad's friend Tony, and a Play Station II from Santa. He decided to leave the X-Box at his Grandparents' home in Auckland "so Ani can play games and Grandma can play DVDs" (Rewi's words).<sup>17</sup>

#### Story 4

My husband Brandon Amo Amo raised two children at home and commuted weekends to either collect or visit the third in Auckland; his absent (minded) roving wife busy, bustling and buried in thesis, lecturing and contract research. He changed secondary schools to work in a rural North Waikato town exhausted from three years teaching *Te Reo Māori* and social studies in the nationally constructed Polynesian Capital – Manukau City, South Auckland.

Brandon talked of career change, burnt out from a teacher's load. An additional forty hours per week was spent as Māori union representative, community outreach, social services liaison and intermediary between State school and the human face of Māori families. He stayed a school teacher but was suspicious of *NCEA's* [National Certificate of Educational Achievement] industrialisation of learning and achievement to resemble credits and courses. Taking up surfing on Rewi's triple fin, joining the school gym and minding his diet was intended to assuage his social conscience. Juggling, jumbling and jiggling his extra curricula activities on top of the additional work did less for sleep but more for his shape.

Meeting his half-sister for the first time was a treasured memory. Visiting his Father in Opotiki with our three children for two summer breaks was timely. His paternal Grandfather's family reunion saw him elected to an organising committee for the next gathering in Opotiki in five years. His Father, our children's Māori Grandfather, migrated to Australia when Brandon was a baby visiting Aotearoa intermittently with an Australian accent. "*How are yer cobber?*" ["How are you my friend?"] (Brandon's mimicry of his Father's acculturated speech). His Father's Mother, Brandon's last living grandparent, died in her sleep and was buried next to her husband at his patrilineal *marae* [meeting house/place of ancestral origin]. Grieving for her memory, Brandon

felt comforted in knowing that, “At least my kids are old enough to remember ***Kui***” [Grandma] (Brandon's words).<sup>18</sup>

### Story 5

My Mother Patricia Brown Pulu experienced kidney failure and dialysed three times weekly to stay alive. At the first dialysis unit she lodged a complaint against a technician, a new immigrant from India, with whom she had an altercation and a series of unsatisfactory interactions. She recommended his employer provide adequate preparation for new staff, particularly new immigrants, to reorient them for working effectively in an Auckland environment. Management moved her to a second unit where she described the technician who attended to her, a new immigrant from India, as “lovely, so caring and helpful.”

Admitted to hospital three times for minor surgery, twice for ulcers and infections and once for major surgery – a kidney transplant – Mum was more concerned that my Father and Ani-Kāterina were navigating their way through work, school and family life without her skill at co-ordinating clothes to match the tone and temperament of familial relationships. “I’m always the mediator between your Father and Ani,” Mum told me. “Your Father tells me to keep out of it but I can’t. I have to stick up for Ani and then your Father gets annoyed and says I’m interfering. I never thought I’d ever have another Teena!” (Mum's words). Mum laboured over Ani-Kāterina but enjoyed her company in her home, her life, hers and Dad’s lives. She was grateful to travel twice to Tonga with Rewi and me and made time to enjoy transitory moments of nearness to family.

Sharing weekend and school holiday childcare responsibility with Brandon Mum insisted her three grandchildren stay with Grandma and Granddad offering to drive Toa and Rewi to Auckland. She spoke of downsizing to part-time employment as a court reporter for Auckland District Court so more of her week could be spent with her grandchildren. Her younger brother died in Manurewa and younger sister in Minneapolis. Dialysis prevented my Mother from attending her sister’s funeral. At her brother’s funeral she mediated sensitive relationships between his two ex-wives, their children and grandchildren and giggled during the gravestone unveiling at the inscription chosen by her older brother: “Will Always Be Remembered By Those Who Loved Him” (Uncle Cliff's epitaph for Uncle Stanley).<sup>19</sup>

## Story 6

My Father Seminati Pulu was involved in thesis fieldwork. He conducted fieldwork conversations with his family in Auckland whose generation alignment was to a migrant identity. Dad's presence shaped the social context in which dialogue was transmitted in Tongan and translated by him into English. He imparted two rules governing a research relationship with one's own Tongan family: rule one is avoid asking **vale** [dumb/stupid] questions and rule two is avoid saying anything that will make the family look **vale**. Of course Dad's instruction guide was intended for his family, not Mum's.

Subsidising university fees for his only child, a thirty seven year old daughter, paying her airfares to Tonga and Samoa because she was reliably broke and purchasing **me'a 'ofa** [gifts] to gift to her patrilineal family who provided fieldwork conversation committed him to weekend plumbing contracts for additional income. At near sixty years he worked like he was thirty and his daughter, a ten year old child in primary school. His wife worried that he was "too old to work like a young man" (Mum's words) but he would not say outright he wanted to slow down. He could not; he had a child and three grandchildren, "a family to take care of" (Dad's words).

My Father became pivotal to liaising between the Kolonga village association in Auckland and Kolonga village. He invested in his familial tie to **Nuku Nopele** [Noble Nuku of Kolonga] to create organisational change in relationships between the Kolonga town committee, water committee, village families and their diasporic kin, the majority living in Auckland. Dad talked of sustainable village development and strengthening a relationship bond to Kolonga among inter-generation families living throughout the Pacific Rim. He actively pursued his aspiration in Auckland by motivating remittance fund-raising and the transference of knowledge, skills and material goods useful for village infrastructure.

Five fieldwork visits to Tonga with Rewi and me were subsumed with upgrading the Kolonga water system, scoping a Kolonga reef reserve project and training students from '**Apifo'ou** and **Takuilau** [Catholic] colleges for athletics and rugby. Dad's work life as a plumber, drain layer and building inspector for Auckland City Council proved invaluable for facilitating change in relationship and resource management.

He continued training in Auckland with his matrilineal nephew Doug Howlett mindful of age and injury and spoke of "going home to Tonga" (Dad's dream) to teach secondary students as the sports' master at '**Apifo'ou** College. If my Mother did not

agree then he would look forward to “going home” once he had retired as he would “have done everything he had come to New Zealand to do” (as he told me).

Dad’s Father died in North Shore City hospital. Granddad Sioeli had travelled to Auckland for medical treatment with his wife Grandma Siu and their youngest son Semi Leka. Dad buried him in Tonga. Initially he was to concede to family opinion by burying his Father in Auckland. Explaining at a family *fakataha* [meeting] he dreamt in his sleep that Sioeli told him he wished to sleep next to his brother Soakai, he flew his Father “home to his family *mala’e* [cemetery] in Kolonga where he can be at peace and so can I” (Dad's memory).<sup>20</sup>

### Story 7

As for me Teena Joanne Brown Pulu I started, paused, remembered to breath, hesitated, cried, sulked, bitched, laughed and stumbled through the undetected cultural landmines and competing discourses of social memory I uncovered. At times such unravelling was a deliberate ploy. But for the most part it effervesced, ebbed, flowed and erupted by chance, an unintended experience (my thoughts). Or perhaps it was an inadvertent consequence of plunging beyond constraints, pushing boundaries and pressing buttons to enter restricted territorial zones on a dodgy visa.

I tried to recall rule number six when troubled and anxious that I could not foresee where my thesis, my story, my life would take me. Rule number six (as explained by a colleague at Auckland University) is remember not to take yourself too seriously; all other rules do not apply.<sup>21</sup> Lecturing at Waikato University, I savoured teaching Māori and Pacific undergraduates using critical narrative. Commissioned to produce three research papers on Pacific tertiary retention and success and Pacific community consultation on university education in Manukau City, I imagined a scenery change.

After three years, I relocated to an Auckland polytechnic thinking it would offer a teaching and research environment congruent with my thesis work, inter-generation Tongan families, and a central space to experience and unpack the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand narrative. My assumption was speculative as a Samoan academic at Auckland University pointed out to me, “And then you saw the light!”<sup>22</sup> Experience created one social dimension but to document its meaning was a maze of perilous pursuit with an absence of clearly marked ‘danger’ signage.

I navigated my way back into contract research on tertiary retention and success; this time, fieldwork with New Zealand’s public construction, the conflated critical

[brown] mass of Māori and Pacific tertiary students. At a different location, Auckland University, New Zealand's tertiary icon located in the city's midst where thirty per cent of the population was conflated in critical [brown] mass, I missed Waikato University. At the Auckland University job interview I was asked why I wanted a qualitative researcher's position. My answer was unpretentious.

In my career I have felt most useful, motivated and happy doing contract research  
 I want that passion back in my life  
 I need it for writing my thesis (*my words*)<sup>23</sup>

### **Five Years Voyaging**

Over the past five years creating this thesis the lives of my children, my parents, my husband and I have passed through familiar and different places of arrival, transition and departure. We have all voyaged beyond how we imagined our lives may shape up and take course (Small 1997). Movement from one discursive place to another has led to historical transformation, the type of change that a five year family memoir discloses in the subdued undercurrents of juncture and disjuncture, convergence and divergence, and how social memory draws meaning from the past to make sense of new experiences (Helu-Thaman 1985).

The decision to include my three children in a family ethnography on Tongan identity stories may need further contextualising in terms of their multiple ethnicity and heterogeneous cultural identity (Harrison 1999). In their everyday lives, my three children have interacted more often with their Tongan grandparents' *famili*, *kainga* and *ha'a* than their paternal Māori grandparents' *whānau* [families], *hapu* [sub-tribes] and *iwi* [tribes]. I feel bold enough to say that this was not a deliberate decision on my part to grant familial priority to my parents and my family, although my husband Brandon may be provoked into argument on such a contentious point. My own social reality incurred the need for family assistance with childcare for weekends and school holidays, the critical time outside of employment taken up with fieldwork, thesis writing and contract research. My parents and their respective families were eager, willing and prepared to share the responsibility of caring for, and raising my three children, not without their own primary socialisation motives.

In chapters five and six, a re-representation of inter-generation relationships taken from fieldwork conversations with migrant, New Zealand-born and New Zealand-raised Tongan generations, my three children included, contributes to the dialogical

release of the ideas, ideals and irks of identity politics (Dore 1990; Fitzgerald 1998). I have admired the will and determination of my children to reflexively assess and select what aspects of being connected to a Tongan family are worth remembering on their terms of social value, their human agency *becoming* salient in conversations on family relationships and its influence over how social life is played out.

In saying this, they are not pre-programmed Tongan robots willing to forget and shed their Māori ancestral ties and ensuing cultural identity in sole pursuit of their relationship closeness to, and familiarity with, Tongan grandparents and their respective families. My children's 'difference,' however, was not conceptualised by, and spoken in, the language of biological percentage, 'cultural loss' or ethnic inadequacy (Fine 1994). This ethnographic memoir is explored in fieldwork chapters five (see pp. 161-168) and six (see pp. 219-223, 227-231, 232-239) where stories shared by family members from second and third generations of New Zealand-born and New Zealand-raised Tongans are repositioned alongside tales of their migrant forebears to evoke the richness, connectedness and diversity of identity in the making as 'We' tell it (Connelly and Clandinin 1990).

At seventeen, fifteen and eight years of age my three children are critical, questioning, relational beings who transmit, rethink and rework their experience and social memory as multiple, moving subject positions of culture and identity (Craw and Hubbard 1993). My eight year old son's interrogation and rearrangement of a question I put to him indicates a child's willingness to reorient the 'world' defined in an adult's talk on his terms of understanding, meaning and usefulness.

What did you say?  
Tonga or what, Tongan?  
What [are] you talking about?

I don't want to talk about that  
I'll talk about my stuff

You know Uncle James, he's got a new truck  
Remember [when] he come to pick me up from Auntie Nina's with Renee  
Did you hear him?  
He said, "We've got a new truck Rewi"  
You were there [with] Auntie Nina and Grandma [in Tonga]

Have you got my passport?

Has Granddad got it?  
 I want to take it to school cos' Herewini went to Melbourne in the holidays  
 I'll show the kids I've been to Tonga lots of times

Where are those photos of Tonga?  
 Can you get them?  
 I want to take them to school

By Rewi Maniapoto Amoamo<sup>24</sup>

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Inter-generation politics transpired between myself and my three children over selecting photographs to front each chapter and create a family album. Choosing photographs quickly converted into an ethnographic site of contested identity, culture and power. Thus, I have elected to cite a section from my verbatim fieldnotes of a four-way conversation between my children and me. This thesis displayed photographs chosen from the contested ground of the photo debate. A merger of tastes and preferences on photographic literature appeared as headliners for thesis chapters and an album of family memories. The convergent area we decided we could live in without the politics of photographing 'culture' exacerbating disagreement was that pictures chosen were taken during fieldwork and thesis creation.

Brown Pulu, T. J., Amoamo, T. R., Amoamo, A. K. and Amoamo, R. M. 2006. Group Interview 1, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.

Nah Mum!  
 Don't put village photos there.  
 It's meant to be on Tongans here.  
 Not over there.  
 Don't be a clown.  
 Be serious.  
 Gee, you're a real clown.  
 Water pump is wack.  
 The pig?  
 Fish?  
 Think about it.  
 I do art.  
 I know what's wack.

The pig is cool.  
 It was bathing at the ...

[Cut off]

And we're not in most of them.  
 Oldie-baldy photos from back in the days.  
 Granddad don't look like my Granddad.

He still looks fresh though.

These ones are recent.  
 When I went with Granddad to do the ...

[Cut off again]

Granddad would like it.

Yeah, cos' it's his village lol!

What about my photo I took?

Rewi, it's your bare bum.  
 This is my thesis son.  
 Do you want your bum in the university library?

[Explosive laughter]

Ok.  
You choose the photos.  
But let me know why you chose them.

Why?  
So you can write it down.

Course.  
I'm an anthropologist.

So what you do for a job Mum?  
Write it down!

[Another bout of explosive laughter]

Your styles is too fresh.

Siaosi's birthday's good cos' we're all there.  
And another thing.  
It's got cultural things like the faiva, koloa.  
Tongan stuff.  
I mean like that's what university lecturers want to see.  
You know.  
They want to see the culture.

Who's 'They'?  
Are you talking about me?

Yeah.  
Nah, nah, jokes.  
Stop spinning.

[More laughter]

Did you guys read my draft?

I read it.

Clever boy Rewi.  
Thank you for reading my story.  
I love reading your stories.

Oh whatever!?  
Too many big words.

*Hamea pe!*  
Whatever back at ya.

Boring.  
Dry.  
Stories are good.  
Well, my stories are good.

What about you bub?

Yeah I'll read it.  
One day.

<sup>2</sup>

Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.

Much of Ani-Kāterina's dialogue cited in this thesis emerged from fieldwork conversation 3 in January 2006. We spent the day talking together in bursts, breaking intermittently to rethink, eat, 'do other stuff,' regrouping once refreshed with ideas for another talk fest. Bustling everyday life with Brandon, Toa and Rewi 'doing their stuff' did not rupture the ebb and flow of interaction and collaboration. Rewi was a conversation participant at times in the day when he felt compelled to contribute his knowledge or perhaps when our discussion interested him. Toa's thoughts were conveyed more in passing body language, background laughter at the discussion topics and 'off the cuff' comments she

would holler to her younger sister (i.e. "Nah Ani, Grandma Siu likes you but your mouth's too smart that's all"). Brandon listened in occasionally to the unravelling memories and stories, offering his contextualised views to enrich and expand the terrain's interpretative possibilities.

<sup>3</sup> Campbell, I. and Coxon, E. 2005. Preface and Futa and His Place: A 'Conversation.' In *Polynesian Paradox: Essays in Honour of Futa Helu*, edited by I. Campbell and E. Coxon. Fiji: University of the South Pacific.

His influence on his own society has been spread through his work as a radical educationist, founder of a school and university that pioneered new methods, new curricula and new values for Tonga. For non-Tongans he is a paradox: a deeply traditional man, steeped in Tongan culture, but also the most articulate, thoughtful and strident critic of Tongan values and society (Campbell and Coxon 2005, p. vii).

By the time I was six, I was well aware that there was a pecking order in Lotofoa in which the Helu family was the setters of standards for every other family. They shaped the opinions of all Lotofoa villagers on important issues, but more significantly this influence was also felt, admired and envied beyond the outskirts of our village and the very small island of Foa (S. Hao'uli cited in Campbell and Coxon 2005, p. 1).

My dialogue (p. 8) is a tongue and cheek prod at two distinct but not mutually exclusive social institutions that have emerged in post-1970s Tongan history with the co-constructionist assistance of public and academic media. First, the ideology and practice subsumed in the Tupou IX institution of modernising Tonga through education, particularly at university level, and economic enterprise; a strategic shift from Saolote Tupou III's reign of manufacturing 'peace' and 'unity' by inventing national dance, poetry and song to reinforce hegemony so that 'difference' and 'disjuncture' writhed close to the surface erupting by route of covert and ambiguous political acts, speech, behaviours, and interactions. Second, the ideology and practice of the Helu-'Atenisi [male] institution which forges dialectic synergy in a sociological imagination that reifies the classical Tu'i Tonga past, the Samoanised Kanokupolu present, Greek classics, Andersonian philosophy and still-life images of Athenian democracy.

Two types of contradictory interplay have transpired from the construction of a Tupou IX social institution and a Helu-'Atenisi social institution. In respect to the Tupou IX institution which informs Tongan social life, I have come across repetitive criticism in the field that, "The King wanted the people to be educated. Now they are educated he don't want them to change anything" (Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga). In reference to the Helu-'Atenisi institution which does not inform Tongan social life but rather replicates a 'form' of Tongan social life, criticism in the field has suggested, "It's no different from the Hou'eiki. Same as the Tongan thinking. The King at the top and the Nobles and Commoners below" (Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga).

Of relevance to my analysis is how and by what speech acts of constructing social memory and its meaning in history do utterances like these couched in social life stories become transmitted, reinterpreted and remembered among Tongan generations. Such ethnographic stories may not be edited and retold in grand narratives of Tongan history nor stored in university libraries of socially acceptable knowledge. However, their release and retelling in social life uncovers power and knowledge relationships that are played out by academic actors. Academics as political actors can exert a context dependent will to truth (Foucault 1972); their will to co-construct the 'stage' of truth about Tongan society, which involves selectively processing and idealising the types of tales that can be told as history. Underpinning this selection process is an unspoken act that sidelines the 'Others' (Said 1978) stories for their dangerous words (Brenneis and Myers 1984), riotous ideas, which undermine an institution's self-invested authority to sanctify 'ideal' knowledge brokers as stone monuments of His-story.

<sup>4</sup> Appadurai, A. 1986. Introduction: commodities and the politics of value. In *The Social Life of Things*, edited by A. Appadurai. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Simmel suggests that objects are not difficult to acquire because they are valuable, "but we call those objects valuable that resist our desire to possess them" (p. 67). What Simmel calls economic objects, in particular, exist in space between pure desire and immediate enjoyment, with some distance between them and the person who desires them, which is a distance that can be overcome. This distance is overcome in and through economic exchange, in which the value of objects is determined reciprocally. That is, one's desire for an object is fulfilled by sacrifice of some other object, which is the focus of the desire of another. Such exchange of sacrifice is what economic life is all about and the economy as a particular social form "consists not only in exchanging values but in the exchange of values" (p. 80) (Appadurai 1986, pp. 3-4).

My discussion that mentioned my Father being 'misled' by an imagined pathway to social and economic mobility in New Zealand (p. 8) points to the power of economic life as an 'ideal' infused in motives for migration. Appadurai's (1986, pp. 3-4) citation exposes the transaction of social values in economic life. This analysis can be reinterpreted through my Father's migration story, his motives and desires for acquiring a Government of Tonga scholarship in 1966 to undertake a trade training programme with the New Zealand Railways in Dunedin. Dad recalls that his imagery of a 'better life' in New Zealand was moulded by his Catholic school teachers' perceptions of progress and development via economic gain. This could be achieved in New Zealand, compared to Tonga (or so he was told to believe) as it was understood that social mobility in New Zealand was intimately tied to economic accumulation of material wealth bereft of the social class structure that governed 1960s Tonga.

To a certain degree, Dad maintains this subject positioning in New Zealand public life and has by some measure exchanged the social value of stratification via inherited birthright (as in 1960s Tonga) for a former working class ideology that those at the bottom strata of a post-industrial society should (in theory) be given a 'hand up' to secure opportunities for upward economic mobility. Although Dad still votes Labour, as he has done since 1970 when he gained permanent

residency in New Zealand, his discussion at times reveals ambivalence towards a former working class position in a stratified society because 'people have changed' (so he has told me). 'People have changed' is an indirect reference to social change in a neo-liberal economy and its impact on the range and breadth of shifting social values within minority communities such as the Tongan sub-population in Auckland; Auckland Region being the location where a near eighty per cent majority of Tongans in New Zealand reside among four cities, Manukau City being the most populated by Tongan families. In this sense, Dad has developed an acute awareness of the heterogeneity of the Tongan sub-population in Auckland and the influence of inter-generation differences over how social values in relation to economic life are played out.

One brief example is the predominant migrant group of Kolonga ex-patriots living mostly in Auckland and Manukau cities who remit regularly to village fundraisers for improving infrastructure such as the water upgrade project. A critical inter-generation factor which affects the sustainability of relationship ties to Kolonga via remittances from Auckland is rethinking how and for what motivational reasons participation from the New Zealand-born generations can be engineered.

<sup>5</sup> Small, C. A. 1997. *Voyages: From Tongan Villages to American Suburbs*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

In telling the story of Tongan migration, however, I found that it was difficult to write the typical ethnography. Standard ethnographies stay in one time and place. This ethnography is transnational and historical. It is a book that, in order to tell its story, must go back and forth in time and place (Small 1997, p. 9).

I hear you Cathy Small! You go girl! This is one of my favourite citations from an ethnographic text on contemporary Tongan social life. In between the too-ing and fro-ing of collecting and collating social memory and history to create an ethnographic mosaic of 'me' in my family, our lives intertwined, I have at times felt giddy.

I have also considered a range of alternatives to historical and transnational sea sickness.

1. Discarding the manuscript so there is no historical evidence of my self-induced madness.
2. Polishing my pronunciation of indigenous Pacific vowels so I may apply for a 'respectable' professional job at the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs in Manukau City, the city of Auckland Region's four cities with the largest Pacific population nationally, regionally and globally. In the context of 'largest,' I would answer my desk phone with a convincing 'culturally authentic' accent. Cue: Talofa, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi ma, Taloha ni, Ni sa bula ... have I left anyone out?!
3. Getting a job in Tonga teaching secondary school English.
4. Reinventing my 'Self' as a 'non' trouble maker willing to do anything to 'fit in' the boxes designed for fringe dwellers, the cross-culturally contaminated and un-definable undesirable types - even if it requires kissing arse.
5. Giving up reading libraries of critical social theory and turning instead to popular media to do my thinking for me.

Fortunately, my life experiences, memories and historical legacies have obstructed me from buying into the list of alternative therapies for 'normalising' the atypical noted above.

<sup>6</sup> The [slash] has been used here to signify two interrelated social factors at work. First, my parents' views of, and attitudes towards, each other's social-economic background and ensuing tastes and values are cross-cultural in nature. I mean to say that their representations of one another reflect they claim and belong to *different* cultures. Second, because their cultures are, for the most part, conflicting in terms of their social values, there is a tendency for 'Them' to talk past each other (so to speak). Here, I mean that at times their self-constructed representations of each other surpass their ability to see each other in that person's position of where they are situated and speak from.

<sup>7</sup> McCourt, F. 2005. *Teacher Man*. London: Fourth Estate.

*Mea culpa.*

Instead of teaching, I told stories.

Anything to keep them in them quiet and in their seats.

They thought I was teaching.

I thought I was teaching.

I was learning.

And you called yourself a teacher?

I didn't call myself anything. I was more than a teacher. And less (Mccourt 2005, p. 19).

My life saved my life. On my second day at McKee a boy asks a question that sends me into the past and colors the way I teach for the next thirty years. I am nudged into the past, the materials of my life (Mccourt 2005, p. 20).

Retelling stories of 'me' in my family as critical narrative 'saved' my life in university and polytechnic lecture rooms in terms of creating relationship synergy with Māori and Pacific undergraduates. Frank McCourt's trilogy on his

life from New York migrant quarters to Limerick slum and back across the Atlantic to New York as a mobile secondary school English teacher trying to 'shake' his past but finding that 'life' provided a creative text from which to learn and teach in the class, shed light on travelling social theory. I marked and re-read favourite pages from his three texts, towards the end of my thesis returning to them more often, to inspire some measure of 'hope' that I would make the submission deadline psychologically functional and emotionally intact for an oral examination.

See also McCourt, F. 1997. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Touchstone.

See also McCourt, F. 1999. *Tis*. New York: Touchstone.

<sup>8</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

My Father was adamant that Helen Morton had "got it wrong." He was referring specifically to Morton's deployment of the term 'eiki' as the designator of the superior rank and status of a Father and his family over his child and the Mother's family. Dad's analysis was that 'eiki' is an identity term employed only to describe *Hou'eiki* and their familial relationships. 'Eiki' was not, according to Dad, a term ascribed to paternal status among non-*Hou'eiki* Tongan families; nor was it a term used in vernacular Tongan language by non-*Hou'eiki* families to describe the familial position of one's Father and his family. My Father's preferred term to describe paternal relationships among non-*Hou'eiki* families was *ma'olunga*. He concluded that Morton had "got it wrong because she don't speak Tongan and don't understand the culture." He added that, "She wouldn't know *le'a fakahou'eiki* anyway." Lastly, Dad asserted that, "In Tonga, you only know these things if you a Tongan."

See Morton, H. 1995. *Becoming Tongan: An Ethnography of Childhood*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. Pp. 126-128.

Dad's preference for *ma'olunga* as a term which describes paternal ascendance in familial relations of non-*Hou'eiki* families by no means debunks Morton's baseline analysis. However, his pickiness over formal and vernacular Tongan language in relation to the appropriateness and inappropriateness of specific terms denoting status, rank and one's familial origin and relational identity is perhaps reflective of his own primary socialisation and subsequent social measures of cultural knowledge. My Father conveyed interest in academic texts on Tonga particularly when he perceived that a piece of writing I had read to him breathed 'errors' in translating Tongan language concepts and associated practices. Dad, more so than my Mother, has exhibited during my childhood to adult years an unrelenting fussiness over the pronunciation and articulation of Tongan language both formal and vernacular. To the point where he has chastised my mispronounced and rudimentary Tongan by saying, "Now you sound like you swearing. Stop it, e! Or I cut it off!" Mum, on the other hand, has laboriously endured through elocution conversations with me. She has spent considerable time patiently re-repeating the correct intonation of Tongan language terms, smiling encouragingly so that her only daughter who hears Tongan articulated Tongan and converts it into Kiwi accented Tongan can get it half-way right, gawd dammit!@#\*?

<sup>9</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

I etched these words into my fieldnotes and strung them into a sonnet of social memory and history after corresponding via email with a matrilineal first-cousin. Our email tracks meandered through memories of visiting Tonga, my cousin telling me that she visited our great Grandmother's origin village, Makave in Vava'u, with an Uncle (my Mother's first cousin) and two of his daughters. I envied her and expressed my desire to see Vava'u too. My cousin also envied me by some measure.

She inquired why it was difficult in some ways to retrieve memories of my maternal grandparents in conversation with my Mother and Auntie Nina (Mum's eldest sister). Her Father was an eldest 'half-brother' to my Mother and her siblings who died in 1986 in Auckland. Social memory constructed by Mum and her siblings recalls him as a 'full-Tongan' sibling whom their Tongan Mother had to a Tongan male before her marriage to my maternal Grandfather. My maternal Grandmother's 'Tongan' child was raised by her Mother in Vava'u and travelled to Tongatapu with his maternal Grandmother during childhood to live with her among the extended family household of his birth Mother, her husband, their children and some of her relatives and her husband's. One of Mum's older sisters once told me that "Mum never told us George was her son. We found out from him. He told us. It wasn't Dad's place to tell us. But she never told us."

I wrote a lengthy email response which my cousin thought "was great. It's like reading a book!" She said I had inherited "Auntie Tina's confidence." Auntie Tina, my Mother's third eldest sister, died of cancer in 1989. My Mother's younger brother Stanley told me that she "got out of her wheelchair and kissed the tarmac" at Fua'motu International Airport in Tonga when arriving 'home' from a course of radiation therapy in Auckland. She desired to die in Tonga, her place of birth of which she had refused to leave when all her brothers and sisters, except one, had migrated with their British citizenship and conferred passports to set-up life. I was thrown, not knowing or believing that I had socially acquired Auntie Tina's confidence or enduring faith, if you like, that Tonga was the one group of islands amidst the big blue ocean to feel at 'home.' However, I did read my cousin's family comparison as a complement.

<sup>10</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>11</sup> Cowling, W. E. 2005. Restraint, Constraint and Feeling: Exploring Some Tongan Expressions of Emotion. In *Polynesian Paradox: Essays in Honour of Futa Helu*, edited by I. Campbell and E. Coxon. Fiji: University of the South Pacific.

One of the reason[s] for my interest in the topic of emotions and their expression within relationships that give rise to them, was that I felt I had been given a mandate by many young people of Tongan descent who had suggested I should look at the difficulties they have had in communicating with their parents and elders both in Tonga and in Tongan communities in Australia and New Zealand. During my first period of fieldwork in Tonga in 1985, a young male university student reflected on the differences between the child-rearing methods of *Palangi* and Tongans. He said '*Palangi study their children.*' He had lived in an Australian household for a time and had observed how the parents reflected on personality differences in their children and responded appropriately. He noted how the parents did not force their children to bow to their will in almost every aspect of life. He asked me to write about this in the hope that some information may circulate in Tonga (Cowling 2005, pp. 139-140).

A scene setting excerpt from Cowling's (2005, pp. 139-140) article on the role of emotion in shaping speech and behaviour in Tongan society. An intersection with Morton's (1995) work prevails in respect to how notions of 'Tongan-ness' are salient features in primary socialisation structure and process. Thus, it is argued that Tongan families engage with familial rules governing how relationships are conducted by speech, emotion (or perhaps emotion which is disciplined) and behaviour.

Of interest to my analysis is the ethnographic memory of a "young [Tongan] male university student" who observed that "Palangi study their children" in contrast to Tongan parents who "force their children to bow to their will" (Cowling 2005, p. 140). I am strategically positioned to take exception to this rule of social life; largely because my life story has unfolded as such in thesis pages and more so because I am a part and parcel social product of a migrant Tongan Father who is remembered by his made in New Zealand descendants (his daughter and three grandchildren) as exemplifying 'The Tongan Dad, The Tongan Granddad.' Even if our inter-generation memory is subject to inconsistency, my point is this imagery represents the co-constructed story of 'Granddad,' my Father, which we find acceptable, meaningful and purposeful in our lives in social change.

[Insertion of excerpt from 2005 fieldnotes, Tonga]

One important social rule of engaging in fieldwork with Tongan family and affine that Dad has consistently reiterated is, "Sit back and watch, Teena. See what people say and do. Listen to their talk. Think about what they say before you say anything. And the kids. Let them have a talk to."

My tongue and cheek personality has momentarily forgotten Dad's observant advice at critical times when an effective communication strategy would be to "study" your family, reflect "on personality differences" and respond "appropriately" (Cowling 2005, p. 140). My Mother said, "It's the 'Kaho' in you. You say what you think. Tongans don't like that. They hide how they really feel. They don't deal with it up front." My Father has told me, "I suppose is a bit of the 'Kaho' way. They a straight up family. That's their way." One of my matrilineal first-cousins who lives in Tonga explained, "Our [Kaho] family are formidable. Only you would say it's very cool to tell people what you really think of them."

In many ways I consider myself relieved to be related to a colourful 'Kaho' family through my matrilineal ties as it provides a historical discourse of social memory to validate my non-conventional speech and behaviour within specific parameters of how Tongans are 'properly' socialised according to a complete ethnographic encyclopaedia (which reminds me, I must **study** the ethnographic library of Tongan behaviours, speech acts and emotions one day - just in case I am ever spot tested by an anthropologist).

Lastly, my Tongan Father especially would not have to resort to forcing me to "bend to [his] will in almost every aspect of [my] life" (Cowling 2005, p. 140). There is no need for such brutal coercion or physical-psychological bullying legitimised through patriarchal power and familial obligation. The emotion that he is apt at manipulating in his child and three grandchildren contains a more memorable, meaningful and sustainable outcome - loyalty - loyalty among generations to an 'ideal' Dad and Granddad whose transparent human imperfections make him more lovable because he is made of the 'real life' stuff of conflicting ideologies and conciliatory (sometimes bordering 'make it up as we go along') practices.

<sup>12</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>13</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

Ani-Kāterina's story referred to a Samoan female engineering student who had completed secondary education at McAuley College in Otahuhu, Auckland City. McAuley College is a Catholic secondary school for girls and has a majority Pacific student population of predominantly Samoan and Tongan Year 9 to Year 13 students. Ani-Kāterina has acquired indirect social knowledge of McAuley College through Tongan cousins from both grandparents' families currently enrolled at this school and from Aunts (my cousins) who completed their secondary education at McAuley. During her conversation she seemed pleasantly surprised to learn that a McAuley College graduate was enrolled in engineering school because an undergraduate degree in engineering was largely undertaken by non-Māori and non-Pacific males. Also, she perceived that her Tongan cousins enrolled at McAuley College were not focussed towards attending university as a post-secondary pathway to employment.

<sup>14</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

15 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2004. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

Mum and I were momentarily struck by Rewi's sensitive insights in rationalising the cause and meaning of Uncle Stanley's sudden death which signalled transformational change in his young life. Uncle Stanley was Rewi's favourite and most frequent caregiver from his Grandma's family (next to Grandma, that is). Uncle Stanley often visited his Tongan (male) cousins and friends with Rewi and undertook informal work as a backyard motor mechanic for Tongan families at his Mangere home - with Rewi in attendance as his chatty and most friendly (bordering nose story-collecting) apprentice.

Before Uncle Stanley's passing, Dad spun a story to Mum and I which we found laughably funny, although Dad's retelling aired a concerned tone expressed in its message. Dad said he was visiting a Tongan home to conduct a building inspection on an extension that had been undertaken. The Tongan Father of this particular home asked him if Stanley Brown was his brother-in-law. My Father responded with a cautious and inquiring "yes." The Tongan Father said that Uncle Stanley had worked on his family vehicle. He believed that *some* of the vehicle's working parts had been removed and replaced with 'worse for wear' parts. He explained to Dad that Uncle Stanley had a friendly little boy with him who spoke very good English. Understandably Dad was trying to 'tone down' the fact that at the time he heard this tale he was forcibly covering up his embarrassment. And, in retelling the dialogical exchange he felt quite livid, especially at Rewi's alleged presence. The response he received from Mum and I did little, if anything, to alleviate the story's tension. Put simply, we laughed with Mum adding, "That boy. His behaviour is unbelievable. I hope Rewi won't be like that!" Dad's comeback line was in direct reference to the speech and behaviour of my Mother and I; "You two. You so alike you annoy sometimes!"

16 Brown Pulu, T. J. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

Tofa's farewell service was attended by Brandon, myself, Toakase Raukura, Ani-Kāterina and Rewi Maniapoto in the backyard of our Te Kauwhata home, North Waikato. Brandon found Tofa on a Saturday morning when our three children were in Auckland at their Tongan grandparents' home. He buried Tofa behind the garage, placing his kennel (Tofa slept in a kennel designed for a large dog) and food/water dishes on top of the burial site. Brandon collected our three children from Auckland on Sunday afternoon requesting they all come home for a farewell service for Tofa.

On Sunday evening, Brandon said a karakia ki roto i te reo Māori over Tofa's burial site and Rewi closed the farewell service with eloquent words of respect for his cat's memory. Listening to my young son's recitation of Tofa's memory, I cried pondering the overlap in a child's memory: Tofa being "lonely and angry cos' he missed his brother" and Rewi's concern for Uncle Herbert (Mum's brother) because his younger brother Uncle Stanley had died in his fifty-fourth year of life. Family concern was frequently exchanged among Mum and her siblings that Uncle Stanley needed to change his lifestyle, in particular, consume less alcohol. Rewi was obviously sensitive to, and aware of, this family discourse constructed on Uncle Stanley's social life or more specifically, his social interests, tastes and preferences. The adult concern raised, however, did not deter the love of a child for a favourite Uncle and for this remarkable memory of family relationships, I am immeasurably grateful.

17 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

18 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

19 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2003. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

20 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2002. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2002. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga.

My Father's Father's funeral proceedings in Auckland and burial in Kolonga, Tongatapu, constructed an ethnographic site in which family tensions and conflicts were played out particularly among siblings of the deceased. Dad sustained some measure of control over family rituals and subsequent relationships with extended family and village kin by employing multiple subject position strategies which ranged from: (a) Seniority as the eldest brother/sibling descendant from his Mother and Father. However, this position was unstable and unreliable at times since he was not the eldest child/son descendant from his Father. His paternal and older 'half-brother' was alive and living in Utah. (b) Closeness and cordialness with Nuku Nopele, his Father's patrilateral nephew, who was instrumental in organising/facilitating burial proceedings in Kolonga, Tongatapu. This family alliance was checked and balanced during the burial proceedings in Kolonga when Fakafanua Nopele from Ma'ufanga attended the gravesite to 'speak' on Dad's Father's behalf as the *Hou'eiki* of the *famili Pulu*. (c) Financier of the funeral and burial proceedings. In this subtext, Dad held majority power of economy by being the primary source for bankrolling funeral expenses in Auckland and Tonga.

Two emerging tensions came to the fore in Auckland which my Father engaged in to achieve a compromise that conflicting parties could live with. Firstly, the 'coffin' scenario. Two of Dad's sisters arrived in Auckland from California and were adamant that the New Zealand coffin Dad had chosen for their Father was "too small and cheap looking." The compromise reached was that if Dad's sisters desired a "big American coffin" for their Father then they had to pay for this funeral feature themselves. They did. Dad's comeback was that the "big American coffin" would not be used in Kolonga at the burial site because their Father was being laid to rest in a family tomb where the deceased would be wrapped in *ngatu*.

Tension two was the 'church service' scenario. Dad refused to hold evening prayer services in a church during the six nights that his deceased Father lay in Auckland before returning to Kolonga for burial. The logic informing his position was that, "If the family and Kolonga people want to see Sioli, that's fine. They can come here and see us. That's how we do at home. That's how we do it here." On the last day before Dad's Father returned to Tonga, Sioli's cousin Tualau whom he had been especially close to asked Dad if he could organise an evening church service. Dad agreed but only if the service took place in our family home, not at a church. He also instructed Tualau to keep the service short because "people will be coming all night to see Sioli and the family. They're not coming here to look at a minister who we not even related to." Tualau organised a prayer service conducted by a Tongan minister from the Wesleyan Church that he attended in Grey Lynn. The Minister did not know Sioli or his family and had been prompted by Tualau. He mentioned that the Pulu Family had a historical connection to the Free Church of Tonga as missionaries and clergy. After the service my Father told me that Sioli converted to Catholicism when Dad was at 'Apifo'ou College so Dad would be in a favourable position for a Catholic schools nomination for a Government of Tonga scholarship to New Zealand. As for the Wesleyan minister's prayer service Dad said, "That's all right. Sioli was Catholic. He's a Wesleyan. But at least he remembered to keep it short. Good on him."

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

21 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

22 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

23 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2002. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2003. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2004. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.  
Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

Endnotes 13-18 represent the co-constructed stories 1-7 (pp. 17-23) of the thesis text, which have been selectively organised from my thesis fieldnotes. My fieldnotes are cited by the year in which the ethnographic material was recorded and the location where I have recorded the material. Fieldnotes were recorded in Auckland, Hamilton, Te Kauwhata and Tonga and the years spent collecting stories in the field spanned 2002 - 2006.

24 Amoamo, R. M. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 2, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.

# PART ONE

## Prologue

### *Scene Two*

# CHAPTER TWO

## HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

The setting and situation, therefore, stand in a reflexive relationship to one another. I mean by this that an analyst wishing to interpret a specified type of behaviour in a [place] needs to work with two different referents simultaneously. The first of these is an appreciation of the set of circumstances in which the actors are placed and which determine the arena within which the analyst postulates the behaviour must take place. The second is an appreciation of the set of meanings the actors themselves attribute to behaviour. The analysis then consists of an interpretation in general theoretical terms of the behaviour as articulated both with the setting and with the actors' cognitive definition of the situation (Mitchell 1987, p. 17, cited in Rogers and Vertovec 1995, p. 7).



*Broken Down in Kolonga*

*Motau and a Kolonga affine fixing our broken down car on the road across from the village water tower  
Kolonga 'i Tongatapu  
December 2005*

## **Tongans in Transnationalism**

Words are not merely a means of expression; words are the raw material of thought, of self consciousness, and of story. Without words there are no memories, and without memories there are no “stories of me” for anyone. Thus, words are not incidental to memory or to narrative. And narratives are how we construct ourselves and how we order the world around us (Archibald 2002, pp. 65-66).

“Do you want stop off and see Nuku?” asked Motau. His parents had moved with their children to Kolonga from Maui Hawai’i when he was at primary school, an American-Hawaiian brogue evident in his English and Tongan speech after almost twenty years of living in Tonga.

This was my eighth fieldwork jaunt in five years. Noble Nuku’s youngest son and I had spent a humid afternoon in near thirty degree heat driving the outskirts of Kolonga. “Yep, let’s go for a visit.” I was relieved for a break from my sticky seat.

“We’ll stop here at Grandma Siu?” His question was a statement. He would not pass my grandmother’s home without stopping. Not solely because she was my Father’s Mother but also a cousin to his paternal grandmother, Nuku’s Mum, Grandma Foa. “Yeah go on,” I consented. “Her house is open.” Grandma’s gate was unchained. Down the concrete path to the open sliding door I breathed *siale* [a Native flower] from the flower garden. “She’s not home!” I exclaimed. “I checked the house but no one’s in. Semi Leka’s not here. Where are they?”

“Grandma Siu’s probably at the funeral,” thought Motau. “There’s a Kolonga funeral where we stopped by the primary school.” “Mmm,” I contemplated. “Wait till I tell Grandma that Semi Leka’s gone off and left the house open. He’ll be in trouble.” Back in my seat I giggled remembering my childhood reputation with Uncles and Aunts for reporting their misdemeanours. My Grandma was known as the Mayor of Kolonga, second in charge to *Nuku Nopele* so family and *Kotongo* [the Catholic quarter of Kolonga village] kin had told me.

It had taken three hours to photograph sites where work on upgrading the Kolonga water system would commence in the New Year, Japan AID permitting. My cousin had patiently offered information in the hot sun carefully following the project plan Dad mapped out in the funding proposal. Ten years since Dad conducted his preliminary evaluation of the water system and devised an upgrade plan. A decade on, a

generation born, successive *fono* [village meetings] and fundraising by the village and kin in New Zealand, Australia and America and we were still awaiting holy water.

“Dad went with the town officer to fax some quotes to Auckland. Nuku’s secretary, what’s her name? Yeah, she told the town officer that most people would have given up by now and Kolonga should be grateful for Nuku and Dad.” Motau nodded in agreement. “I hope it comes together soon because I don’t want to inherit the water saga.” We laughed at my admission. I released a sigh, “*hoiaue!*” [“Oh my goodness!”].

Pulling into the driveway my cousin Humi was ahead collecting water in a plastic bucket from the outside tank. “He looks like Uncle Siale,” I murmured. Siale was Humi’s Mother’s Brother. He died of cancer in Dunedin. His *Palangi* partner flew with him to Auckland. Kolonga kin buried him on top of his brother in Great North Road cemetery, not quite home but closer than Dunedin and “at least they’re together,” said Dad.

“Humi’s family are moving to Auckland. They’ve got their papers,” Moatau informed me. “Why does Auntie Mafi want to move with her kids to Auckland?” I laughed realising my question was dim. “Humi wants to go to New Zealand. He wants to see what’s there, see what it’s like.” Motau explained Humi’s prospects. “You’d better give him some pointers,” I instructed. “Tell him Auckland is expensive, you need a paid job because everything costs money and Kolonga people don’t live in a village so you can’t get water from the Noble’s house anytime you feel like.”

Motau walked into an American style home with an enclosed veranda to look for his Father. I took in the Noble’s property. Machinery for squash farming parked after seasonal use. “They look hot and tired,” I mused inspecting the dust and dirt clinging to rusty metal (Boyce 1995; Coxon 1999). “Nuku’s sleeping,” Motau called to me. Nuku appeared in the doorway behind his son. “Oh don’t say that about your Dad. He’s not having a day off,” I joked. Nuku chuckled. His face showed he was pleased to see his niece.

In the veranda’s cool I quenched my thirst on a plate of watermelon offering Nuku a slice while devouring the pieces. “You look hungry. Have you had lunch?” enquired Nuku sounding anxious that I may not have eaten. “I’m just pleased to eat Tongan watermelon. Been in town all week doing the water proposal for central planning, had pineapple, *lesi* [pawpaw], but no watermelon.” “You’re in the watermelon capital,” Nuku jested wryly. I laughed heartily feeling smitten with his warmth, humour and relaxed manner.

“How was the *fono*?” Nuku’s question was an invitation to dialogue. His tone suggested I could explore boundaries of overly polite interaction between an uncle and niece and the formal manner expected in a Noble’s company. “Dad did really well I thought. He was able to get the project plan across to the people. But Toni was drinking *kava* [traditional relaxant/drink for men] at the church hall. I think he was *kona* [drunk]. He kept interrupting, annoying the people. Central planning department, the town officer and the matapule, they all tried to explain to him what was happening with the funding. He just went on and on. The women were rolling their eyes. A *fine ‘eiki* [old lady] told him that if he didn’t understand then keep quiet because everyone else understands what’s going on so maybe he doesn’t get it because he’s interrupting, not listening or maybe he’s drunk. Everyone laughed.”

Nuku took in what I said. “I was kind of glad in a way to get called into town for a meeting because the people can talk freely.” “Yeah that’s a good thing,” I replied. “But sometimes their talk isn’t relevant to what we’re discussing. Decisions don’t get made, the work doesn’t get done. Some people are way off the map.”

Nuku smiled, “Same thing at the meeting I was at in town. Even if the talk isn’t relevant people keep talking, they just keep going.” We laughed. He added, “You know Kolonga people, sometimes they don’t think the outside world is going to affect them. They’re living here, living their lives, they don’t see the world out there is going to affect them, that it’s relevant to them.” “Is that why Toni’s talk at the *fono* wasn’t relevant?” I asked cheekily. “No that goes all over Tonga not just here!” His witty retort incited more laughter.

The drive back to town was serene meandering along Hahake Road, coastal villages, people convened at foreshores talking and taking in the sea breeze to subdue the afternoon heat. A BP petrol station at Manuka had been built since my last visit seven months ago. An inland moat of water caught my attention. Coconut trees, their roots submerged in water. “They’ve taken the sand for building,” Motau spoke quietly. “They have too. They’ve taken the sand,” I echoed (Bollard 1974).<sup>1</sup>

That’s a good story, but is it really research? (Ceglowski 1997, p. 188).

Rewritten from my fieldnotes in Tonga this story re-represents an afternoon of company and conversation with my cousin, his Father *Nuku Nopele* and ‘me’ (Layder 1993; Lawler 2002).<sup>2</sup> Documenting the verbatim ebb and flow of interaction between speech, behaviour and environment I selected conversation pieces from the original

transcript to convert into a memoir, a story that reconstructs my experiential memory (Bishop 1997, 2005). Motivated by the desire to lure intellectual and emotional engagement with the human and physical landscape, I intended the story to stimulate the reader's imagination on how these factors impact on each other in an east coast village of *Tongatapu* (Sevele 1973; Burrows 2001; Sheller 2004).

As narrative inquiry, it provides a critical re-reading of my memory inscribed in fieldnotes, stored in feeling and disseminated by storytelling (Shotter 1981; Ceglowski 2002; Sheller and Urry 2003). It questions village development by indirect inference: "what happened to the village water system?", "what was decided at the *fono*" and "how and by whose authority was the sand taken at the end of the story?" It poses social relationships by not presuming that a class dichotomy strangles everyday life in a Tongan village: "what did the *Nopele* [Noble] mean by remarking that 'Kolonga people ... don't think the outside world is going to affect them?'" "why did he say he was 'glad ... the people can talk freely?'" and "where is the *Nopele* situated in village politics and diasporic allegiances?" (Marcus 1977a, 1978a, 1978b, 1980a, 1980b; Needs 1988; Tcherkezoff 1998).

It probes the contours of power differentials by hinting at obvious and subtle intersections: "how does the researcher's patrilateral tie to the *Nopele* affect the transmission of speech, ideas and behaviour?", "how does a bureaucratic process for development funding impact on relationships among village and diasporic kin?" and "how is development information interpreted, communicated and received in village and diasporic forums and networks?" (Tonga Council of Churches 1980; Tongamoa 1987; Hannerz 1996; Thomas 1992, 1997; Novellino 2003). An ethnographic memoir rewritten as narrative reproduces a social site for exploring the relationship between culture and power (Fanua and Webster 1996; Doane 2003).

The two research questions that informed my fieldwork were grounded in my social memory and experience of social life: "what does it mean to be part of a Tongan family?" and "what do we consider important in remembering cultural identity among generations?" (Nolan 2003). I quickly learnt that asking these questions did not simply take place over a tape recorded conversation. Instead, my life *in*, and *as*, the field provided a smorgasbord of possibility for experiencing and reassembling everyday social life emerging from informal and structured conversation, chance meetings, reflexive speech, *off the cuff* [spontaneous utterance] comments, unexpected talk, relationship

conflict, body language and behaviour imbued in family rituals and power relations (Goffman 1981).

For the most part I felt I was field ‘tripping’ with the *fanau* [family], drowning in a moving interchange of ‘family-fieldwork’ and its ensuing tensions, clashes, mitigated by shifting alliances and allusions to consensus (Burgess 1984; Goldsmith 1989). Tenacity to keep afloat was found by interpreting contextualised meanings enmeshed in an everyday culture in connection to the research questions: “To be part of a Tongan family – what does this mean?” and “what is important to remember – to myself, of myself in my family, of myself in relationships with diverse shifting experiences of community, society, nation and the globe?” (Goffman 1959).

How do I see ‘me’ in my family life, my place in the world?  
What constitutes the ‘world’ we live in and remember?

What does a web of connectedness mean?  
How are family relationships imagined, remembered, forgotten or carried out?

And for what ends ...

purpose ...

and use?

My wandering wonderings ...

## **Grounding Me in the Field**

My two research questions – “what does it mean to be part of a Tongan family?” and “what do we consider important in remembering cultural identity among generations?” – alongside the ripples of inquiry hinted I was grounded in the field, grounding theory from fieldwork, not grounding myself in a kind of social reality where one’s family in the field becomes the cultural priority beyond all others (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Davies and Harre 1990; Brayboy and Deyhle 2000). My allusion to cultural priority – “what were the priorities that culture and power defined?” – curiously flirted and mingled with confusion, delusion and illusion. To explain, competing discourses on culture and power were untangled from a torrent of family relationships which I have remembered and recorded here as ‘stories from the field’ (Te Momo 2002).

A doctoral thesis on Tongan identity stories provided a strategic possibility for matrilineal and patrilineal family to challenge the authority, power and motives that propel institutional knowledge collection and public dissemination (Weedon 1987; Diamond and Quinby 1988). By this, I mean that family who contributed social memory

by way of interactively storytelling their memories possessed personal agendas and political interests of their own for participating in such knowledge gathering (Borofsky 1987; Connerton 1989; Connelly and Clandinin 1990). Family in general did not adopt a position of passive research participants answering questions on cue (Mishler 1986; Kvale 1996). Some family did not show interest in my questions, sidelining my asking and shifting the conversation to memories they perceived of greater importance or mutual benefit to 'the family' (Butler 1997b). Fieldwork conversations with family played out through rules, rituals and rites of context-dependent relationships that defined power relations between collaborators and the reproduction of knowledge by recounting memory and making history (Jacobs-Huey 2002; Bryman 2004).

To resituate this statement, who 'I' was through what my familial connection to dialogue participants meant to them on their terms of understanding determined the information selected for exchange (Bishop 1996, 1997, 2005; Smith 1999; Ka'ili 2005). Conceptualising who 'I' was to the 'speaker' in a familial web of relationships also shaped the mode and means of communication in which memories and stories were transacted in accord with the type of social reciprocity expected (from my engagement in conversation and the value I placed on our collaboration) (Butler 1990; Hermans, Rijks and Kempen 1993). Importantly, family participants did not share information on their lives indiscriminately without the human agency and power to adapt the study's purpose, edit its written memory or bend the author's will to suit a desired outcome (Carucci 2001; Bozic-Vrbancic 2004).

To explain, I had to be useful to family in ways meaningful and purposeful to their political agenda and desired outcome for contributing memories and stories to a thesis. Such a relationship strategy was necessary for acquiring family buy-in power and social acceptance of a doctoral thesis which recalled memories and re-spun tales of history in the making, a story of 'Us' as we make it up (so to speak) (Teaiwa, Nicole and Durutalo 1996). My perceived social value to family who contributed fieldwork conversations altered and adjusted according to who saw me of use in which circumstance and for what purpose (Teaiwa 1995; Smith 1999; Beverley 2000).

This section named 'Grounding Me in the Field' and the following one titled 'Where's the Ground in this Here Field?' are tongue and cheek references to the self-constructed survival strategies I devised and deployed in my life as the field to be of value to family participants. My family tussle was located in attempting to be useful without losing the thesis plot, going over the critical edge or promoting social

dependency on “all kinds of [clever] uselessness” (McCourt 1997, p. 4). In saying this, grounding me in the field by having to ‘feel’ for the ground through social change, relationship flux and familial ties persistently renegotiated to serve a ‘common’ purpose (whatever the social motive may be depending on the collaborative context of interaction) has given me significant insight on ‘me’ in my family. That is, the concept of ‘me’ is slippery and elusive in my family life; at times to the extent where the ‘me’ that I desire to envisage becomes absorbed in the agenda of ‘Us’ (Fogelson 1982; Ellis, Kiesinger and Tillman-Healy 1997).

### **Where’s the Ground in this Here Field?**

The story of an afternoon spent in Kolonga, my patrilineal village, depicts a role I have played decided by family, particularly my Father and *Nuku Nopele*. My paternal Grandfather’s family identified me as a useful and willing human resource for village development (Marcus 1979, 1982; Harrison 1988). It was believed the thesis writer could assist Honourable Minister Nuku (Dad’s cousin), Noble of Kolonga, Member of Parliament for ‘*Eua* [island off *Hahake* coast], former Minister of Police and current Minister of Works, by locating funding for an eight hectare by five hectare reef reserve. I could locate funding for the Kolonga water system upgrade, compile a project plan from Dad’s fieldnotes and negotiate its value with the Government of Tonga Central Planning Department. I could locate funding to design and implement at village level a sustainable resource management model (James 1993, 1995; Campbell 1992a). I could locate funding for developing the management structure and services of the Kolonga Village Association in Auckland (James 1991, 1997). I could locate funding, funding, funding and write proposals for a development duet in the village and the village moved to Auckland forever and ever till death do us part, Amen (Hayter 1971; Henderson 1990). I had lectured in development studies. This was therefore my “job and useful for the thesis,” my Father explained (Dube 1988). For the most part of five years fieldwork I have located funding, written proposals and will continue to do so from now until the afterlife, my life after the thesis, A[wo]men (Verhelst 1987; Dube 1988; Dore 1990).

My paternal Grandmother’s family imagined I was writing a thesis on *No’o ‘anga mei Kolonga* – traditional shark hunters from Kolonga. This was a story to which they shared an intimate relationship as descendants of Mailau and Tae, a Father and son who were remembered as the last shark hunters from their village. Collective perception that my thesis constituted a family remembrance of *no’o ‘anga* [shark hunting] stemmed from a fieldwork conversation I participated in with my Father’s

Mother. My paternal Grandma, *Siu ki Halakakala* [name of a shark hunting ground] Tae Mailau, named after a shark hunting ground towards *'Eua*, was the second daughter of Tae and granddaughter of Mailau. She recounted her Father and Grandfather's shark hunting exploits journeying through social memory to validate the significance of its practice to village identity (Harre and Secord 1972; Bloomfield 2002). Grandma Siu related shark hunting in a conceptual picture that interwove ancient and modern history to create meaning in our lives shared and shaped by social memory (Toren 1988; Jenkins 2002).

My maternal Grandmother's family were disgruntled with how their patriarchal forebears, the Kaho brothers, had been represented in academic media as 'conservative' and 'traditionalist' cabinet ministers hostile towards Queen Salote's ascendance to the throne (Campbell 1992b; Ellem 1999). They saw my thesis as a collective vehicle for correcting an imbalance, a bias that remembered and rewrote their Grandfathers in modern Tongan history as dissidents, nonconformists and anti-Tupou factionalists. My Mother extrapolated what she interpreted as her Tongan family's position. In heated conversation with Dad, while I observantly kept score, a debate over 'historical fact' effervesced into how the Kaho brothers were inscribed in written text. Dad waved the red flag, "They a very ignorant family." Mum defiantly sprang, "Not really Semi! They just weren't arse kissers that's more to the point!" Point taken, point to Mum, I wrote in my fieldnotes.<sup>3</sup>

My three children, especially the second child who lives with my parents, were eager to contribute critical insights into second generation New Zealand-born Tongan culture. Unlike their Mother at their age, they shared a heightened social awareness of what Homi K. Bhabha (1994) spoke of as 'in-between-ness,' their in between subject position as children and grandchildren of multiple ethnicity and heterogeneous cultural identity. Their politicisation by Māori total immersion education impacted on their willingness to learn Tongan language and their valuing of what they perceived to be 'traditional' aspects of culture. My children were aware by varying degrees of consciousness of the social anxiety expressed by Tongan family when worrying that their Māori identity may dominate conservative markers of culture such as indigenous language and associated practices. By differing degrees of consciousness all three children acted on these social anxieties in certain contexts depending on the reasons prompting their action (Fine 1994).

Playing on social anxiety entailed a range of strategies which intersected through one important method: target the crux of anxiety by giving greater emphasis to one cultural identity so that it is positioned in conflict with another. Strategy one involved playing up one's Māori identity to irritate their Tongan Grandmother by inquiring about her Māori ancestry. Strategy two required playing up one's Tongan identity to embarrass their Tongan Mother by disclosing an ability to pronounce Tongan language with greater confidence, craft and sophistication. Strategy three called on playing up one's Samoan identity to upset the Tongan Grandfather by supporting *Manu Samoa*, *Manu Sina* and the Samoa Sevens, admiring *tatau* [traditional tattoos], *pe'a* [male tattoo] and *malu* [female tattoo] and greeting callers with "*Talofa!*" ["hello!" in Samoan] when answering his mobile phone.

Strategy four was perhaps the least used in the course of thesis creation as their Father's identity anxiety transferred to his children appeared subtler, not up for critical assessment, compared to their Tongan Mother and her family. It evoked playing up one's *Pakeha* identity to startle their Māori Father by inquiring why his *Te Whakatohea Marae* [tribal *marae* in Eastern Bay of Plenty] had *whakairo* [traditional carvings] of their *Pakeha tupuna* [White ancestors] when *iwi* [tribal] land was *raupatu* [confiscated by colonial-settler government] (Awatere 1982, 1984).

The ambidextrous identity combination for everyday use induced playing up one's multiple ethnicity and heterogeneous cultural identity to confuse the general public. This identity tactic was especially effective with teachers, *Palangi* unfamiliar with and uncomfortable to discuss Māori and Pacific intermarriage and adults whom they perceived *fie' poto* [Tongan: know-it-all], *fie' 'ilo* [show-off], *fie' kai mu'a* [arrogant], *whakaputa mohio* [Māori: know-it-all] and in positions of authority over them (e.g. parents, grandparents, Tongan relatives engaged in fieldwork conversations).

Perhaps my Mother's story of her grandchildren's ability to transcend static categories by situating themselves among multiple identity sites provides an analysis to disentangle. "One good thing about your kids Teena is they stick together whenever there's [identity] trouble. Your Father told Toa off for going on about Maoris and Pakehas. You know how she gets. She was crying at the dinner table. Rewi stepped in to tell him off, "*Arrgghh – tuku laupisi e?!*" ["Hey – stop talking stupid eh?!"]. He shook his head at us. Your Father was embarrassed. We were all embarrassed getting told off by a little boy. Your Father apologised to Toa and she stopped crying. Then Ani put in her bit. "You should think about what you say to us Granddad." Your Father

didn't say a word. Those kids of yours, all giving him a hard time!" (Arce and Fisher 2003).<sup>4</sup>

My cousins, nephews and nieces categorised as generations two and three either raised or born in New Zealand, saw novelty in fieldwork conversations. A doctoral thesis was generally viewed as a vehicle for increasing social capital and hence elevating family status in Auckland and Tonga (Benguigui 1989; Baron, Field and Schuller 2000). One matrilineal first-cousin in jesting dialogue momentarily glimpsed the power and persuasion of social capital accumulated by Tongan families in New Zealand through higher degree conferment in university education. "Just hurry up and finish your PhD why don't cha so I can tell everyone we're related! Hey, some guy might wanna marry me! Ha, ha, ha!"<sup>5</sup>

Structural rules defining thesis value, measuring the quality of an evidence based argument, were less appealing, comprehensible or compelling: but more, the 'newness' of *being* valued for their experiences, insights and memories triggered motivation for engagement. Stories unfolded the complexity and ambiguity of being 'third space' peoples (Bhabha 1994), generations located in-between cultural spaces that were not clearly distinguishable in the fluidity of memory and the organic reconstructions of culture.

Embedded in references to culture and power lay an ethnographic wealth of social memory and stories among three Tongan generations in New Zealand. I have reorganised a spectrum of expressions used by Tongan family to expose the richness, colour and border movement of storytelling by renaming (Marsh 2001).

Your family don't have a cut off point  
***Kakai Tonga*** [Tongan People]  
 Traditional Tongan culture  
 Real stuff in Tonga  
 Kolonga thinking  
***Faiva Tonga*** [Tongan performing arts]  
 The good ***punake*** [composers/poets]  
 You know how it is in Tonga  
 Know the ways  
 The old styles  
 The old ways  
***FOB*** [fresh off the boat] generation  
 Your ***Tongan mojo*** [Tongan identity prowess]  
 We're one big family

Us over here - we're *uta* [bush]  
 Born here  
 Still back in the islands  
*Fresh styles* [migrant Tongan behaviour]  
 Tongans are *Crips* [American-Latino gang], Saas the *Bloods* [Black-American gang]  
 The younger generation  
 The future generation  
 Tongans over here  
 Tongans over there  
 Our family in Tonga  
 Go to Tonga - see where I come from  
 The American Tongans

My husband Brandon was positioned in a double bind. He could be viewed as a minor political stakeholder in an ethnographic mosaic of Tongan family stories due to his Māori ethnicity and cultural identity. Alternatively, he could be seen as integral to fieldwork and thesis creation as a husband to the writer, a father to our three children and a participant by marriage in a Tongan family and their transnational lifestyle and emotional ties to familial connectedness. Brandon contributed extensive financial support to supplement fieldwork expenses. His willingness to assist was not confined to airfares to Tonga, *me'a 'ofa* for research participants plus Rewi's requests for 'stuff' for his cousins in Auckland and Tonga.

Brandon tirelessly photocopied and faxed development proposals across the region to Wellington, Nuku'alofa, Suva and Apia. He was uncomplaining of fieldwork correspondence directed to his email and mobile phone at work when the author could not be found. He allowed his wife to take over his laptop for thesis writing when hers collapsed in Tonga from overheating and overwork (the power supplier burnt out from using generator power). He built on his repertoire of basic Tongan language from listening to conversations using expressions to show closeness to, and respect for, family. He warmed to Tongan parents he met through teaching their children by introducing himself, "*Ko hoku mali ha'u mei Kolonga 'i Tongatapu*" [my wife comes from Kolonga in Tongatapu].

Brandon would sleep at Auckland International Airport during his working week, awaiting an early morning flight arrival from Tonga. He sighed but refrained from using fractious words when his wife disembarked at the airport explaining she had overspent their household budget on fieldwork. He contributed financially to family rituals that signified sites of social memory, funerals, christenings, birthdays, weddings and

reunions. His generosity extended to village fund-raisers for the Kolonga water upgrade and *palupalu* [fund-raiser] at ‘*Utu-longo’a-a* [ancient name for Kolonga], the *Kalapu Faikava* [*Faikava* Club] of the Kolonga Village Association in Auckland.

He blessed food in *Te Reo Māori* at Mum’s family get-togethers when asked by her older brother. He attended to food preparation at Dad’s family get-togethers as instructed by my Father, regularly assisting my Father’s Uncles with *puaka tunu* [pig on a spit]. He danced (sometimes shyly) with my Father’s sisters and female cousins when they perused the hall for male partners, embarrassed by their conversation that his face, skin and long eyelashes were *talavou* [beautiful].

Lastly, Brandon said he would be happy to witness me “finish the darn thesis” as it “impacts on us; that thesis, your life, it takes it out on all of us!” “What will you do when I finish, Brandon?” “I’ll move to Raglan! A long way from Auckland and Mangere Airport!”<sup>6</sup>

At the time, I did not know how to tell Brandon that although my activity in family networks had stepped up somewhat over the past five years of “that thesis” (his words) affecting him, our children and my parents, this was an opening chapter in the motion and movement of lives combined.

Our lives in process  
Our lives changing

Learning in new experiences  
Creating memories of us

A family of stories

Still wondering and wandering ...

## **Granddad, Me and the Kids on Tongan Families**

Verse 1

What’s a Tongan family?  
I told you before we related to nearly all of Tonga  
Your family don’t have a cut off point, Teena  
You can’t do that to your own people, cut them off like that  
That’s why my mobile is always ringing  
It’s the family  
The family relations

The family friends  
 They ringing me for something  
 Maybe I can turn off my phone  
 I can't turn them off  
 It don't work like that  
 They still find me boy I tell you that much  
 Some Tongan people ring me  
 I never met them  
 They tell me they need this, please come look at our house, help my kid for training  
 And then I find out they a relation  
 I must help my family and that's all of them, all of Tonga some days!  
 But you don't hear me moan because that what it's all about  
 You people born overseas  
 You moan to me  
 But I tell you what boy when you need the family they always be there, *e?* [eh?!]  
*Ko e haa?* [What?!]  
 Still need your Dad to tell you this?!  
*Si'i!* [Gee!]  
 I think Rewi got more idea than you!  
 At least Rewi think highly of the family

By Seminati Pulu  
 Born 1 October 1947, Kolonga, Tongatapu<sup>7</sup>

### Verse 2

Yeah ok I'll answer my own question  
 You know when I went to America for that Michigan conference  
 I emailed Dad's niece, my first cousin Auntie Leilani  
 She couldn't remember meeting me when I visited her family in Utah  
 I was at school then  
 I asked her if Cleveland was far from East Lansing  
 Because I wanted to visit her and her six kids  
 She was there to pick me up  
 Brought three little girls, two were hers, one was her Tongan friend's  
 Drove five hours across the State line in her brother in law's car to pick me up  
 Take me to the conference, listen to my paper, drive me to her place  
 That's a Tongan family  
 Whatever it takes to get together around the world, they'll do it  
 They'll be there  
 We can do it

We can make it happen!

By Teena Joanne Brown Pulu  
Born 13 December 1968, Dunedin, New Zealand<sup>8</sup>

Verse 3

Tongan families have a *Grandma* like *Grandma Siu*  
She's the boss  
She knows the old ways  
The old styles  
You gotta' have a *Grandma* to know the old ways

By Toakase Raukura Amoamo  
Born 12 May 1989, Dunedin, New Zealand<sup>9</sup>

Verse 4

Take 1

Tongan families drive a van like *Uncle Maka*  
Put his ten kids in there  
And *Sei* too [*Maka's wife*]  
Is that why you bought a van Mum?  
That's your *Tongan mojo, e?!*  
***I aa!*** [*Wowee!*]  
***Si'ii!*** [*Gee!*]  
Aaa, ha, ha!

By Ani-Kāterina Rerewai Amoamo  
Born 13 November 1990, Dunedin, New Zealand<sup>10</sup>

Verse 4

Take 2

Ok, ok, I'm being serious now  
No Tongan jokes, ok Mum?!  
Tongan families have *Granddad* like mine  
You have to  
I recommend it  
But my *Granddad's* like he's kind of cool for ***FOB*** generation  
Yeah, yeah, like he's not all churchy and boring  
Yeah, he's cool for a Tongan *Granddad*  
He's into sports

Oh nah, he comes to school when he wants to see the Deputy Principal about stuff  
 Stuff about me  
 He rocks up to the office in his *FOB* styles  
 So embarrassing!  
 He can be pretty trendy, wears the Adidas gears Uncle Doug gives him  
 Uncle Doug goes, "I don't want to see you in old stuff."  
 "Wear the clothes I give you."  
 He lets me have a beer with him, sometimes  
 But Grandma doesn't like it, *e!*  
 She tells him off  
 He loves his big *FOB* family  
 Granddad thinks Kolonga is *da bomb!* [the best!]  
 You know, like I'll be at home after school and his family turn up here  
 And they'll be like *hard out* [full-on] talking Tongan, trying to hug me and stuff  
 And I'm like, "*io, mo'oni 'aupito!*" ["yes, that's so true!"], cos' I can't keep up  
 Like the other day, right  
 This Tongan guy turned up here, pretty fresh styles, yeah  
 He was like, "Ani *e*, I bring the money for the *putu* [funeral] in Tonga"  
 "You give to Semi, *e?!*"  
 "Tell Semi is from Saia"  
 "*Ta'ahine poto lelei!*" ["What a clever girl!"]  
 In his fresh Tongan-English  
 I don't even know him  
 He knew me though  
 Was saying, "Oh, you the good rugby player, *e* Ani?!"  
 "*Io, ta'ahine Kolonga!* [Yes, Kolonga girl!] The strong rugby player, *e!*"  
 Yeah, that's my Granddad and his Kolonga *peeps* [people]  
 Nah, he's a good man my Granddad  
 He's from the good *peeps*  
*O le a?* [Samoan: What?]  
 Nah, I never asked whose funeral  
 I think it was for Tangikina's husband  
 Shut up!  
 I'm allowed to speak *Saa* [Samoan] if I want!

By Ani-Kāterina Rerewai Amoamo  
 Born 13 November 1990, Dunedin, New Zealand<sup>11</sup>

#### Verse 5

Tongan families have a Dad like Uncle James  
 Yeah, he goes to the bush everyday to get their food

By Rewi Maniapoto Amoamo  
Born 28 May 1998, Hamilton, New Zealand<sup>12</sup>

## Family on Tongan Families

Tongan families put a limit on *kavenga* [gift exchange]. That's the traditional Tongan thinking. It goes by *ha'a*. They just don't go ask anyone. Not like Samoans. They go to the extreme and ask anybody, even their friend, go get a big loan from the loan shark (Generation 1a).

For the Tongans family is everything. You must love your family. You must keep contact with them wherever they are in the world. If you fight with your Mum and Dad that is very bad in Tongan custom, Tongan culture. No one will respect you. Even if you have a degree they say *anga kovi* [bad behaviour] if you fight with your family, especially your parents (Generation 1b).

Tonga family is everything. The beginning and the end. You born into a *famili* and you die in there. You can't change who you are or who you relation is. I'm proud to be a Tonga and I love my family. They mean everything to me. I think it sad not to know the family, not to have them close to you. I don't understand what it be like (Generation 1c).

If you go to Tonga and stay in a hotel that's embarrassing. It shows you don't have any family or you don't know them. Maybe you don't have a home or any land in Tonga. *Fakama 'aupito!* [Most embarrassing!] You know how it is in Tonga. Well that's our way, you know the Kolonga thinking. *E ta'ahine, ko Kolonga ko e!* [You're a Kolonga girl!] *Hoiaue!* Ha, ha, ha! (Generation 2a).

I love how Tongan families speak the language. I think they're strong for that, the Tongan culture. And they know their family, how they related, their connection in Tonga. Sometimes they *loi* [tell lies] a bit in New Zealand and tell everyone they related to the *hou'eiki* when they not even. I just check out their stories with Mum. She tells me who they really are, especially the *afa kasi* or those ones with degrees. They can be so *kai mumu'a* [arrogant] because they in New Zealand they get away with it. When it comes to the traditional Tongan culture, the real stuff in Tonga, *hoiaue!* That's when you don't see these little *teipilo* [farts] because they nothing and no one knows who the hell they are! They just wanna blah, blah, *laupisi* [tell rubbish] to the *Palangi* [White people] or whatever, make out they

something big and traditional when they not. They from a poor family. No one knows them in Tonga. Don't waste your time with these people. They use you for your connection in Tonga. You just love your family and do your own thing! (Generation 2b).

Tongans are strong for the family and speaking Tongan. They always help their family. But I hope they don't go like the Samoans and put church and money before family. I think they are going a bit like that. Yeah, they going more like Samoans. Too much *misinale* [Church gift-giving]. They start to forget the ways. My family first, always! (Generation 2c).

***Kakai Tonga.*** Tongan People. One big family! All around the world! (Generation 3a).

It's good to be in a Tongan family because you have heaps of cousins to look out for you at school and everywhere else. It's the feeling that you always have someone to care for you that's really good. Like I have family all over the world. Some of them I never met. But they still my family and I can always get to know them when I go overseas. Yeah, it's the feeling that you really belong somewhere and you feel it, you know (Generation 3b).

Tongan families are the best. Ain't it the truth! Nah, I'm not bragging. Just tellin' it how it is, *lol!* [Anachronism: laugh out loud]. Like I have *Saa* mates, you know. And I think the good thing with Tongans is that we close to our families here and in Tonga. Like the *Saa* girls they don't go to the islands [or] speak the language and they don't have a Nana like mine. They just doin' their *Saas* in '*Okalani* [Auckland] thang, you know. Their little *PIs* [Pacific Islanders] in the hood thang is more *PolyFest* [Polynesian Festival] n' gangsta styles an' a bit a '*Laughing Samoans*' [a Samoan comedy duo]. But my Nana man, she's the one! You know she keeps us strong. She's strong in the culture. Yeah, it's the Tongan thing that you love the family, keep it strong and stay together. Wherever we go in the world, there's always some family to go to (Generation 3c).

## **And How to Read Their Stories**

[Discourses are] ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body,

unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern (Weedon 1987, p. 108).

The conversation snippets in 'Granddad, Me and the Kids on Tongan Families' and 'Family on Tongan Families' display a gamut of stories, co-creating a discourse on the production of meaning. Such glimpses of social life unfold various conscious and unconscious associations between memory, thought and emotion which combined, 'essentialise' what it means to be a Tongan family. The selection of talk on Tongan family by no means attests to a fixed 'truth,' immovable by circumstance or contextual change. My own conversation piece inserted among the ethnographic mosaic of family voices was a response to my second daughter's playful instruction to "Tell us one of your stories then. Go on. Answer your own question."<sup>13</sup> What I am saying is these excerpts from remembering family life, our attempts to capture family experience in words, images, feelings and body language intended for another's understanding, are context-dependent. They are moments of transitory speech and behaviour specific to a conversation that emerged at a point in time among people familiar with, and known to, each other by familial relationship principles, conventions and experiences.

My response to my child on what it means to be a Tongan family was a conscious and unconscious story sculpted for my three children, all of whom were present and hopefully listening, taking in and reinterpreting the memory I desired to share. In that fleeting moment I wanted my children to remember the name of their aunt, my patrilineal first cousin, my father's brother's daughter – a brother to Dad conceptually fractured and fractionalised in language by the name, 'a half-brother.' Analysing my words after its release into our lives, my response was loaded with an intimate desire to govern subjects of social memory by manoeuvring the emotional tie between us, a mother and her children, to invent memory.

Although there is a possibility my children may not meet this aunt in their lifetime, I hoped they may form a memory association to my story of meeting her and her children, especially if her name is mentioned to them by family living in America. I wanted to put a story to the faces in the photograph that sits on my desk, faces unknown to my children which prompts Rewi to ask occasionally, "Who are they?" The picture sent to me from their Auntie Leilani was of her and her six children when they moved to Utah, closer to her parents, siblings and their children, after my visiting them in Cleveland. Inscribed on the back in Leilani's handwriting are the full names of her six

children, a riveting array of Tongan, Hawaiian and Mexican names, the date the picture was taken and the children's ages which at that time were sixteen to three years.

Underpinning my desire to imprint Leilani and her children into memory was the hope that the photograph remain with my children because one day they may ponder the six Tongan, Hawaiian, Mexican names, remember Mum's story and make contact with their cousins through family networks in America (Harvey 1989; Hannerz 1996). For the most part of telling this tale, I can only hope (Kleinman 1991).

Like all statements of 'cultural truth' – a truth value specific to circumstance and actors whose interaction gave life to its social meaning – the field of views and visions on Tongan family are couched in context-dependent codes of reference, transmission and understanding. Foucault observed that "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced by multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power" (1991a, pp. 72-73). The intersection between my own will to invent memory to pass down to my children and the value judgements shared in stories of Tongan family is the power relations between subjectivity and identity (Heshusius 1994).

At once, each speaker is enacting social memory, retelling experience and participating in a belief system on family life for the recipients of their knowledge. The method of transmission, however, "induces regular effects of power" by drawing on a "general politics of truth" (Foucault 1991a, p. 73): thus, in a passing sound bite of retelling a story of what it means to be a Tongan family each speaker has selected and decided a 'cultural truth' and aligned their value judgement to a "general politics of truth" (Foucault 1991a, p. 73). They have consciously and unconsciously adopted a method to transmit speech in a way that the story's meaning – its fundamental truth value – becomes normalised and naturalised within, and customised for, family consumption and production. Ethnographic representation of customary behaviour surfaces: what is considered 'normal' practice is essential to canons, tastes and values comprising knowledge that tells 'Us' how we know ourselves from 'Them' (Said 1978).

Each story's desire retold by a speaker was spun into a significant juncture – to construct a cultural truth on what it means to be a Tongan family. By this, I mean that speakers employed a host of analyses resituated in conversations as legitimate ways of 'knowing.' Processes employed to reach an end result, to arrive at the truth, are reflected through deep-seated comparisons used to substantiate and perpetuate the self-legitimising statements made (Hall 1991b).

In the section ‘Family on Tongan Families,’ conversations employed inter-ethnic comparisons between Tongans and Samoans to convey an understanding of social values and the politics of *difference*. Such a convergent method was used to explain *different* analyses from speakers situated among three Tongan generations (Hall 1991a, 1995). Briefly, I will disentangle the discourse of meaning reproduced by speakers from generations one and two when contrasting their stories of cultures in change and the *difference* between Tongans and Samoans in New Zealand.

One speaker noted distinctive attitudes to utilising family networks in the collection of *kavenga* for social ritual involving gift exchange. The implied meaning was that Tongans diverge from Samoans due to a family rationale that a definite border may not be crossed in respect to those who can be asked and expected to provide *kavenga* and others considered inappropriate to pledge a request to. The point of difference was that Samoans petition *kavenga* from those whom a Tongan family would consider an out of bounds donor (Generation 1a).

Another speaker designed a Tongan and Samoan comparison. It was observed that Tongans were adopting Samoan social practice by valuing church and money over family relationships. The conclusion drawn was Tongans were ‘forgetting’ their own distinct system of culture termed as “the ways” (Generation 2c). The implied meaning was that Tongan culture practiced in New Zealand is inauthentic due to its Samoanised influence.

My argument is that it is not simply the discourse created by a speaker’s will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a) and a story’s truth value which requires unravelling. More so, to write a family of stories necessitates examining the circumstances and “associated surroundings” (Mason 2006, p. 18) that inform the production of meaning; the relationships that transpire in fieldwork which contextualise speech, thought, emotion and behaviour; and lastly, the social mechanisms and structural constraints in which social memory is coloured, layered and loaded.

In analysing a “general politics of truth,” Foucault noted:

Each society has its regime of truth, its “general politics” of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes functional as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true (Foucault 1991a, p. 73).

This thesis seeks to shift Foucault's analysis on a "general politics of truth" (1991a, p. 73) toward an exploration of the relationship between social memory and history among Tongan generations in New Zealand. In one sense, the practice of constructing social memory and writing history appear conflicting in their methods of engaging with the past to recover meaning that assists in making sense of the present (Cohn 1980; Kopytoff 1995). Social memory and history do, however, interweave a common thread – that is, achieving truth value. The methods employed may vary in terms of how 'truth' is ascertained and validated alongside rules conferring group acceptance. But, stories and histories that aspire to create a 'general politics of truth,' one that sanctions culture and power by its will to control history, memory and what is accepted as a 'true' origin of the past in the present, unveil discrete contextual overlaps.

If the production of meaning from everyday life among Tongan generations involves manoeuvring social memory as an identity strategy to invent or recover a cultural truth belonging to 'Us' – stories that explain who we are in relation a shared past – then remaking history is integral to such detailed social processes (Friedman 1993; Borofsky 1987, 2000). Social memory and history cross a collapsible boundary and become tangled in a web of stories: they are by no means segregated by function and usefulness to groups willing to invest in their conceptual power and meaning.

Here, Climo and Cattell have explained the social value of reconstructing memory (2002, p. 27):

Where cultural memories have been forgotten or lost, or are no longer appropriate, memory reconstruction provides continuity. The process of reconstruction may vary from a barely conscious reconstructing of the past to the fully self-conscious activity of tradition building, as in the construction of a national cultural identity (Swiderski 1995) and the invention of traditions to support political legitimacy (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) and for many other reasons (Kammen 1995). Memory reconstruction frequently has a role in everyday situations, such as the cultural management of death and remembrance of the dead.

In the context of New Zealand cultural politics, reconstructed memories are intimately related to political processes of reinventing tradition and cultural identity. Memory reconstruction can mobilise the political agenda of legitimising 'difference' by securing a 'place' for social fragmentation to be transformed into institutionalised 'minority-ness' within national and transnational living situations (Friedman 1994). Relationships forged between memory, history and the modes of power by which

'difference' becomes a public marker of 'minority' culture and identity are entangled in processes of social change. This theoretical idea is explored in respect to reinterpreting fieldwork in chapters three to seven. A Foucauldian notion of subjugated knowledge (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a, 1991b) may seem a useful and somewhat obvious analytical lens to inspect the contested identity terrain in which inter-generation Tongan memory and history is matted in, and mediated through, the discourse of Tongans [slash] 'The Pacific' in New Zealand.<sup>14</sup> However, my thesis adapts and shifts a Foucauldian frame to envision an alternative picture which this prologue introduces in chapter three on politicking tensions between Samoan and Tongan stakeholders embroiled in a Pacific Peoples narrative (Baudrillard 1987).

### **How to Write a Family of Stories** ... but will I *live to tell the tale*?

This thesis focuses on social memory emerging from fieldwork conversations, an ethnography of social life, the culture of everyday life among Tongan generations in New Zealand. Crucial to the study is an exploration of power relations that permit social memory to become institutionalised as history in contrast to memories forgotten or deemed inappropriate for 'our time' and unacceptable for 'our generation' to remember. At a conscious level, I analyse anthropology from below, the conventions, mechanisms and structures employed to imagine my 'Self' in relation to family, identity and culture. Pivotal to the purpose and function of 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983) are the ensuing 'cultural truths' transacted in dialogical exchanges which reconstruct ourselves amidst the system of culture and power one speaks of, and speaks as (Spivak 1990). Consciously and unconsciously, my analysis probes the cultural politics of ***bending the rules*** [crossing boundaries] to reproduce *counter* systems of memory and meaning.

It uncoils fieldwork situations that permit the sociological imagination (Mills 1970) to step outside social norms prescribing how communities are imagined into existence (Anderson 1983) by asserting identity 'difference' in a different way to how it is conventionally packaged for social acceptance. The interplay between social memory and social life therefore unfolds three layers of discourse, unremittingly in flux, intersecting and interweaving among family relationships and their influence on how we relate ourselves in the 'world' and to others of kin and affine.

Firstly, my thesis traces fieldwork conversations that momentarily release juncture and disjuncture when remembering the past in the present. Secondly, it situates speech, thought and behaviour which espouse contradiction and conciliation. Here, I explore how and why sites of memory negotiate relationship continuity and

change among generations. Lastly, it retells stories that shift and station themselves amidst positions of power and resistance, sometimes synonymously. In context, the study analyses how and why speakers recount what it means to be ‘me’ in relation to people and places that make up ‘my life,’ the life of ‘me’ in my family.

Thirty four ‘official’ participants from my matrilineal and patrilineal Tongan families contributed fieldwork conversations (Coffey and Atkinson 1996). Additionally, my Māori husband Brandon provided critical insights on the influence of cross-cultural relationships on our three children. The ‘official’ fieldwork group was positioned among three Tongan generations living in New Zealand where thirty two family members resided in the Auckland Region, most in the Otahuhu suburb of Auckland City. Broadly speaking, by family I mean that fieldwork conversations were conducted with a group of thirty four Tongans living in New Zealand related to me through matrilineal and patrilineal ties to common Tongan ancestry or ‘lines of descent,’ to use a popular term for describing genealogy in terms of shared ancestors to whom generations may trace descent from. In specific familial language, this group constituted generation one of my parents, some of their siblings and first cousins, generation two – some of my first and second cousins, and generation three – the grandchildren of generation one.

Generation one may be categorised as migrant Tongans. However, most family participants had lived the majority of their years in New Zealand, many entirely in Auckland. It is crucial to question social factors that classify and massify ‘migrants’ when for many Tongans throughout New Zealand affiliated to generation one their years spent geographically fractured from Tonga is lengthier than their past life lived at ‘home.’ My point is a migrant’s memory of ‘home’ and their will to remember an origin place in their everyday lives has become an institutionalised marker of identifying ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ (Benhabib 1992, Said 1998). My query is if migrant Tongans spend more years living in New Zealand than in Tonga then would social convention relax its boundaries to allow them to shed their ‘migrant’ classification? Is it socially acceptable to move beyond the border constraint of migrant status and if not, then what political factors restrict such movement?

Chapter six re-represents a colourful spectrum of ‘migrant’ stories (see pp. 223-239) that resituate the ‘Self’ in imagery of ‘home’ – Tonga, the origin place that moulds memory and meaning of social life in the present. Here, the term ‘migrant’ as an indicator of one’s political status in New Zealand was *not* explicitly stated. My Mother and Father in conversation (see pp. 232-239) signalled that it is *not* singly the structural

confines of ‘minority’ identity that restrict border movement. In addition to this, recalling the past and reinventing *tradition* in social memory and history collapses the ‘migrant’ in the storytelling pursuit of engaging with, and *becoming* closer to, ‘home.’

Generation two, generation one’s children born or raised from childhood in New Zealand, self-identified with a number of identity markers such as Tongan, New Zealand-born Tongan, New Zealand-raised Tongan and our generation. Generation three, grandchildren of migrant Tongans represented in generation one, worked in with generation two’s signposted roadmap and added *localised* identities and cultural hybridities (Bhabha 1994). In chapter four (see pp. 146-150), a place in memory (Archibald 1999) where generations two and three intersect is speaking of conflict that erupts from identity trouble; that is, the inter-ethnic and cross-cultural disputes transacted between Samoan and Tongan youth in South Auckland specifically, and Māori and Pacific youth generally.

A host of ‘unofficial’ participants provided dialogue and critical insights on how social memory and history is played out among Tongan generations in New Zealand. Their memory is moulded in my mine, my recollection of experience, exchange and emotion. Interspersed throughout the thesis in stories, memoirs, verses and analyses that situate how Tongan generations see themselves in relation to each other and social factors influencing everyday lives are the contours of these interactions and the imprints of their meaning. Some ‘unofficial’ contributors resided permanently in Tongatapu travelling intermittently to Auckland to visit their New Zealand kin or for work related purposes associated with the Government of Tonga or private sector business. Eight fieldwork trips to Tongatapu granted me access to the lives of family in Tonga so I could engage their perceptions of *Nu’u Sila* and their familial relationships with Auckland based kin.

A point of convergence emerged. Just as Tongan generations in New Zealand manoeuvred social memory and history to reconstruct and at times romanticise imagery of Tonga and their connectedness to origins so did their kin living in Tonga reinvent relationship stories of ‘Them,’ the New Zealand Tongans, and the ‘Others’ named the American Tongans and the Australian Tongans.<sup>15</sup> In context, an ‘Us’ compared to ‘Them’ dichotomy compelled by geographic fracture travels along a border which is both collapsible and intransigent in family stories. The overarching thesis strategy is to explore how social memory and history becomes coiled, conveyed and conscious. The fieldwork dialogue in chapters four to seven converge through a recurring theme: “how

and why are shared pasts intertwined in family stories of remembering and forgetting and thus made relevant by their interpretative meaning in the present?" (Geertz 1973; Said 1978; Bourdieu 1979; Clifford 1988).

The concept and practice of anonymity in university research is a relationship that I have toiled over to find a breathable position in which I may *live to tell the tale*. Explaining anonymity and confidentiality to 'official' participants, all who are my family, has motivated a number of responses; raucous laughter, bewilderment, an immediate change of subject or a critical commentary on why a participant wants to be identified. Responses engage with social reality; that is, a speaker's will to truth in retelling family stories means that 'truth,' the truth about Tonga, our family truths, are contested, negotiated and rivalled sites of memory and history (Foucault 1991a).

Generally family participants understood the memories and stories selectively discussed in fieldwork conversations invoked personal, provocative, poignant and powerful engagement with the intended meaning of what was transmitted. However, a position prevailed with generation one in particular where it was seen that to attach oneself to one's story alleviated guesswork among family over who said what and why. Subsequent to this, a discourse surfaced where some (not all) family members of generation one believed their memories and stories may be claimed by others, thus exacerbating family politics of representation.

Occasionally during collaborative feedback on memories and stories retold by family, I asserted my position on why certain fieldwork content was memorable to 'me.' These situations came to the fore at times when participants instructed me to change or omit storytelling memories narrated by other family members.

Uncle is lying to you, Teena. He wasn't even alive when Nuku Pulu was speaker of the house twenty hundred years ago. How would he know? Take him out of there because he'll make the family look stupid. Uncle's only good for talking about the reef. He knows about the reef. He wouldn't know about history. He didn't even finish primary school (Generation 1b).

Perhaps my next point is contextually grounded in ethnographies of family, especially so when the self-appointed scribe is co-constructing an autoethnography of 'me' in my family. I have not encountered difficulty in gaining access to willing research participants. Quite the contrary: if anything, explaining there has to be a cut-off point to family members is treading contested ground. A cut-off point entails rules of inclusion,

selection, exclusion. This can inflame contention and discord in respect to validating why the border regulates the impossibility and impracticality of conducting fieldwork conversations with an unlimited supply of Tongan relatives.

At times, my Father was deeply ambivalent towards fieldwork that limited its scope to what he interpreted was an incomplete set, not the whole package. His standpoint on the meaning of family reflected principles of primary socialisation he carried from Kolonga and had adapted to his everyday life in Auckland. Two crucial insights he imparted during separate conversations were: “We call our relatives brothers and sisters Teena because I’ve told you we don’t say cousins in Tonga.” His second memory was delivered in a brusque tone compared to the first: “I don’t know where you get the cut-off point from. Who made you the boss of the family, *e?*!”<sup>16</sup>

Dad’s two fleeting utterances on “brothers and sisters” and the “cut-off point” situated the ‘Self’ in respect to ‘Others’ of kin and affine (Benhabib 1992). First, his conceptualisation and practice of *hoku famili* [my family] differed considerably from Mum (Stack 1988). His Tongan ‘Self’ and ‘Personhood’ was embedded in memory and history of the relationship bond with his principal village, *Kolonga ‘i Tongatapu*, in which the reference to place – ‘Kolonga’ – is synonymous to speaking of kin and affine. Second, declaring that he did not know where I had developed the idea of a cut-off point when locating and dislocating family was an indirect and reflexive reference to my Mother’s family. What Dad hinted at was that my understanding of family leaned more towards my Mother’s family practices than his. To explain, I had devised a cut-off delineator over his family, an idea that aligned with Mum’s ‘hybrid’ culture, and in the process I had appointed myself ‘the boss,’ another social value he saw relevant to my maternal family but highly ill-suited for Kolonga kinship practice.

Negotiating difference and politicking culture and power with my Father is intimately written into thesis memories, stories and analyses (Goldstein 2000). If anything, this tale engenders a point of entry where the thesis returns and closes – not in a conclusive set of empirical findings – but more, as a place in memory (Archibald 1999) that has created and continues to recreate for me, an origin moment of the ‘Self,’ the “stuff of me,” the story of my life in my family (Archibald 2002, p. 66).

As all doctoral research is preordained by Foucault’s description of a “regime of truth, [a] ‘general politics of truth’” (1991a, p. 173), an institutional reality collided with family expectation. Cross-cultural contamination involved a compromise forged in the hazy in-between half-light of public and private life (Bhabha 1994). A hierarchy of truth

for doctoral candidates is predetermined by benchmarks of acceptance: adequate grades for entry, a research proposal, an ethics procedure, annual fees, time-frame for submission, supervision meetings, six monthly progress reports, an oral examination and final edits for degree conferment. Given the institution's inventory of time frames, outputs and measurable outcomes the cut-off point for family research participants remained, *not* without an occasional fatherly redress that "It's not the Tongan way to do it, Teena. Kolonga people don't do that" (Dad's memory).<sup>17</sup>

Grappling with 'anonymity' and discourses of research convention, a second concession was found in collaboration with family participants (Barthes 1987). I have elected to name *some* family in the thesis text. Named participants in fieldwork excerpts and co-constructed memories, stories, verses are 'me,' my parents, my husband, our three children and *some* (not all) matrilineal and patrilineal family. Apart from those mentioned here, the thesis body does not name 'official' research participants and those who contributed 'unofficial' memories, experiences and stories edited and repositioned throughout the tracks and trails of analyses. Unnamed 'official' research participants, however, are recorded according to their generation grouping.

Endnotes are intended to contextualise fieldwork excerpts, memories, stories and verses co-constructed particularly by named participants and to a lesser degree, by unnamed actors. Endnotes have sought to unravel the "associated surroundings" (Mason 2006, p. 18) in which conversations took place as ethnographic sites of social life. By this, I have inserted an edited fieldnote selection collated from 2002 – 2006 as endnote stories in which some conversation participants are named to embody and enrich the fullness, meaning and movement of our social transactions.

I expect my family, by varying methods of tracing fieldwork conversations, are capable of identifying the 'unnamed' and who said what to whom. I would suggest that 'official' participants are acutely skilled in decoding the context in which a story's meaning was transmitted and intended. I hope (said 'me' swivelling sideways down the gang plank) that my family may laugh, cry, rage and remember that reading our lives intertwined on pages is emotionally exhilarating, exhausting and exciting.

My point is we endure as a family because of social change, not in spite of its presence, perseverance and pragmatism. I have attempted to equitably represent my matrilineal and patrilineal ties by including near equal numbers of participants from Mum's family and Dad's family. Dad's family were larger by one which made him smile when I told him. '***The rest is history***' [one can not alter what was done in the past'],

said the fatalistic historian. So in this case, I should be grateful to have shifted from history to anthropology. Anthropology, a living fate worse than death if one succumbs to fieldwork-induced anxiety.

To explain, the switch from practicing the tools of the historian's trade to that of the anthropologist has taught me a memorable lesson in *valuing* first-hand experience. By this, I mean that writing 'my life' *in* the field has allowed me to revisit experiential memories, many enjoyable while others absorbed in relationship tension. It is the subject's scanning of memory, the ethnographer's engagement of fieldwork and the writer's crafting of an 'imagined' balance between conflict and clarification that at times sits weightily on my conscience (Goldsmith 1992). Therefore, an anthropological situation transpired while writing my thesis in which I persistently found 'me' milling through *how* to retell my stories and reinterpret my experiences with the *greatest* clarity and integrity while instigating *minimal* fracture and fall out. In saying this, the fieldwork-induced anxiety created from an anthropologist's work translates into 'living' and 'lived' experience *or* fate – which ever way one chooses to view the research relationship (Te Awekotuku 1991; Smith 1997).

Chapter three of the prologue recalls, reinvents and reinterprets an experience I have consciously and unconsciously edited in memory and couched in history. It proffers a glimpse into a shifting ethnoscape (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33-34) of cultural politics in contemporary New Zealand.<sup>18</sup> Specifically, my story unfurls the social landscape and subsequent tensions of defining and redefining the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand narrative in respect to power sharing among cohabitants 'forced' within contested territory inscribed by institutions of public life.

The following chapter's story is intended to provoke and stimulate responses to the underlying tensions and questioning of power differentials generated by telling tales. I have decided to situate this story here to introduce some of the theoretical terrain discussed in chapter four and to display a hybrid writing strategy my thesis employs.<sup>19</sup> Blending story, verbatim conversation and critical analysis into a politically sculpted narrative, a play of meaning performed in verses of remembrance, I have created a 'personal history of memory' (Archibald 2002).

My argument is that a story's retelling can reposition its meaning to counter institutionalised social memory and history. In many ways Gramsci's (1971) notion of hegemony may seem an applicable theoretical tool to employ in the type of analysis which offloads and unpacks the intra-minority politics of locating the 'centre' position of

the margins and tracing its discontents. The critical inquiry that unwraps is what social factors give rise to *counter* memory, an alternative history, a story that falls outside the realm of accepted ‘minority’ convention? (Climo and Cattell 2002, p. 28). In this subtext, hegemony operates through distinct but not mutually exclusive practices of culture and power. In chapter four (see pp. 133-150), I discuss the minority’s discontents in respect to disassembling the Pacific Peoples mass to release Tongan identity stories *independence*; that is, their yearning for place and belonging on its own terms of *becoming, being* and *engaging*.

Hegemony constructed by the State and its bureaucratic arms in civil society locates, labels and monitors ‘the minority’ which in my analysis is the multiparty territory of Pacific Peoples. Social memory and history recreates a type of counter-hegemony by inventing the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand story which identifies minority disjuncture and social-economic marginality within the grander narrative.

Counter-hegemony is fragmented. Fragmentation is not performed through a transparent process contained by public structure, controlled by social order and captured in black and white media. It is an exercise in contested social memory and history which toils in-between shadows, shades, tones and layers of politically loaded identity politics. Contestation is played out in sites of multiparty fracture in which the fragmented minority rupture the Pacific Peoples ideal imagined into existence for ‘Us’ to manage ‘Us.’ In turn, the political agenda of ethnic mobilisation through the public structure of ‘being’ an institutionalised minority becomes questionable.

Who does the mass category ‘Pacific Peoples in New Zealand’ assist? Who *really* benefits from its will to produce and consume culture, power and knowledge? Consequently, who *becomes* silenced in the discourse parameters, restricted from full participation and prohibited from official membership because it is assumed they do not understand the order of the discourse, its rules of play and reason for *being?* (Foucault 1991b; Trouillot 1995).

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> This story was re-constructed from my thesis fieldnotes in Tonga, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga.

<sup>3</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>4</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>5</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

During one of our email marathons, a matrilineal first-cousin and I discussed her intention to embark on a Master's degree in public/community health. Her professional background was in nursing or more specifically, community health nursing specialising in mental illness among Tongan youth. In jest she told me to hurry up and finish my thesis, tailing her comment with a witty interplay on family social capital acquired from being a close relative of a Tongan with a conferred doctoral thesis.

<sup>6</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>7</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga.

This conversation piece formed part of an exchange between my Father and me in Tonga. Dad was relaying a communication strategy he would undertake at a Kolonga fono on the Japan Aid funding process for upgrading the water supply. Fono participants were Kolonga villagers (including the town officer, the Noble's matapule, the town committee and the water committee) and the director and one field officer from Central Planning Department, Government of Tonga. The director of central planning was Dad's niece related to him through his patrilineal Grandmother who was originally from Kolomotu'a. Nuku Nopele was unable to attend the fono due to a meeting in Nuku'alofa that lay within his role and responsibility as the Minister of Police, Government of Tonga.

During one part of our conversation Dad returned to a historical point he had raised in prior dialogue on village politics of social organisation. He reiterated that some of the Kolonga families were Ha'apai in their ancestral origin, families who had either migrated and resettled in Kolonga or had intermarried with Kolonga kin. According to Dad, there were apparent conflicts and differences in the way that Ha'apai families conceptualised and practiced social organisation compared to Kolonga families. One point of divergence was that "Ha'apai people don't have any Nobles living with them. They [the Nobles] mostly live in town [Nuku'alofa]."

I asked Dad, "Are they family? The Ha'apai people in Kolonga?" Part of his response is cited in the text. At once my Father was frustrated with the question I had posed because it exposed my disjuncture in social memory and history. By this, I mean that the differences between Ha'apai families living in Kolonga and Kolonga families did not constitute an experiential understanding couched in my direct memory. These differences were Dad's direct memory relayed to me via social transmission (and ensuing social memory) between a Kolonga Father and his made and raised in New Zealand daughter. Somewhere in the midst of our social transaction we had crossed paths and veered off on divergent tangents. I had inquired whether the "Ha'apai people" whom Dad referred to were familial relatives of ours. This was not the point Dad was alluding to. His discussion focussed on social differences in village organisation, ideologies and practices distinguishing a Ha'apai discourse from a Kolonga one, which, if un-managed, resulted in conflict.

The morning before our afternoon conversation, Dad drove me into Nuku'alofa to visit Tu'ivakano, Noble of Nukunuku and Minister of Works. We arrived at the Minister's office without prior appointment assured by Dad that, "It's your family, Teena. You allowed to see your own Uncle for goodness sake! I don't want your Mum's family to think I stop you from seeing them. Before we see Nuku you go see your Uncle [Tu'ivakano]. All the Ministers talk you know. I don't want him [Tu'ivakano] to find out from Nuku you been here and not go to see him. I will get blamed for it. Your Mother won't be very happy with me." The Minister's receptionist was a relative of Dad's through his patrilineal Grandmother. After greeting my Father and chatting about the St Andrew's school centenary (of which a public holiday was declared to commemorate the school's one hundredth year) she remembered I was standing there, somewhere on the border, looking for an entry. Smiling she asked, "Have you met him [Tu'ivakano] before? I think he's your family." I replied coyly, "Yes, I know Tu'ivakano. He's my Uncle." After dialling his office phone she placed the receiver down to tell me, "He said, "Teena Brown - that's my cousin." You go in. Open the door."

[Note to myself in my original fieldnotes]

*Etched this note to 'me' around the edges of my fieldnotes recording the visit to, and conversation with, Tu'ivakano. At the time I was pondering the social 'disjuncture' imbued in my family name - Brown Pulu - and how it signified to matrilineal and patrilineal families a route for separating and privileging one name over another.*

Teena Brown to my Mother's Tongan family and Teena Pulu to my Father's Kolonga kin. No matter how many situations arise to remind me of these maternal and paternal name preferences, I have to hold my mouth from correcting the speaker by blurting out, "Teena Brown Pulu. Brown is my Mum's family name. Pulu is my Father's family name." I remember one time Dad instructed me never to write a hyphen in between Brown and Pulu [e.g. Brown-Pulu] because, "Your Mother and I are not related. When you do that it means you marry to your own family."

Dad waited in the reception lounge and chatted to his relative while I visited Tu'ivakano. In the course of our conversation Tu'ivakano explained a communication strategy he employed at Nukunuku fono to mediate tension between Ha'apai families who had either migrated and resettled in Nukunuku or had intermarried with Nukunuku families and those families who identified foremost as Nukunuku. He would, during times of tense dialogue between conflicting subject positions, say to those attending the fono who affiliated primarily to Ha'apai, "Remember you're living here now. You're Nukunuku." According to Tu'ivakano, such an emission from himself as Nukunuku's Noble prevented the dialogue from spiralling into conflict during village fono. I asked Tu'ivakano if I could relay this communication strategy to Dad and Nuku Nopele. He chuckled, telling me, "Kolonga is different to Nukunuku." He added, "It's good when Nukunuku marry with Ha'apai because the people can swim. Nukunuku can't swim. Ha'apai, oh they know the sea."

[Insertion of excerpt from 2003 fieldnotes, Tonga.]

Dad's version of a swimming story during the drive that we took with Tu'ivakano to view his estate (Tu'ivakano is Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Government of Tonga and the Noble of Nukunuku). Dad, Tu'ivakano and I

stopped for lunch at the Good Samaritan Restaurant. Tu'ivakano's driver waited in the car park with the truck. Dad took him a drink and some lunch. Walking to the truck after lunch Dad told me quietly, "Nukunuku can't swim, Teena. That's right. They have a lot of drowning here because the people can't swim." I asked Dad carefully outside our host's earshot, "What about Kolonga? The people swim?" Dad's face and voice lit up. "Kolonga swim like a fish. That's right. That's why they hunt the shark. Hina was the Kolonga girl got turn into the shark. You know that. You can swim can't you?" "Yeah, you taught me to swim Dad and my kids too." "Well there you go," said Dad.

[Note to myself in my original fieldnotes.]

*I wrote this note to myself in between my fieldnotes recording the conversation with Tu'ivakano. At the time this note to 'me' was important as it was highlighted in pink fluorescent marker. I was attempting to situate the 'Self' in terms of unpacking the subdued and understated meaning of Tu'ivakano's story.*

Perhaps Tu'ivakano's expression of 'fitting in' with Nukunuku directed at Ha'apai families (more than likely men from Ha'apai households) was a subconscious reference to himself and the Kaho family. Tu'ivakano (Polutele Kaho) and his three brothers (Siosiuu, Sioape, Manase) whom he appointed cabinet ministers, plus Grandma Tupou Posese's Dad (Fe'iloakitau) - a school master at Tonga College, were originally from Hihifo 'i Ha'apai. Bott's book says that during Cook's first visit to Ha'apai the paramount chief of Lifuka was Po'oi who was based in Hihifo. According to Grandma Tupou Posese Fanua's memoir (1996), the patrilineal Grandfather of Tu'ivakano (Polutele Kaho) and his brothers (Siosiuu, Sioape, Manase, and Fe'iloakitau) was named Po'oi or Tuita from Tongoleleka ('i Ha'apai), who was their Father's Father (their Father was Kaho 'Ulukilupetea or Kahomovailahi). According to the list of descendants from Manase Kahomovailahi prepared as part of the Kaho Family genealogy (for the Kaho Family Reunion 19-23 June 2003, Tonga), Po'oi was also known as Tuita III. The title Tuita was more than likely a Samoan-derived construct traced to an era of transition from the Tu'i Tonga to the Ha'a Kanokupolu or the Fale Upolu (which established political status as Tu'i Kanokupolu after defeating the Tu'i Tonga).

Po'oi had children from two women, Mateitalo and Siulolovao. Siulolovao was the Mother of Kahomovailahi. Kahomovailahi had children from two women, Tupoumanakofolau and 'Anaseini Tu'ivakano. 'Anaseini Tu'ivakano was the Mother of Tu'ivakano Polutele, Tu'ivakano Siosiuu, Sioape Kaho, Manase Kahomovailahi and Sione Fe'iloakitau Kaho.

Mum said that, "The old Kaho [meaning her matrilineal Grandfather Manase Kahomovailahi and his brothers, Polutele, Siosiuu, Sioape, Manase and Fe'iloakitau] all went back to Ha'apai where they were buried." Recorded in family memories and stories is the Ha'apai origin of the Kaho brothers, which their descendants living in Tongatapu, America, Australia and New Zealand, remember (and reify) with great pride and affection.

Returning to my pre-fono conversation with Dad later that afternoon, I relayed Tu'ivakano's story of how conflicting discourses on social organisation between Ha'apai families and Nukunuku families were mediated by him. Not surprisingly, Dad reiterated Tu'ivakano's sentiments by saying, "That's all right for Nukunuku. But Kolonga is different. You know Kolonga is known in Tonga for being different to everyone else. They the rebel village in the old days. That's why the old King put Nuku in there. Nuku was brother to the King's Father, his real Uncle. He went to Kolonga to control the people because they the rebel village. And they still like that today!"

[Note to myself in my original fieldnotes]

*This note to 'me' at the end of my fieldnotes recording interactions with Dad, Tu'ivakano and Nuku during one hot December day in Tonga entailed a process of connecting the dots. By this, I edited and built a narrative based on conversation snippets I had recorded in my fieldnotes on the politics of difference and Kolonga. I desired to learn from fieldwork conversations how 'Kolonga' as a village and network of families were constructed as 'different.'*

Bott's book mentions Vaoloa who was appointed the title Nuku during Ngata's time establishing himself in Hihifo 'i Tongatapu as the first Tu'i Kanokupolu. Vaoloa was apparently Ngata's Father's brother coinciding with Dad's social memory of the first Nuku appointed to Kolonga. Nuku Nopele told me, "There's thirteen Nuku's from the first Nuku to me [him]."

Dad and Nuku both converge in social memory when historically recounting Kolonga as the "rebel" village. Dad said, "Kolonga people weren't really in the civil war when the Ha'a Kanokupolu and the Samoans - Fale Upolu - took over the Tu'i Tonga. They were too busy keeping Hahake from invaders and that's why Lotopoha is a sacred place in Tongan history." Nuku concurs with Dad's analysis that the civil war was predominantly Ha'a Kanokupolu and Samoan oriented with Lifuka 'i Ha'apai as the home guard at Velata.

Commander Lupeti Vi explained that Velata was held by Lifuka 'i Ha'apai (his family, Pangai 'i Lifuka and mine too, Hihifo 'i Lifuka) and their allies. However, Foa 'i Ha'apai (particularly Lotofoa 'i Foa) fought with the Tu'i Tonga as they were not Ha'a Kanokupolu allies. Their allegiance was to the Tu'i Tonga and Commander Vi saw that these historical ties are evident today in their social ideology and organisational practices. I asked Commander Vi if Kolonga-Hahake were involved in the civil war. He told me, "The way we think of modern war today didn't happen like that in the old days. It wasn't planned like a strategic offensive. People would join with the main war party and then fall away here and there. It was more emotional, war was driven by a lot of emotion, how people felt about each other and their places; and how ideas about other people and places were put to them by chiefs and leaders. It's very different to today, Teena. You can't read the past from how you understand the present, ok? It was different. We have to understand that first." He commented that, "Well, I have been told that Kolonga warriors in the old days wouldn't sleep for three days at a time. When they went to war they would stay awake for days! Their enemies knew this and told stories about the Kolonga warriors who didn't sleep. A bit like ghosts, eh? Maybe that's why your Dad hardly sleeps!"

To explain Dad's reference to Lotopoha as "a sacred place in Tongan history," Grandma Siu identified Lotopoha as the site where Kolonga warriors convened to cook their enemies, three kilometres south-west from Kolonga village towards the water tower (Lotopoha is the raised earth mound next to the Mailau 'uta plot where Grandma Siu's brothers Uncle Latae and Uncle Asa'ele keep their plantations). Apparently the current Tu'i (Tupou IX) had a sacred rock exhumed

from Lotopoha for storage in the Palace archives. Grandma Siu said this rock could only be touched by Kolonga people. Outsiders or non-Kolonga people would suffer burns and abrasions from touching the rock because it was used at Lotopoha for cooking enemies. Grandma remembered uncovering human bones at Lotopoha as a child when she used to collect vines. Her Father Tae, a traditional funeral director, would re-bury the human bones and "speak to them in the old language we don't hear nowadays" (Dad's English translation of Grandma's talk).

Dad built on Grandma's talk by adding that, "Uncle Latae knows the right language for preparing the family bones. He clear the tomb at Deanne's funeral [Deanne is Mum's older sister] because no one in town [Nuku'alofa] will do it. They too frighten of the ghost. Maybe they forget and don't have anyone to do it properly. It's a bad Mala'e the one by the Palace. Town people all talk about the ghost. But Latae clean up the tomb, put the bones in the right place and make the proper speech so the ghost won't be angry. Latae tell us that's why Deanne keep saying she had sore bones before she died. Because the tomb was a mess, bones all over the place. After he finish he swim in the sea, clean himself up. And he tell me to burn all his clothes, even his shoes. He was down there with his brother for a whole day. No food. No water. Just work till it's all done. 'Anau [Dad's youngest sister] was there with them. She sit at the top and wait for Latae to bring them up." I asked Dad, "Who will take Uncle Latae's place for funeral stuff when he dies?" Dad said, "His son Meitu'i. He meant to be in training now so I don't know what he's doing in Auckland. It won't be me boy that's for sure. Every time I seen a ghost I can't sleep for days. I stick with the water and that's another headache! [upgrading the Kolonga water supply].

Quite possibly Dad's memoir of Kolonga being associated with traditional funeral and gravesite preparation is couched within remnants of Tu'i Tonga historical narrative. Dad's matrilineal ties through his Mailau family to Kotongo, the Catholic quarter of Kolonga, are also intertwined in Tu'i Tonga allegiances and memories of Tongan history that emphasise the significance of the period before the Fale Upolu, the Ha'a Kanokupolu's transition into the Tu'i Kanokupolu, which was, according to stories from Kotongo families, Samoan in 'culture' and social organisation.

[February 2006 Commentary in Fieldnotes]

My second daughter Ani-Katerina read the endnote story retold by her Granddad of his Uncle Latae clearing the bones at my Mum's family tomb. She gelled with the mention of 'Anau, Dad's youngest sister, playing a role in the work conducted. "I'll do 'Anau's job Mum. Tell 'Anau she can teach me what to do."

"Do what Ani?" her sister Toa asked. Ani-Katerina relayed the endnote story she had read to her older sister. Toa responded carefully, thoughtfully, in a serious tone. "That's tapu work. You're too young Ani. You have to be older. And you have to learn your Tongan[language] properly. You can't have broken Tongan because you might not get what's going on when the old people tell you what to do."

[March 2006 Commentary in Fieldnotes]

My Mother's memory of the gravesite preparation conducted at her sister Deanne's funeral in 1998 differed from Dad's interpretation on two points. Firstly, there was an accompanying gravesite facilitator from 'town' (Nuku'alofa) recommended by the Queen (Tupou IX's spouse) who was present for *some* of the work. However, he left Dad's Uncle Latae to conduct most of the work on his own as he was too scared of the ghosts. Mum was adamant that the traditional funeral directors from the Nuku'alofa area know the correct gravesite preparation procedure but are frightened of the ghosts at this particular cemetery because it is where many Hou'eiki families are buried.

Secondly, Mum stated that her first cousin Lisuia was present during the gravesite preparation in which Dad's Uncle Latae conducted most of the work on his own. According to Mum, Lisuia held and cleaned the family bones with Tongan oil.

See Bott, E. 1982. *Tongan Society at the Time of Captain Cook's Visits: Discussions with Her Majesty Queen Salote Tupou*. Nuku'alofa: Taulua Press Friendly Islands Bookshop.

See also Fanua, T. and Webster, L. 1996. *Malo Tupou: An Oral History*. Auckland: Pasifika Press.

8 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.

9 Amoamo, T. R. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.

10 Amoamo, A. K. 2006b. Fieldwork Conversation 4, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.

11 Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 4, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.

12 Amoamo, R. M. 2006b. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.

Endnotes 23-27 construe a four-way conversation between my three children and I late one Sunday evening after they had arrived home from a weekend in Opotiki. Their Father had taken them to a whānau meeting which discussed ideas on how to sustain collaborative interest for planning the next family reunion in five years time plus tidying up administrative details from the 2006 reunion held in January.

My children were fatigued from travelling to the Bay of Plenty from North Waikato and returning home over a two-day weekend (six-hours one-way in our van with regular bathroom and food stops at one-hour intervals). Their Father, a secondary school teacher of Te Reo Māori and social studies, has a 'thing' about not making children or adults sit longer than fifty-minutes to one-hour without a bathroom and/or food/water break. He has identified one type of teaching/learning strategy as 'abuse' (his term). In this subtext, he perceives such a teaching/learning strategy to be practiced by 'old guard' teachers and university lecturers (his term) who literally lecture at students for over one-hour with

no interactive dialogue, stimulation tasks, collaborative activities or bathroom and food/water breaks. Hence, long distance trips in the van with Brandon, as my children tell me, "take longer than usual because Dad stops all the time and talks all the way up the coast about the whenua and our iwi history. The more questions we ask him the more he stops and talks because he thinks we're learning something." "Are you learning and enjoying your trip?" I asked my three children. Rewi's response entered the room first, "Yeah cos' we buy chips and drink and stop for swims too. And you know what Mum? Dad keeps hogging my surfboard."

I was tapping away on Brandon's laptop when my three children arrived home to unravel their weekend experiences. During our conversation they began comparing their experiential memories of differences and intersections between Tongan families and Māori families, in particular, Māori families from rural Eastern Bay of Plenty and East Coast *iwi*, *hapu* and *whanau* to which they belong and identify with through their Father's patrilineal ties. Playful laughter and banter was generated from our collaborative dialogue, especially from Ani-Kāterina's storytelling performance which gained the heartiest and most affectionate laugh for her rendition of Granddad and his "big FOB family" from Kolonga.

At the end of endnote 17, Ani-Kāterina's second take on Tongan families, she voiced Samoan words, "*o le a?*" meaning "what?" Toa, Rewi and I laughed at this seemingly 'out of place' Samoan utterance on Tongan families. Toa interrupted her sister's flow, "What was that?" Ani-Kāterina defensively pounced on the query by asserting, "Shut up! I'm allowed to speak Saa [Samoan] if I want to!"

<sup>13</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>14</sup> 'Tongans [slash] 'The Pacific' in New Zealand' has been used here to highlight *how* Tongans living in New Zealand are re-situated within a 'Pacific' category which *sometimes* may appear at odds with, or counter to, their first preference of identifying as a Tongan.

<sup>15</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2004. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga.

My matrilineal first cousin who was born, raised and lives in Tonga asked me with the most earnest tone, "Why do they send us all the rubbish from Auckland?" We were watching the English version of Tonga News on TV Tonga which screens around 8 pm weekday evenings (give or take half-an-hour each way for programming glitches). The English language anchor, a young Auckland-born and raised Tongan woman brandishing her self-invented New Zealand panache, announced a news item from New Zealand would feature. I asked my cousin, "What rubbish from Auckland do you mean?" I was unsure whether she was referring to the upcoming news item or the uppity and keep it coming news reader.

My cousin explained, "They use to send us the culture festival from Auckland. You know the one with the school kids. Too many complaints from the people saying, "What rubbish. Those stupid New Zealand Tongans. They went there to send their kids to school." The TV had to stop playing it. All they do in New Zealand is Lakalaka. We don't see them doing good at school. They send their stupid kids to Tonga when they get in trouble. Why do we want to watch them do Tongan dance? We can do it better here. And the punake in New Zealand. Oh lord. These people are not punake. It's all the rubbish pretend they are punake. In Tonga, we laugh at them because we know they not from a punake family. But in New Zealand they try to act like they Hou'eiki. What's wrong with the New Zealand Tongans? They thinking is so fie' haa."

<sup>16</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Appadurai, A. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press).

By *ethnoscape*, I mean the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree. This is not to say that there are no relatively stable communities and networks of kinship, friendship, work and leisure, as well as birth, residence and other familial forms. But it is to say that the warp of these stabilities is everywhere shot through with the woof of human motion, as more persons and groups deal with the realities of having to move or the fantasies of wanting to move (Appadurai 1996, pp. 33-34).

<sup>19</sup> By 'hybrid writing style' I mean that my thesis mingles and merges verbatim quotes in story and verse that values the moment of transmission in which the dialogue transpired by resituating its sub-textual meaning within the overarching thesis analysis. I have provided some measure of contextualising verbatim conversation wrapped in storytelling genre by rewriting *some* (not all) excerpts from my thesis fieldnotes in the endnotes. Although I desired to spin many of the endnote stories in the thesis analysis, the pending word limit of a doctorate meant having to choose, edit and tidy fieldwork conversations and interactions into sound bite memories. Hopefully 'endnote fieldnotes' will allow me to negotiate my own shortcomings in the selection process (and sooth my social conscience) by offering colourful context to verse.

# PART ONE

## Prologue

### *Scene Three*

# CHAPTER THREE

## WALLOW IN THE DANGER ZONE

As the New Zealand economy sank into recession, many urban families suffered serious breakdown. Parental unemployment, the burden of 'not having enough to make ends meet' and the temptations of city life have taken their toll. Unless parents made a conscious effort to hold on to their *Maoritanga* [*Fa'asamoa*/*Fa'apasifika*] they themselves began to reflect the social economic environment in which they lived. ... The education system was criticised for its suppression of Maori [Samoan-Pacific] language and its failure to make curricula relevant. In 1971 Walker [In 2001 Mulitalo-Lauta and Hunkin-Tuiletufuga] noted the corroding influence of urban life upon the Maori [Samoan-Pacific] family's function of socialisation and the transmission of culture [and indigenous language] to the next generation (Hazlehurst 1995, pp. 103-104).<sup>1</sup>



*Puaka Lahi<sup>2</sup>*

*A big pig wallowing in a mud bath  
Saw me approaching  
It ran away  
Please don't scamper  
I only want to get close  
So I can remember you as you were*

*Kolonga 'i Tongatapu  
December 2005*

## Power Differentials in Pacific Peoples

One of the best areas to study this juncture of memory, confrontation, and ongoing power differentials is language. Language and cultural confrontation provide the locus for historical formations and meanings that are encoded and reenacted by the users in what turns out to be a naturalized structure. Thus, even though these historical meanings are activated, they are not apparent to many users. Many miss the historical message. Language and the many symbols encrusted in it work together in a process of contextualising (Cimet 2002, p. 146).

If naivety permits one to *go where angels fear to tread* [walk on dangerous ground] (to use a past adage) then experience teaches *once bitten twice shy* [not to go there again]. With respect to Samoan and Tongan anthropology this rule applies unless one is immune to bites, abrasions and other tropical hazards. One experience begs me *to live and tell the tale* [to speak as a 'survivor' of a particular trauma]: an inter-ethnic and cross-cultural 'research' relationship with two Samoan colleagues, one male and one female. We could be grouped as a Pacific generation (34 - 42 years), the male born in New Zealand and raised in Samoa from adolescence to adulthood and the female born in Samoa and raised in New Zealand from infancy to adulthood. Collaboration was intended to produce a conference paper for co-presentation in Samoa by the female and me plus a journal article for publication.

A series of tempestuous exchanges, however, engineered more than clear-cut and straightforward research collaboration, which is why I have recalled an edited memory and reinterpreted its meaning. First-hand experience provided a context-dependent understanding of how pivotal relationships are to sustaining, rupturing, mediating and changing social life. When social life entails navigating a current of inter-ethnic and cross-cultural relationships such associations can reproduce fertile ground for aggravating contested social memory and history. In New Zealand public life – state bureaucracies, institutions, workplaces, media – Samoan and Tongan relationships may provoke tension and rivalry mitigated by somewhat tenuous and often unstable alliances to an ideal of Pacific Peoples. The assumption that Samoans and Tongans form 'natural' allies in public life as Pacific Peoples is therefore popular construction supported by strategic conjecture.

The research was informed by the female's assertion that *fa'asamoa* [the Samoan way] was the foundation upon which to effectively organise and monitor communication in social work with Samoan and Pacific families (Shore 1976, 1977, 1978, 1981, 1982; Morton 1995).<sup>3</sup> *Fa'asamoa* thus symbolised a cultural system of meaning transferable across all ethnic groups indigenous to the Pacific Islands of

Oceania living in New Zealand. During our relationship's social transaction, I connected the dots to reinterpret the meaning of *fa'asamoa* transmitted to me by one Samoan female and one Samoan male; at times in three-way conversation in which the direction and information flow was transmitted to and between themselves, and at other times in distinct one-one-one engagements where the knowledge flow passed on to me was in censored sound bites suitable for an offshore audience with a restricted viewing licence.

*Fa'asamoa* constituted my colleagues' key social signifier for Samoa as ancestral home and origin (Mageo 1998, 2001a, 2001b, 2002). The point of abrupt departure where their difference from me spoke volumes was that *fa'asamoa* represented the one pedestal on which to organise Samoan ethnicity and authenticate Samoan culture (Linkels 1995; Levi-Strauss 1995): in context, nothing above and beyond *fa'asamoa* defined ethnic origin and cultural authenticity. By this, *fa'asamoa* acted as the “symbolic basis for the new ethnicity among Samoans” and Pacific Peoples (Kallen 1982, p. 32) – the mass ethnic categorisation of Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.<sup>4</sup>

Contrastingly, my identity work in co-constructing memories and stories of ‘culture’ (contoured and contented by its relationship to power) with Tongan family and affine have not impressed (or imposed) upon me the comparable concepts *fakatonga* [the Tongan way] or *anga fakatonga* [the Tongan way]. In my experience, concepts associated with *fakatonga* or *anga fakatonga* have not translated into practice as the grand finale in ‘Being Tongan’ (Cowling 1991) and ‘Becoming [*the real McCoy* – an authentic] Tongan’ (Morton 1995). The tormenting risk that ‘We’ will not let you be one of ‘Us’ if you do not idealise and centralise these concepts into social practice for ‘me’ in my family life, my social memory and history, set off an alarm: the foreboding possibility that a force of will intolerant to difference would discipline and punish ‘me’ into compliance with one strand of orthodox ‘truth.’

My first direct memory of being repetitiously subjected to ‘The Word’ *fakatonga* plus an encyclopaedic invention of ethnographic doctrine representing ‘The World’ of *anga fakatonga* was experienced in reading anthropology texts (Morton 1995, 2003). My ‘Self’ and ‘Personhood’ was therefore experiencing ‘symbol shock’ (Copas 2006) from reading an ethnographic play on ethnicity and culture, a play on *fa'asamoa* co-starring and co-produced by two Samoan actors.

I was never convinced of the greater *fa'asamoa* project, nor was I willing to be subsumed by the ethnic massification machine which I worried might process me without my consent into a converted and indoctrinated Samoan-centred Pacific

Person (Baudrillard 1975; Bell 1979; Alberto 1995). What I declined to purchase was the industry-made history of:

Born in New Zealand  
 Raised in **fa'asamoa**  
 Lives in Auckland  
 Attends Avondale or Newton PIC<sup>5</sup>  
 Supports the Blues<sup>6</sup>  
 Economically mobile by profession  
 Socially acceptable  
 by  
 Integration  
 into  
 Markers  
 of  
 Middle class  
 and  
 Colour inscribed [White] success  
 (Franco 1991; Tiatia 1998; Anae 1998, 2001; Macpherson 2001, 2004).<sup>7</sup>

Such social memories and histories as these were not mine: put simply, I had no desire to borrow and try them on for a generic Pacific fit from Samoan benefactors consciously and unconsciously set up for making a profit from increased outside sales.<sup>8</sup>

To me, the research discourse my colleagues had constructed activated their anxiety-laden aspirations that **fa'asamoa** underpinned the success of the Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples [role] model (Samu 2003).<sup>9</sup> From the ground I stood on, such subject positioning that reified **fa'asamoa** as the ideal ethnic and cultural system resembled a return to anthropological primordialism (Freeman 1984). I viewed it as an early twentieth century screening of a black and white moving picture with subtitles bereft of sound. The plot instructed the audience that **fa'asamoa** contained timeless structures and universal principles *natural* to how Samoans and Pacific ethnicities communicate and organise their lives. This analysis is an attempt to understand how and why my criticism became muted. I do realize, however, that my presence and participation as a Tongan woman corroborated and compounded my displacement (Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee and Kee 2001).

In this chapter's sections titled 'Cultural Priority' and 'Thursday Story, Friday Story' (see pp. 86-91, 91-100) I offload and unpack how **fa'asamoa** has emerged in New Zealand public institutions as a concept and practice that implies the Samoan way is synonymous to the Pacific way. Critical questions to front up to is first, how is an imaginary leap of this kind performed in ideological conversation and second, who *may* benefit and who *may* not from being forcibly repositioned within this discourse? Unpacking narrative creates a method in which I can examine how an environment is

built for the social landscaping linked to *fa'asamoa* to *become* ingrained human features of Pacific Peoples in contemporary New Zealand.

I suggest the predominance of Samoans in New Zealand as the largest Pacific ethnic cohort shapes how Pacific ethnicities are mass-constructed by the state, public media and institutions such as tertiary providers. Consequently, social expectation is manufactured whereby Pacific Peoples are believed to experience and understand 'ethnicity' and 'culture' through their common situation in New Zealand *bereft* of taking in account that a one-size-fits-all logic devalues difference by its will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a), its resolve to deny intra-Pacific power differentials.

Remembering my research relationship stirs uncertainty because I was not at ease during our interaction to ask directly who and what was being researched and how a *fa'asamoa* research methodology worked. A systematic method and critical analysis gave way to an essentialist argument of 'natural intuition.' This notion was theoretically related to biological determinism. In theory, a Samoan and Pacific person's cultural way of communication was believed to be inherent to their ethnicity, contained in their bloodlines and 'true' to their human nature (Mead 1961; Levi-Strauss 1966, 1973; Kuper 1988). This biological deduction supplanted a research plan, a research method and a social scientific analysis of the information collected and the primordialist discourse which informed the argument (Linnekin 1990).<sup>10</sup>

Strategic essentialism (Spivak 1990), in this context, instigated a popular dichotomy: the criterion for 'knowing' a *fa'asamoa* research methodology was innate in one's ethnic and cultural affiliation to Samoa or the Pacific Islands whereas non-Pacific Peoples were limited in their 'non' ethnic and cultural capacity. *Fa'asamoa* in the context of the research undertaken was never explicitly analysed because its meaning was taken as the natural set of organisational rules, stagnant in time, solid in structure but more importantly, accessible and comprehensible to those on the 'inside.'

I am not suggesting this kind of *fa'asamoa* research methodology constitutes a belief system practiced by all Samoan researchers across the globe. However, I am questioning the "forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere [in] such knowledges and relations between them" (Weedon 1987, p. 108). As a specific discourse of *fa'asamoa* in New Zealand institutional life I am interested in analysing the social mechanisms and structural constraints from which such an ideological conversation emerges to gather power, truth value, persuasion and conversion (Huffer 2005).

Ideology feeds to grow offshoots, branches and new trunks of cultural truth in a New Zealand political climate where references to ethnicity may perform a

contemporary euphemism for ‘race,’ triggering discomfort among the nation’s fragments<sup>11</sup> – minority groups coloured by ethnicity – and discord among the nation’s frontline – the majority group discoloured by ethnicity (Bell 1996; Bell 2004a).<sup>12</sup> I return to this analysis in chapter four’s discussion on the conflation of multiple, moving subjects in the mass conglomerate, Pacific Peoples (see pp. 130-133). In fieldwork conversations, ethnicity and culture are fused as interchangeable concepts. It is the subject’s (or the speaker’s) “associated surroundings”<sup>13</sup> which they experience in everyday life and have described to ‘me,’ the researcher, that activates ideas of ethnicity and culture *being* blended together in social memory.

I mean to say that three generations of Tongan family who have contributed social memories to this thesis have *imagined* into existence that the South Auckland territory of contemporary *Aotearoa* New Zealand represents a *brown town*. The social reality that the demographic majority of Tongans and Pacific Peoples in New Zealand live in the Auckland Region, particularly in suburbs marked out as South Auckland, triggers the idea that *all* of South Auckland looks, feels and *is* ‘brown’ because of the notable numbers of these communities. Thus, ‘brown’ *becomes* an identity marker of people and place especially in relation to *how* people inscribed by an *ethnic* category such as ‘Pacific’ embody and practice their everyday *culture* in public places (e.g. schools, shops, markets, streets, churches, community centres and halls, and public services such as libraries, courts, bureaucracies and hospitals) (Brown Pulu 2002; Borell 2005).

The point I want to make here is that immersed in New Zealand cultural politics and the changing meanings imbued in the language of identity, ethnicity, culture and nation, lie ethnic groups in the process of disentangling. By this, fragmented groups unravel the Pacific Peoples narrative to negotiate identity space sometimes in direct competition with, or opposition to, each other. The *fa’asamoa* research methodology I was exposed to was understandably couched in a Pacific Peoples discourse. Its political will was to recreate social memory and represent history by occupying ‘centre’ space in the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand story while simultaneously sustaining structure and content that was distinctly and irrevocably Samoan (Kammen 1991, 1995; Narayan 1993).

### **Fragmented Power and Resistance**

Resistance to power, as inter-ethnic conflict or opposition to a Samoan centre of the Pacific Peoples narrative, is not necessarily overt or unambiguous because as Diamond and Quinby (1988, p. 185) have noted, “if relations of power are dispersed and fragmented throughout the social field, so must resistance to power be.”

The theoretical issue I have raised here is explored in chapter four (see pp. 133-137). My reason for introducing it at this stage, however, is two pronged. Inter-ethnic conflict arising from competing discourses seeking to reposition themselves within multiparty territory of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand exists and persists. Perhaps the silence and forgetting in social science research of this contentious and contested turf of social memory and history is purposeful. Rupturing the tidy design and uniform function of the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand narrative by exposing discontinuity and disjuncture risks fragmenting a delicate 'minority' position in New Zealand cultural politics. The situated identity of Pacific Peoples is staked out by stories of mutual circumstance (e.g. Dawn Raid, Polynesian Panthers, Church, labour market) and glued together by a will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a), the desire to reify the continuity of culture and the remnants of tradition in the lives, struggles and memories of 'third space' peoples (Bhabha 1994).

Part two of my reasoning stems from wrestling with my social conscience and reflexive research practice over the possibility of cultural aggrandisement. I can not deny, detach or disestablish myself from a Tongan position when negotiating ground within the confines of the Pacific Peoples category. Although in my everyday life I cohabit messy, multiform and multidimensional territory in realigning myself among multiple identity markers (e.g. a Tongan woman of Māori and Samoan ancestry), when situated in a Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples discourse, a structural constraint restricts the fluidity of movement.

The border restriction I am speaking of is that, given a two-way option of either aligning with a Samoan centre or positioning 'me' on a Tongan periphery, the discourse I am more comfortable and confident with is one of dispersed and fragmented resistance (Diamond and Quinby 1988, p. 185). The "fragmentary point of view" (Pandey 1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993) is the one in-between location (Bhabha 1994) that I persistently return to in creating this thesis because it embodies the multiple subject positioning of 'me' in my family, social memory and history. Travelling theory (Austin-Broos 1987; Clifford 1988) which desires to transcend the border control regulating the Pacific Peoples narrative is, of course, political. Chapter four analyses competing discourses that negotiate identity territory in the story of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand (see pp. 137-146): in particular, it gleans conflicting Samoan and Tongan social memories and histories and asks whether these fragmented positions are reconcilable and whether incompatible discourses desire to be reconciled?

My intellectual and political interest looms from questioning structural and organisational change. If the notion of Pacific Peoples constructs a narrative

discourse that activates and nourishes tension and conflict between rivalled subject positions located and dislocated within its wake then what possibilities arise for disassembling the structure, changing organisational values and de-centring the *centre*? Who and what constitutes the centre? Can this simply be interpreted as Samoan-centred discourse? Or, can the centre be located in New Zealand bureaucratic structures and processes for labelling, boxing and situating the ‘minority,’ that is, Pacific Peoples, on the margins of institutional and public life?

The discourse of bureaucracy feeds a fertile ideology. Surreptitiously it engineers a process which propels ‘Them’ to self-manufacture and self-administer themselves – the critical brown mass, social acceptance and buy-in power to *being*:

Sweepingly Clumped  
in  
Institutional Marginality  
which  
Intellectually Ghettoises  
through  
Implicit Complacency  
to  
Public Construction  
as  
The Problem

## **Samoa and Tonga: Social Memory Contested**

[The] same words that constitute truth for some are, and always will be, myth for others, who inherit or embrace different assumptions and organizing concepts about the world (McNeill, cited in Ross 1991, p. 166).

Re-tracking my discussion on the *fa’asamoa* research methodology that I encountered, it exposed a structural constraint among intra-Pacific relationships which is worth contextualising here. Research conversations and the conference in Samoa created ethnographic sites for my colleagues’ conscious and unconscious observation and scrutiny of my Tongan difference. And I returned the ‘gaze’ (Jacobs-Huey 2002). Hence, for the most part of our transitory interactions we gazed at each other’s dissimilarity through lenses that interpreted, internalised and externalised the Other’s strangeness compared to ‘Us’ (Wetherell 1998). What I am saying is that we were doing identity work by tasting, consuming and contributing ingredients to an existing brew of ethnic and cultural stories of ‘Them’ (Said 1978; McAdams 1993).

For *being* a Tongan in Samoan territory I felt subject to domination by a type of *fa’asamoa* surveillance which reproduced social inequality when controlling, disciplining and revoking dissidence. My matrilineal tie to Samoa (Fale Fa, Fale Vao)

through a great-grandmother was not viewed enough (in terms of biological determinism) to put me on comparable ethnic footing with my collaborators. Consciously and unconsciously a strategy to resist alienation surfaced as I asserted my Tongan ethnicity and cultural identity. The disciplinary speech and behaviour I encountered therefore differed from how I have noticed Samoans put other Samoans in their lower place for insubordinate behaviour (Milner 1961, 1973). I had caused a double breach. My non-compliance with a power structure that preserved *fa'asamoa* as defined by the Samoans in judgement was one transgression. But I was a Tongan woman, a non-Samoan but somehow Pacific actor, which exposed another kind of social fracture.

This double breach invoked a process of disciplining disobedience by ridiculing my ethnic and cultural difference (Gerber 1985; Handler 1985). The driving logic saw my Tongan-ness constructed as the root cause for nonconformist behaviour and an essential limitation imagined as a type of *non* ethnic and cultural capacity (Handler and Linnekin 1984). I am not saying that I was viewed as a non-ethnic and non-cultural political actor. But rather, the *non* status ascribed to me was defined in terms of *less*, of *lower* social value than the ethnic and cultural norm. My *non* status was inferior and therefore I contained limited ability to understand and engage with a *fa'asamoa* research methodology from the position of a Tongan woman who was Pacific *but* peripheral to, and disjunctive from, the *centre*; that is, the Samoan-Pacific in New Zealand.

The male and I traded banter on historical relations between Samoa and Tonga, which indicated that inter-ethnic and cross-cultural tensions were close to the brim of staged politeness (Maltz and Borker 2002). At one time, I told the male in frustration while laughing to diffuse an angry reaction, "I knew it would come down to this: two Samoans against the Tongan." His retort was like a sharp reflex, "After four hundred years of Tongans in Samoa what do you expect? It has to change!"<sup>14</sup> By comparison, the female emailed me a photograph of a protest banner and Tongan strikers from the civil servants strike in Nuku'alofa that said, "Pribery is Evil." The pun was directed at the banner's misspelt message with the young Tongan men oblivious to its grammatical error proudly raising the signage. She added, "Tonga is no longer the superpower," phonetically spelling her statement, "Donga is no longa da supabower" to mimic a heavy Tongan accent in spoken English.

These examples of *desire* laden in speech showed that two types of culture and power shaped our relationship. First, I was an out of place Tongan speaking back to the Samoans on their 'home' ground, a contested Pacific Peoples centre that social memory had reinvented as the cradle of Polynesia, Polynesia's golden origins

(Fairchild 1961; Kallen 1982; Keesing 1982, 1989; Keesing and Tonkinson 1982).<sup>15</sup> Second, social memory recalled historical grievance: this informed me Tonga occupied Samoa for some four centuries during *Tu'i Tonga* history but in the present day, Samoa and Samoans worldwide constituted the ascendant Pacific superpower (Bott 1982).

The first point constructs a discourse of 'local' culture and power. The research topic appealed to *fa'asamoa* as the solution for effective communication in social work with New Zealand families of Samoan and indigenous Pacific descent. For me to question the soundness of imposing one solution as the cultural priority for Pacific Peoples was to challenge the historical resilience and contemporary superiority of *fa'asamoa*. The second point creates a discourse of 'global' culture and power. Social memory of the Tu'i Tonga's past occupation of Samoa was evoked to legitimise the contemporary counter-ascendance of Samoans and *fa'asamoa* over Tongans specifically, and other Pacific ethnicities generally.

### **Quest for the Real Samoa<sup>16</sup>**

Any memory can be challenged – and many are. Just as sharing is an aspect of collective memory, so too are discussion, negotiation and conflict (Brundage 2000). Struggles over identity, political power, and legitimacy often revolve around memory sites and practices. Political elites and others in positions of power try to be “the master[s] of memory and forgetfulness” (LeGoff 1992, quoted in Brundage 2000: 11) because to control memory is to control history and its interpretations of the past. Resistance to such control is widespread and may express itself in silences, as discussed above, or in more confrontational ways, both subtle and overt (e.g., Watson 1994) (Cattell and Climo 2002, p. 30).

The conference in Samoa started on a Monday morning with registration and an opening ceremony. The Minister of Health's keynote address was relaxed, his use of commonplace language of New Zealand youth creating traction with New Zealand-born Samoan attendants, mostly health, social and community workers, bureaucrats and researchers from Auckland. “I hope you have an awesome time at the conference and in Samoa,” his closing was applauded indicating warm recognition from an Auckland audience.

On the Sunday evening I approached the male to see if he would discuss with the female and me the conference paper before its Tuesday reading. I also asked him to explain cultural protocol if I were to attend meetings with him and staff of the tertiary institute where the conference was held. He had intended to organise a series of meetings in Samoa on “collaborative partnerships” (his description). Annoyed by my request for information on etiquette, agenda and outcomes he made it clear that I

would not be accompanying him on campus as meetings were “informal, ad hoc and arranged on the day by meeting up with people at the conference.” He reminded the female and me that “I don't need to tell you about appropriate attire” in reference to women wearing a *puletasi* [two-piece top and wrap-around skirt] or skirt/dress to the conference “because I've [he has] been criticised for my [his] dress.”<sup>17</sup>

Earlier on Sunday morning I told the male that my Samoan friends working in Apia confided over a Saturday dinner that, in his case, as an educated Samoan male and *soga'imiti* [traditionally tattooed male] employed at a New Zealand tertiary provider, a social expectation prevailed (Duranti 1981a, 1981b, 1984).<sup>18</sup> He would be expected to make a “courtesy call” (their term) to the senior representative of the institute hosting the conference (Milner 1961, 1973; Duranti and Goodwin 1992). According to my friends, in Samoa it was not considered correct protocol for him to casually enter campus with no appointment in shorts, cap and sunglasses looking to discuss “collaborative partnerships” with a female relative employed at the institute as he had done with his female colleague on Friday morning (Coxon 1996). To adapt a colloquialism, *word sure gets around fast in the islands* [news travels fast] and my colleagues' informal visit was met with curiosity, observation and comment.

I was cautioned not to offer this information to the male in the company of the female as he may be offended and could become irate with me for embarrassing him in the female's presence. Embarrassment would be caused by my retelling ‘inside’ information, my will to seek understanding of Samoan networks and relationships in the “Motherland” (‘Their’ reference to Samoa); inside information that should not be accessed by a Tongan woman over a Samoan male, especially one who signified cultural expertise in *fa'asamoa* in his New Zealand career and public life and more intimately, through his bodily *tatau* [traditional tattoo].

Irate was an appropriate term as I was immediately put in my place on two separate occasions on one hot Sunday in Samoa. At once by being scolded in a one-on-one conversation with the male and again by his dismissive speech directed at me during our pre-conference talk (Maltz and Borker 2002).<sup>19</sup> During one point in our evening assembly the male's dialogue shifted to a Pacific strategy he said was underway at the institute where we were employed. He noted the division he headed “would become the reference point for Pacific academic thought and research.”<sup>20</sup> I hastily interjected by saying he would need to consult with other Pacific ethnicities, not just Samoans. Tongan stakeholders would want to know how a discrete intellectual-cultural space for Tongan academics and researchers would be negotiated with Samoan stakeholders, the ethnic majority of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.

He reacted by ethnic fun-poking. “That’s easy to deal with the Tongans. I’ll just roll out my scroll and say hear ye, hear ye.” The slur unleashed explosive laughter with the female repeating his punch line, “Hear ye, hear ye.” I retorted, “You guys are mean!” At first it was taken as a humorous reply and the laughter continued. I held the line, “You guys are mean!” The laughter dwindled and the banter that bordered inter-ethnic conflict ceased as did our conversation and tumultuous relationship.<sup>21</sup>

That ephemeral moment of derision packaged in jesting mockery prompted me to decide a course of action. I would isolate myself in the hotel we were staying to polish my part of a conference paper and complete a publishable article draft on my computer. Once the Tuesday paper presentation concluded I would make a hasty exit to safe ground – the security of my Samoan friend, her family and their home – where I could delight in my stay until the Friday morning flight back to Auckland. My visa to cross the border had expired and I was no longer willing to be detained by a made in New Zealand discourse of Samoan superiority.<sup>22</sup>

The Tuesday evening saw me pledge a respectful glance to Mount Vaea before trundling my bags down three flights of stairs to my friend’s truck. The sight through the hotel dining window had overawed and kept me company. I marvelled at its mountainous green. Leaving its company left me homesick. Upolu’s interior was glorious. My first direct memory of volcanic tropical forest – so different from Tongatapu. But drowning in contested social memory and history, Tonga was my ‘home’ and I could not leave Tonga’s memory behind when navigating ‘safe’ passage beyond cultural landmines. It travelled with me so I would not forget. So I would always remember Dad, even when his memory was all I had to be close to him. My Tongan Dad who waited four months for a New Zealand bureaucracy to process ‘partial’ reimbursement for paying three travel packages to Samoa from his personal savings.<sup>23</sup>

I would never forget Tonga  
Even in Samoa  
The place of my Mother’s grandmother’s origin

End of story<sup>24</sup>

## **Cultural Priority**

Telling the story of a nation’s past is a highly political act involving struggles over whose stories will be remembered and preserved and whose memories will be repressed or forgotten. The ownership of memory is a question of

power. Individuals and groups struggle over who has the right to represent the past and whose memories will become institutionalised (Natzmer 2002, p. 161).

The end of the story in ‘Quest for the Real Samoa’ leaves scope for inventive interpretation. It is not a story’s end in so much as it signals conclusiveness. “End of story” (see p. 86) implies closure for one of life’s chapters and the introduction of another to be threaded into an ethnographic tapestry of social memory and history. Recalling the past unhinges a sequence of events that prods power relations between Samoan and Tongan contributors to, and subjects of, a discourse that defines and confines them in a Pacific Peoples stronghold.

Telling tales exposes fragmentation that becomes known, seen, heard, felt and most importantly remembered in certain cross-cultural situations. Interactions of this kind are grounded in memory, speech, emotion and behaviour which inflame contending discourses of culture and power. It is the ‘how’ that reveals by what structural mechanisms and in which social contexts do contentious and coded meanings of culture and power become salient, transmitted and projected in trajectories of story and history. My question is how do conflicting subject positions wrapped and wrought in identity politics materialise in speech, behaviour and emotion? Consequently, when disjuncture in a system of culture and power presents itself how does social fracture influence the way in which meaning is reinterpreted and made sense of in memory and history?

Such a tale as ‘Quest for the Real Samoa’ is purposeful conversation designed to probe political fall out and the fractious opening of historical sore spots. In this subtext, a conflicting communication strategy transpires that resonates with, ***‘you’re damned if you do and you’re damned if you don’t’*** [either way, you will get in trouble]. I am signalling to the double edged fracture of *not* speaking or speaking of power differentials authorised and entrenched by an official Pacific Peoples history.

When power differentials are left unsaid and publicly unaired, historical grievance and contemporary conflict conjure anxiety, fear and distrust. In one way because its memory, its recollection, may release ‘dangerous words’ (Brenneis and Myers 1984) into the world; while in another way because the politics of silence provide an effective method for stating a position without explicitly saying. I am suggesting the power differentials at work within Pacific Peoples discourse is implicitly understood by minority stakeholders (e.g. non-Samoans) “in intimate rituals that few discuss, but everyone knows” (Crumley 2002, p. 39). Therefore, disillusionment can prevail in silence, a strategy of quietening counter memory and

history in public life which propels greater inclination to exacerbate (*not* restore) relationship blemishes.

When spoken, acted on or systemically argued as indicative of structural confines embedded in accruing narrative – a history of situational ‘sameness’ called Pacific Peoples – counter memory and history is subject to public reinvention as the discourse of objection and unorthodoxy. It becomes inscribed by accepted norms of popular opinion as sites of resistance that disrupt tradition, convention and uniformity. A possibility looms that a strategy of opposition may undermine its own power and persuasion in counter memory and alternative history by the pursuit of social change through public tale telling. In the process of retelling, the very story itself may become selectively edited down to an acceptable sound bite: a spectre of the original text which the Pacific Peoples agenda can safely borrow and graft to a system of power without destabilising majority rule, upsetting the status quo or changing the structure that the storytelling process relies on to mobilise but holds it captive.

The situation narrated as ‘Quest for the Real Samoa’ was intended to exemplify how and why inter-ethnic dialogue mounted on an unyielding *fa’asamoa* stage of Pacific social history in New Zealand incites a type of global warming. In this saga, the environmental change spurs temperature escalation to an unbearable heat so that in some situations a non-Samoan party may experience being hung out to dry. Important to this study’s analysis is the relationship tension that flourished and expanded into conflict when immersed in a turbulent dialectic.

Social dialectic in this case involved a three tiered process of first, ‘unfreezing’ a *fa’asamoa* structure. Second, ‘adapting’ its organisational principles to integrate Samoan and Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. And third, ‘refreezing’ a new configuration so it resembles memory of the old by recapturing a traditional past. Concomitantly, the three tiers of structural unfreeze, adapt and refreeze relives the romanticism of an original form which seeks stability, security and authenticity in Samoa the origin homeland (Tcherkezoff 1998), in being ethnically and culturally Samoan (Kallen 1982), and in being the Samoan-centre in the history of New Zealand Pacific Peoples (Macpherson, Spoonley and Anae 2001).

By no means am I implying that Tongan generations in New Zealand are immune to romanticising their revered ‘past’ and its system of culture and power in the political present (Gergen 1999). The context-dependent situation my argument unfolds is that ‘different’ to a Tongan sub-population in New Zealand, a Samoan ethnic and cultural cohort occupies a position of demographic privilege in *being* the most numerous sub-population conflated in the Pacific Peoples mass. The specificity

of such subject positioning as the 'largest' in numbers means that a Samoan sub-population *becomes* more susceptible to identity reconstruction as the *centre*, the *locus*, the *progenitor* of culture and power in the Pacific Peoples social memory and history (Giddens 1979, 1990).

Perhaps the contentious yet understated and unexplored terrain is what can not be spoken or more specifically, what can not be aired among a Pacific multiparty table outside of private conversation cloistered within ethnically defined bounds. In context, Foucault was astute to suggest that we are never really free to say what we want, to whom we want, and when we want to (Foucault 1980). My interest here is to understand the kinds of social memory and history that become silenced, forgotten or forbidden when inter-ethnic tension and conflict surfaces and collides in minority multiparty territory, the official history of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.

'Quest for the Real Samoa' will no doubt make 'me' an unpopular discourse for tale telling and translating memory into history.<sup>25</sup> Perhaps this story was best buried, forgotten or detained in solitary confinement long enough for me to see sense in putting it out of mind, out of sight and out of earth's orbit. However, if I am to make sense of the story's edited memory, retelling and relocation in history then analysing context-dependent factors that engineered its will to truth and the conflicting positions that ensued may shed light on the unstable, murky and uneven ground on which Pacific Peoples are expected to socially collaborate and politically mobilise.

Climo and Cattell have noted (2002, p. 28):

Memories that exist as silences or gaps in the records (Pincheon 2000), as counter-memories or alternative histories, are clearly connected with the exercise of economic and political power.

This interpretation resonates with the construction of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand public life (Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988). It is no esoteric mystery to decipher the economic and political expediency, cost effectiveness and convenience of packaging multiple ethnic, cultural and language groupings in a critical mass branded with and bordered by Pacific sameness (Tupounuia, Crocombe and Slatter 1980; van Fossen 1995). The knowledge industry of manufacturing research predominantly bankrolled and marketed by the State for its bureaucratic consumption, benefit and reinterpretation reinforces and popularises the concept and practice of Pacific Peoples in institutional life.

Quantifiable formulas measure mass movement in upward or downward shifts according to how Pacific Peoples rate against other ethnicities in birth, death,

health education and employment. *Some* (not all) research agendas have attempted to de-massify Pacific Peoples by conducting fieldwork according to ethnic-specific cohorts. However, this encourages the measuring glass to turn inward to weigh, fit and rank how Samoans, Cook Islanders, Tongans, Niueans, Tokelauans and others fear against each other in living, dying, breathing, schooling and working competitions. My point is that in validating fiscal and social gaps of inequality among ethnicities in New Zealand can, perhaps inadvertently, constrict movement outside of problematising and pathologising the 'Other' (Said 1978). Such research programmes can deliver a life sentence of deficit, deprivation and disadvantage models as solutions for a critical mass positioned by statistical interpretation on the nation's edge.

Situated in the structural confines of a Pacific Peoples equation, inter-ethnic alliances and tensions are riddled in relationship mitigation, negotiation, concession, discord and conflict. An intra-Pacific ethnoscape (Appadurai 1996) is by no means uniform, consistent and homogeneous; but rather, reflects shifting alliances, submerged rifts and mounting tensions motivated and assuaged by competition for limited State resources, policy inclusion and social acceptance. Framed in a historical picture of increasing minority, critical mass and policy crisis it is conceivable that discourse rivalry over whose Pacific way informs Pacific Peoples in New Zealand compels the logic of majoritarian rule to supplant 'Other' competitors with an ethnic-specific solution. A subtle conflation of race and ethnicity prevails here. Ethnic diversity and cultural difference is displaced in imagery of critical mass and Pacific sameness embodied in a Samoanised centre. The allusion of 'one race' uttered in stories of a Polynesian majority downplays images of ethnic heterogeneity and cultural fragmentation (Husband 1982).

What I am saying is the growth of a Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples formula is a plausible, purposeful and palpable construction reproduced in a fertile climate of New Zealand cultural politics. Cultural priority as a strategy of culture and power operates in coalition with a Pacific Peoples in New Zealand discourse. As an ideology and practice propelled by a conscious and unconscious will to truth, cultural priority is the aggrandisement of social memory and history more relevant and meaningful to one particular ethnic and cultural group than 'Others' (Said 1978).

A group's ethnic and culture specific life ways are therefore prioritised to take precedence over 'Other' competitors wishing to assert their independence not singly within, but also from the minority multiparty territory publicly named Pacific Peoples. Cultural priority's driving logic is that for an ethnic group to ensure their cultural sustainability requires they combine to consolidate a central position within

the Pacific Peoples mass. The border checkpoint is that the mass which cultural priority desires to centralise its power and position within is a strategic territory designed by the state, and policed through a bureaucracy, to simplify statistical data and cut costs in measuring resource allocation in relation to policy outcomes.

An ideological leap from ‘Samoans’ to ‘Pacific Peoples’ understandably takes place with agility, a transitional efficiency that gives license for these names to propel mutual meaning and comparable expressions of a collective ‘Self.’ Context-dependent factors which pressurise how, why and to what extent the terms Samoan and Pacific Peoples *become* fused into meaning one-and-the-same are the audience reinterpreting the story’s meaning – who am I speaking to – and the group whom the speaker momentarily speaks for and speaks as – who am I to the audience (Spivak 1988, 1990; Chatterjee 1993; Mohanram 1999).

The point of divergence this thesis explores is how the forging of Pacific Peoples colours and coalesces in the social memory of remembering and forgetting among Tongan generations in New Zealand (Mills 1970). Following this point, my analysis unpacks how counter memory and alternative history becomes imagined into existence in terms of considering where such discourse is located and dislocated within the current political spectrum (Anderson 1983; Linnekin 1990; Bottomley 1992; Bhabha 1994; Kearney 1995; Brown Pulu 2002).<sup>26</sup>

### **Thursday Story, Friday Story**

I wanted to write an embodied research text full of the emotionality present during its creation. However, I could not merely provide transcript data because it was not clear and complete. Donna’s interview was lengthy and full of stops and starts. There were flashbacks to previous events interchanged with present events and in-the-moment awareness. Her story construction process was complicated and at times disjointed. The transcript did not capture the fullness of those three hours at my kitchen table where Donna had poured out her story because a transcript cannot bring to life to the reader the lived experience (Arvey 2003, p. 173).

One week in February, nine months before thesis submission, social interactions with two Samoan acquaintances whom I met separately for the first time on Thursday and Friday *fronted* [faced me] me, back to back. These fleeting exchanges have been inserted here for interrelated reasons. Similar to Arvey’s (2003, p. 173) account, my desire was to create a thesis that engaged with an “embodied ... text of the emotionally present during its creation.” Located in-between transcript and translation (Smith 2003) I realised that capturing emotion as it appears in social life was subject to disciplinary measures of selecting, editing, tidying and relaying interpretative context rather than any replicable “present during its creation” (Arvey

2003, p. 173).<sup>27</sup> Social life is continually in flux as are our emotional engagements in its presence (Kleinman 1991).<sup>28</sup>

In saying this, the two chance encounters with Samoan acquaintances one February week provided me with new social contexts to consider when theorising *how* and *why* the discourse of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand had *become* a Samoan-centred construct. These conversations engendered possibilities that encouraged me to rethink how difficult it is to pinpoint causal factors of structural constraint when the content, the ‘stuff’ of everyday life manufactures complex, ambiguous and fragmented experiences in motion.

Scene 1  
Act 1

On Thursday morning I arrived before my two colleagues at a seminar and workshop retreat for university undergraduates training as mentors to secondary school students. Three qualitative researchers were conducting an annual evaluation of a mentoring programme for its fifth year running. I was relieved to be early. The team of programme co-ordinators were one Cook Islander/Niuean and three Samoans. The director, a Cook Islander, I had met once before; thus, an opportunity to informally chat and *suss out* [investigate] the cultural ground presented itself (Howe 1990).

Inside story, seldom discussed but known, was that the programme targeted Māori and Pacific secondary students as mentees. Outside story, publicly documented but downplayed, was that the programme targeted secondary school students with university potential who needed role modelling, encouragement and support. Whatever the story, the programme recruited a landslide majority of Pacific secondary students with Māori in second largest place. Mentors, however, reflected a multi-ethnic and multicultural spectrum of Auckland City with a visible Pacific Peoples presence among the undergraduate forum. In contrast, Māori mentors in training were difficult to see or visibly locate as an identifiable ethnic and cultural group.

Morning workshop two was the pressure cooker. The temperature was set on high with no air conditioning to temper discomfort. The ethnicity question cropped up for discussion, deliberation and discomposure. Notions of culture doubled up with ethnicity for a spotlight duo. Undergraduates were asked to co-construct a mentee – who is this nameless, faceless secondary student in your social imaginary? – retell their life story.

Three groups totalling ninety university undergraduates from dedicated doctors, aspiring scientists, poetic English teachers and promising planners struggled, stumbled and staggered with the ethnicity question and its accompanying cultural luggage. Three groups of university students converged on one contentious point that polarised the room into supporters and objectors of the mentee's ethnic and cultural description. "I need to hear you. Tell me the mentee's ethnicity." The Pacific facilitator's instruction resounded amidst jarring hesitancy, uncomfortable glances, the captive audience, waiting, waiting for some brave fool to put their Adidas sneaker in their mouth (Ryan 1999).

She's a half caste  
 Half Māori and Pakeha  
 [Prickly silence]  
 She's Samoan, half caste  
 She got pregnant at thirteen  
 Samoan Russian  
 No, Samoan Mexican  
 Pregnant?  
 Yeah, she got on the wrong side of the tracks  
 It's a decile one school  
 This is her second chance at school  
 Samoan Mexican  
 Yeah, Samoan Mexican<sup>29</sup>

Scene 1  
 Act 2

A group of Pacific students convened at a lunch table: five Samoans, two male and three female plus one Tongan female and her friend, a Croatian female who had lived in New Zealand for eleven years. The Croatian student quietly observed the frenzied storytelling of workshop two and the ethnicity and culture spat that sucked up energy and space.

Teena, we saved you a seat  
 Teena wants to sit next to me  
 Teena, we can tell you this ok  
 You should've come to our session  
 It was heated  
 That girl, did you hear her?  
 Samoan half caste  
 Our session too and Christian's group

Samoan, Samoan, Samoan  
 I was so pissed off  
 I stopped listening  
 Turned me right off  
 But where do these ideas come from?  
 That's what I asked her  
 She laughed  
 Said she was only joking  
 I said, yeah, it's a joke but where does it come from?<sup>30</sup>

One Samoan male facilitated workshops as a Pacific team member; four females and one male, four co-ordinators and one director or three Samoans, one Cook Islander and one Niuean/Cook Islander – depending on how one elects to read the identity roadmap. He managed cross-cultural dialogue during the ethnicity and culture session I sat through, making reference to ‘deficit thinking’ when the life story of a Samoan, half caste, pregnant girl, ignited the room to a tropical climate (Bell 2004b). Pacific students did not take note of ‘deficit thinking.’ The heat had impaired their hearing.

After talking through witty comebacks to disarm potential ethnicity trouble and problem culture Pacific students left the lunch table leaving me sitting, thinking, pensive, waiting, waiting for the magic answer to appear in a sound bite – where does it come from? The Samoan male approached, smiling, pulling up a seat.

How's your morning been?

Good

And you?

[Samoan male grins, hesitant pause]

You had enough of half caste pregnant girls, bro?

[Laughter, ice breaker]

Where does that come from?

You asking me?

You the man with the deficit story!

You're on to it brother!

Give me some new ideas so I can keep it fresh in there

Ok, ok, here's a story

Māori half caste pregnant girl?

Nah! Won't stick these days

Samoan half caste?  
 Yep, new enough to stick  
 Samoans?  
 Yep, big enough to stick out  
 Pregnant girl?  
 Hell bro! I sat through lunch with the Samoan girls  
 None of them were pregnant!  
 [Laughter]<sup>31</sup>

Scene 2  
 Act 1

Friday lunchtime I visit anthropology, a section of the Department of Societies and Cultures in the second floor of J-Block of the Arts and Social Sciences building at the University of Waikato. A new conference table had arrived, raising the realty to complement the Fatu Feu'u original and Polynesian artefacts pinned to the walls. A Samoan female breezed past my office door. Still pondering Thursday's ethnicity and culture dialogue, I called to her looking for conversation and company.

Are you looking for someone?

Tom, he's not in

I'll get you a paper, leave him a note

Are you from Samoa?

[I sat at the conference table inviting her to chat]  
 I'm Tongan but my Mum's Grandma is from Fale Fa

[Smiling, the Samoan female sat, taking up my invitation]  
 I remember you from first-year anthropology  
 You gave a lecture on traditional Tongan healing  
 Have you been to Samoa?

Yeah, I went last year during Miss Teuila Week

Did you like it?

Yeah, Samoa is beautiful and good people

Are you closer to your Mum's side?

[Hesitant pause]

Um, probably closer to my Tongan family, my Dad's family

In Tongan families the Dad is kind of *ma'olunga* [elevated in status] in some ways  
 Um, like you inherit title, land, citizenship through your Dad  
 It's kind of a bit different in my family though

[Surprised look]  
 I didn't know that  
 Different to Samoa  
 You can get stuff through your Mum's side

[Sheepish response]  
 Yeah, Tonga is different to Samoa

Did you go to Fale Fa?

Yeah, of course

Did you see your family?

Yep, they gave me some fish to take home to Mum

I didn't want to come back  
 I went home for three months  
 They gave me a scholarship to come back and do post-grad  
 That's the only reason I came back

Will you go home after this year?

Of course, I can't wait  
 I wrote about being homesick for Tom's essay  
 He asked me in class what I was doing  
 I didn't want to say  
 I said, "It's kind of a sad story about me being homesick for Samoa"  
 He said, "Don't make it a sad story"  
 Samoa is developed did you see?  
 Samoans have money  
 New swimming pool opened for the public  
 Yeah, the one for the South Pacific Games  
 Costs ten *tala* for one person to get in  
 Samoans can afford it  
 Samoans have a lot of European blood  
 They're not black like the old Samoans  
 Yes, the doctors went on strike  
 Eight came back  
 They trained in New Zealand  
 The rest left  
 They were from *USP* [The University of the South Pacific]  
 But development brings bad stuff too

Eight government officials were busted for cocaine just before I came back  
 Two murders  
 Drugs  
 Guns  
 That's what I say, development brings bad stuff too  
 Do you know my village?  
 It's where the Wesleyan school is<sup>32</sup>

Scene 2  
 Act 2

Michael my thesis supervisor was tapping away on his computer. Him tapping in his office, me in mine, still thinking over Thursday's ethnicity and culture quandary, wondering if I should plague him with the where does it come from puzzle. The Samoan female reappeared at my door with an official looking form. I was taken back to see her twice in one Friday afternoon.

Teena, can you look at my graduation form?  
 I have to write my name in the English way so they can say it properly  
 Can you read it to me so I can hear you?

Come, let's go ask Michael  
 He's more on to it for this stuff<sup>33</sup>

Michael edited her script so the Samoan names could be pronounced by an English speaker narrowing the margin for error, embarrassment and mispronounced earshot. She followed me back to my office and I sensed the second visit contained an invitation, a coded message on its own terms.

Teena, I was just thinking  
 How did you get around in Samoa?  
 Did you take the bus to Fale Fa?

Oh, I wanted to take the Fale Fa bus  
 But my friend said it would take too long  
 I got around in her truck  
 She drove me to Fale Fa

You have to take the bus next time ok  
 That's how you meet everyone  
 They all talk on the bus  
 They'll probably ask you, "Whose daughter are you?"  
 They'll know your family

That's how you meet people and get to know them  
I was just thinking that would be an experience for you to take the bus

Yes it would  
I'd like that<sup>34</sup>

I forgot to take my question to Michael. In between circumstantially different exchanges with two Samoan acquaintances in one February week, another possibility for interpretative context was emerging; one that I had not intended but would ride the bus to see where it would take me, what it would teach me (Beverley 2000).

A Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples story engendered historical overlap with public discourse surrounding Māori development in urban New Zealand (Walker 1970, 1984, 1985, 1989; Hanson 1989; Maaka 1994; Hazlehurst 1995; Howe 1999; van Meijl 1998). Conflating Māori and Pacific Peoples in a policy logic driven by reducing economic gaps and social inequalities had, perhaps inadvertently, activated the sociological imagination to equate ethnicity with disadvantage (Klees 1991). Ethnicity had subsequently vaulted into the public domain as the political issue designed to exacerbate disagreement; the conflict resounding through discord over ethnically targeted development (Keyes 1981; Fitzgerald 2004).

Crucial to manipulating public disquiet lies the political criticism that the ideology and practice of ethnically targeted development constitutes an inherently racist exercise enacted through its will to name Māori and Pacific groups as more disadvantaged than others (Hughes 1993; Bell 2004a; McCreanor 2005). The logic that propels protest is that Māori and Pacific Peoples receive 'special treatment.' That is, 'They' are the targeted recipients of state driven policies, programmes and interventions on the basis of 'Their' *race*. Consequentially, for development initiatives aimed at increasing Pacific participation in public spheres of social and economic life the perception of a Samoan centre positions the *centre* for instant conversion into an identifiable subject and object of 'ethnically disadvantaged' discourse (Larrain 1989).

I had transiently stepped on the unstable ground of a mentor training retreat lodged in a double bind. An underpinning motive of its origin history was the desire to target an education service for Māori and Pacific secondary students, who would, in theory, benefit from university mentoring and tutoring (Rosaldo 1988; Rorty 1989; Jones 1991; Ryan 1999; Reyes, Scribner and Scribner 1999; Ife 2002). Intimately this position's truth-seeking will to reinvent positive imagery of the disadvantaged 'brown' mass was made redundant. Envisioning an optimistic picture was undermined through the notion that ethnicity and culture fuse to form "a bounded

[fixed] social unit” (Howard and Howard 1977, p. 191; Linnekin 1990, p. 149), a popular idea which the sociological imagination (Mills 1970) may manoeuvre to arrest and detain ethnically disadvantaged discourse. Contradictory social currency materialised in ideological conversation whereby undergraduate trainees were expected to *know* that mentors worked alongside predominantly Māori and Pacific secondary school students (Education Review Office 2004). The twist was that a prohibition stood against drowning ethnicity and culture in self-depreciating imagery of social and economic disadvantage (Bishop and Glynn 1999; Bishop, Berryman and Richardson 2003).

But the question remained unspoken and unfettered – where was ethnicity and culture positioned? New Zealand cultural politics had staged a popular script which encouraged audience participants to expect that the ‘minority’ would assert their ‘difference’ by *being* ethnic and *performing* culture (Bhabha 1990; Billig 1995). In this scene, how and through what layers of language and colours of meaning may we critically discuss (without inflicting harm) and conceptualise ethnicity and culture in relation to social and economic hierarchies of power? (Macpherson 2004; McIntosh 2005).<sup>35</sup>

Working through ethnicity and culture on Friday afternoon my thoughts were warmed remembering conversation with the Samoan female. She had rekindled memory of my friends on route from Samoa College to government scholarship in a New Zealand university. Friends I had made as an eighteen year old school leaver, my first undergraduate year. Graduation, the return ‘home’ to Samoa’s government sector and life’s rotation meant sustaining relationships throughout seventeen years of my marriage and children in letters, telephone calls, parcels via Dad’s container networks from Auckland to Nuku’alofa and onward to Apia, visits to Auckland and of late, email (Berger 1985).

Striking a remembrance chord was her conversation. No naming *fa’asamoa* or sweeping reference to Samoan culture, the Samoan way. No preaching the book of *fa’asamoa* as the code of moral conduct above and beyond all ‘Others’ (Said 1978). Nor was it gestured in words and behaviour that my Tongan-ness restrained the human capacity to fluidly move in-between islands of intermingled history, ethnicity and culture (Shankman 1989). The coded message was subtle but compelling, meandering in nuance and spiralling undertone. Similar to my friends, her memories were eloquent in their simplicity and honesty. She valued our talk, the chance to relate and connect in shades of *micro* meaning. Fale Fa and family, “Did you go to Fale Fa? Did you see your family?” Her words kept me company that Friday afternoon in February.

And I wondered, in a travelling memory, if the fish I had carried from Samoa was shared by Mum with Aunt Emeline, her Father's sister, as she intended.

### **Travelling Memory**

I wonder if I'll give some fish to Auntie Eme  
 She lived in Fale Fa when she was a young girl  
 I remember Grandma telling me  
 Or was it Dad?  
 I forget now  
 But I know she lived there  
 You know you have my Grandma's name don't you?

Kathleen Ruby Veronica Patricia Brown  
 Born 15 March 1946, Kolomotu'a, Tongatapu<sup>36</sup>

### **Thesis in a Nutshell**

This thesis explores the interplay between social memory and history among Tongan generations in Auckland New Zealand. The analysis unpacks how family memory, the life of 'me' in my family, travels, transitions and transforms among first, second and third generation Tongans living predominantly in Auckland. The thesis thus argues that the social life of memory and history among Tongan families in New Zealand is sensitive to transnational lifestyles and inter-generational change.

Part One's Prologue unfolds over three chapters the actors and associated surroundings critical to the thesis storyline. It argues that memory and history among Tongan generations ebbs and flows throughout familial relationships in flux, altering its course in routes of social change that reconstruct who I am in respect to others of kin and affine situated in a shifting national and transnational ethnoscape. It locates and dislocates a discourse of Tongan identity within the parameters of a Pacific Peoples history in New Zealand questioning intra-Pacific power differentials that confine and define movement beyond border controls of ethnicity and culture.

Chapter Four disentangles ideological conversation interlaced in theoretical terrain which feeds cultural politics in contemporary New Zealand. It analyses the subject positioning of inter-generation Tongan memory merged and emerging among a history of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. It argues that memory among Tongan generations converges with and diverges from the social memory reinvented and accepted as popular discourse of Pacific Peoples.

Chapter Five unpacks the motion and movement in identity stories from three Tongan generations. It traces origins of family memory interwoven in a discourse of

remembering, forgetting and reinventing the past to make sense of the present. It argues that inter-generation memory negotiates social fracture and familial conflict in various ways to accentuate cohesion, continuity and connection.

Chapter Six analyses the politics of doing identity work among three Tongan generations of family memories, stories and life histories. In this context, the chapter unravels how identity reinvention becomes a strategy for validating discourses of family strength, stability and security. It argues that doing identity work constitutes a politicised ideology and practice, engaged in conscious and unconscious processes of relationship and environment change.

Chapter Seven situates interaction between memory and meaning among three Tongan generations in New Zealand engaged in the transience of social life. It examines points of entry, transition and departure in which social memory and its history of interpretative meaning intersect, collide and conflict among family stories. It argues that an emerging ethnographic mosaic of Tongan identity stories evokes and echoes the complexity and ambiguity of social life. Intricacy is thus mediated by memory and repositioned in stories of us, cultural truths of family, the stuff of 'me' and my life in my family.

Chapter Eight's closing curtain rotates to the story's beginning. Retracing inter-generational change in Tongan identity stories which situate 'me' in relation to family, it recaps interpretative meaning drawn from an origin past to make sense of the complex, shifting 'stuff of me.' In present day *Aotearoa* New Zealand, my life in my family is revised, reworded and reworked to maintain consistency with a subtext that induces power and persuasion – reading 'me' in my family in respect to an origin imagined and willed into existence and persistence – Tonga.

### **Thesis Edited in a Nutshell**

That's what people do  
They spend their whole lives building up experience  
So they can pass it on as memory

When they die  
That's all there is  
Memory

The good thing about memory is that it can be edited

Forgotten memory is 'non' memory  
It's memory the body stores on hard drive in 'non' files

But memory  
The stuff that's passed on

Can be edited

And that's the good thing

By Brandon Eruera Campbell Keeti Amo Amo  
Born 14 May 1968, Invercargill, New Zealand<sup>37</sup>

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Hazlehurst, K. M. 1995. Ethnicity, Ideology and Social Drama. In *The Urban Context: Ethnicity, Social Networks and Situational Analysis*, edited by A. Rogers and S. Vertovec. Washington D. C.: Berg Publishers.

I have inserted in parentheses a cross-cultural interpretation of the historical trajectories of urban Māori development in contrast to those of a Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples story situated largely in Auckland. My point is that there are identifiable sites of social juncture where urban Maori and Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples discourse overlaps, particularly through the logic of culture and language sustainability as the focal point of contemporary 'development' for the Māori and Pacific 'minority' in Aotearoa / New Zealand.

Comparative references were made to the published articles of two Samoan (male) social scientists, Tafa Mulitalo and Alfred Hunkin, which appear in the 2001 (Samoan-centred) compilation of inscribing the story of Pacific Peoples on a shifting Aotearoa / New Zealand ethnoscape (Appadurai 1996).

See Mulitalo-Lauta, P. T. 2001. Pacific Peoples' Identities and Social Services in New Zealand. In *Tangata O Te Moana Nui: The Evolving Identities of Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa / New Zealand*, edited by C. Macpherson, P. Spoonley and M. Anae. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

See also Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, G. 2001. Pasefika Languages and Pasefika Identities: Contemporary and Future Challenges. In *Tangata O Te Moana Nui: The Evolving Identities of Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa / New Zealand*, edited by C. Macpherson, P. Spoonley and M. Anae. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

<sup>2</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga.

In my fieldnotes I arranged these words in stanza after snapping the photograph of the *puaka lahi* fleeing from my invasive presence at her mud bath.

<sup>3</sup> Shore, B. 1976. Incest Prohibitions and the Logic of Power in Samoa. *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 85 (2): 275-296.

The emphasis is on the brother-sister relationship and a particular form of power relations which it manifests. This dichotomy between the two types of power is shown to be a pervasive aspect of Samoan ideology, informing many key institutions of Samoan social organisation. Finally, an argument is put forward that Samoan incest prohibitions can be best understood, not simply as a necessary condition for exogamy, but as a mechanism for maintaining a code of intra-family relations, these relations themselves being a subset of a more comprehensive system of power relations characteristic of Samoan culture. (Shore 1976, p. 275).

I located Shore's journal article after co-presenting a conference paper in Samoa on fa'asamoa and cultural communication in social work with Samoan and Pacific families in New Zealand. It focussed on social work theory and practice among Samoan and Pacific families subject to experiences of sexual abuse and incest. After processing Shore's analysis and the ethnographic stories, I wished I had read his work before attending the conference. It would have enlightened the co-constructed conference paper somewhat on the power and knowledge discourse infused in sustaining social boundaries over brother-sister relationships.

In my opinion, a Foucauldian analysis which unpacked the structures and mechanisms of power and knowledge production in situations mediated by 'culture' in New Zealand (i.e. a breach of social rules governing familial relationships between brothers and sisters) would have generated a valuable merger between fieldwork and social theory. However, this basis for research was unhinged by a 'cultural' agenda to validate (not critically analyse) a type of fa'asamoa worldview immersed in Christian overtones and an Auckland relocation as the most effective 'ethnic' mobilisation strategy for social work in Samoan and Pacific families.

[Insertion from 2005 fieldnotes, Samoa]

At the conference in Samoa one particular 'local' Samoan male stood and spoke during audience dialogue after a paper on incest in Samoan and Pacific families in Auckland co-presented by three Samoan female nurses on the Wednesday afternoon. The Samoan male speaker said in English (conference proceedings were overwhelmingly conducted in English with the exception of one short skit in Samoan on Samoan child discipline practices in New Zealand by two Samoan female social workers which fronted their co-presented paper); "In Samoa the law defines incest as sexual relations between a parent and child or a grandparent and grandchild." Immediately I sought clarification from my Samoan male colleague who sat behind me in the lecture theatre, "Did he say that's the legal definition of incest?" "Yes," was the reply. If this definition was correct then why were social rules governing the brother-sister relationship not translated into law?

Cross-cultural impressions/images. 1. In Tonga, brother-sister incest is considered a more likely possibility than parent-child incest. Brother-sister social boundaries are still apparent in contemporary Tonga, especially in adolescence and adulthood. 2. At a glance, English language seems more prevalent in everyday life in Apia Township,

Samoa than in Nuku'alofa, Tonga. I would suggest that my generation and those younger walking through Apia main streets and disembarking from buses almost come across as if they prefer speaking English in public life (especially those flaunting American accented English - staged or socialised). Or perhaps they engage in English first when I am part of a conversation because 'I' am Tongan and they do not want to exclude me from the talk for risk of appearing rude. 3. Social boundaries between Samoan men-women do not seem overtly salient in everyday public life in Apia compared to Tonga. However, in village life (e.g. Fale Fa) gender boundaries between Samoan adults are more noticeable. (i.e. In Apia, I noticed that Samoan men-women engaged in casual speech, body closeness and 'friendly' touching, especially among men-women who are employed at the same workplace or attending public social sites like restaurants, bars, the week's events in Apia for Miss Teuila. By this, the familiarity in speech and body language between men-women who are married or in long-term relationships but not to each other struck me as 'different' from Tonga or how I have experienced and remembered Tonga, particularly when Tongan men perceive 'me' as a Tongan woman and have some background knowledge of who 'my family' are in Tonga).

*Oh dear Teena - stop returning the 'Gaze!' Your Mother told you it's rude to stare at people!*

4 Kallen, E. 1982. *The Western Samoan Kinship Bridge*. Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill.

In the light of the foregoing discussion, we may conceptualize contemporary Samoans as an ethnic category which crosscuts national boundaries. The literature on Samoans in their homelands (Western and American Samoa) and overseas indicates that affective/symbolic ties with *fa'asamoa* (the "traditional" Samoan way of life/values) remain strong. Ties between Western and American Samoans, like those between Samoan migrants and their respective home country, appear to be continually reinforced through the ethnic organizational strategy of chain migration. Although *fa'asamoa* continues to provide a *symbolic* basis for the new ethnicity among Samoans, the centrality and expressions of this new ethnicity appear to vary considerably with different population sectors both within and between national boundaries. (Kallen 1982, p. 32).

Kallen's (1982) analysis that *fa'asamoa* provides a 'symbolic basis' upon which a 'new ethnicity' has emerged among Samoans located overseas or geographically dislocated from Samoa is one that resonates with my fieldwork interpretation. The culture and power imbued in naming *fa'asamoa* in the social memory and history of New Zealand located Samoans, especially among inter-generation relationships, seduces instant conversion within the sociological imagination from the "fragmentary point of view" (Pandey 1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993) to the ideal of a 'centre' unified and consolidated through romantic notions of tradition, timelessness and primordial authenticity.

The compelling tendency to veer towards *fa'asamoa* as an ideological framework upon which 'We' base our cultural epistemology and practice in the Pacific Peoples narrative of New Zealand history is evident in knowledge and research labelled 'Pasifika' or 'Pacific' in learning institutions, particularly in the tertiary sector. The impact of such a sweeping discourse that dismisses fragmentation by massifying heterogeneous subject positions within a category - Pacific Peoples - compounds institutionalised 'minority-ness' and socially acceptable 'marginality'. That is, the construction of a fringe space within institutions permits a minority category to explore and express their peripheral location in relation to strategies for 'getting closer' to acquiring *some* of the 'real' power to make decisions and allocate resources over the lives.

Does this strategy of 'getting closer' from the edge incite structural and organisational change in public institutions? Or does such a political tactic reinforce and replicate the structures, processes and relationships that institutionalise a category's marginality in the first instance?

5 " ... attends Newton or Avondale PIC, ... " (p. 78).

'Newton or Avondale PIC' is an everyday language reference to the Presbyterian Congregational Churches located in Newton and Avondale suburbs of Auckland City. These churches are perceived to be 'Samoan-centred,' in the sense that their church clergy and brethren largely identify as Samoan ethnicity and culture.

6 "... supports the Blues, ... " (p. 78).

'The Blues' is an everyday language reference to the Auckland Blues rugby team; Auckland Blues rugby club is the professional club situated in the Auckland Region to compete in the Super 14s annual competition between clubs located throughout New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.

7 Macpherson, C. 2004. From Pacific Islanders to Pacific People and Beyond. In *Tangata Tangata: The Changing Ethnic Contours of New Zealand*, edited by P. Spoonley, C. Macpherson and D. Pearson. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

The New Zealand-born children differed from their parents in various ways (Anae 1998; Anae 2001). Their worldviews and lifestyles reflected to various degrees, the urban capitalist, humanist, individualist and consumerist environment to which they had been exposed, and the pedagogies and curricula of the institutions in which they were formally educated. Their increasingly polyethnic social networks reflected the growing importance of education, occupation and personal interest in sharing peer groups (Maingay 1995). These variations were masked in the social statistics, in which complex histories and biographies were compressed into one or two ethnic identity 'categories,' which belied ethnic diversity within the Pacific population (Bedford and Didham 2001). (Macpherson 2004, p. 142).

Macpherson's (2004) analysis intimates around (by indirect mind association) the effects of social change on the human and institutional landscape in which the sub-category 'New Zealand-born children' has emerged within the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand history. Of relevance to my analysis is the way in which 'polyethnic social networks' are intertwined in fragmented histories of ancestral origins. Such 'polyethnic social networks' create origin

myths that trace their emergence to origin moments in social memory and history. These origin moments tell stories of 'Us' in relation to who 'We' are in reference to each other and our dislocation/location in New Zealand. My interest, therefore, is to disentangle if 'polyethnic social networks' among New Zealand-born Tongan generations are Samoanised or heavily inscribed by "fa'asamoa as the symbolic basis for the new ethnicity" (Kallens 1984, p. 32) - that is, a Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples mass.

<sup>8</sup> Macpherson, C. 2004. From Pacific Islanders to Pacific People and Beyond. In *Tangata Tangata: The Changing Ethnic Contours of New Zealand*, edited by P. Spoonley, C. Macpherson and D. Pearson. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

While the social worlds of New Zealand-borns were, in many cases, unlike those of their parents, they were remarkably similar to those of other New Zealand-born children of Pacific descent. Because of the circumstances in which Pacific migrants had become incorporated into the society and economy, New Zealand-born Cook Islanders, Samoans and Niueans had, in many cases, grown up in extended families, lived in similar homes in the same suburbs, attended the same schools and churches, competed in the same school cultural festivals and Sunday school scriptural examinations, had hung out in the same malls in various suburbs. Some also shared a disillusion with school, protracted unemployment and a sense of social marginalisation. Many were also aware they shared another experience: an identity which was different from their island-born parents and their local hosts (Anae 1998). This provided the platform for the emergence of a 'sub-culture' based on common descent and similar experience (Macpherson 2001, p. 143).

Although "the emergence of a 'sub-culture' based on common descent and similar experience" (Macpherson 2001, p. 143) has culminated into social memory and history among many affiliates to the New Zealand-born generation of Pacific Peoples, the point I wish to raise has been strategically overlooked, downplayed and sidelined. That is, "common descent and similar experience" has not by any means alleviated or resolved inter-ethnic and cross-cultural tension and conflict, particularly among Samoan and Tongan subject positions immersed in the history of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. If anything, the reproduction of "common descent and similar experience" in Pacific Peoples discourse activates a political site for contested social memory and history to play out.

<sup>9</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

I corresponded through email with a Samoan (male) friend who at the time of our fieldwork conversation was working in Suva as a regional health manager for a Fiji-based NGO. He explained his views on how a stagnant (over-romanticised almost fundamentalist Christian) interpretation of fa'asamoa had emerged inter-generationally among *some* migrant Samoans in Auckland and their New Zealand-born descendants. My Samoan friend had gained Australian undergraduate and graduate qualifications and was hoping to migrate back to Apia, Samoa, to work and resettle permanently.

He told me that Samoan migrants living in Auckland reify their memories of Samoa, the origin homeland. It is these migrant memories of 'home' that New Zealand-born children and grandchildren read as integral to their family history and collective identity. He saw that Samoan migrants who had lived in Auckland for a substantial unbroken period of time tended to see that Samoa in the present day bore little difference from the Samoa they knew and had experienced in the 1960s. He emphasised that social change in contemporary Samoa (especially in Upolu) had taken place perhaps too fast. New values and practices had transformed the physical and human landscape leaving many Samoans located 'outside' of Samoa with memories of past experience as their template for authentic Samoan culture, language and identity.

<sup>10</sup> Linnekin, J. 1990. The Politics of Culture in the Pacific. In *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in the Pacific*, edited by J. Linnekin and L. Poyer. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Pitt states that the concept of fa'aSamoa is primarily a political tool, invoked in political contexts and aimed at achieving "power rather than the retention of political custom" (1970, 8; see also 113-126). But I suspect in the years since Pitt's 1970 study, the concept of fa'aSamoa has become more current, both in Samoa and among expatriate Samoans, in the sense of Kastom, as the category of indigenous Samoan culture. Fa'aSamoa and fa'apalagi are used in casual speech to contrast different ways of doing things, the Samoan and the European. In some contexts, for example, the terms may be used to contrast in-kind and monetary exchanges. (Linnekin 1990, pp. 162-163).

Linnekin's (1990, pp. 162-163) analysis of the shifting conceptualisation and practice of fa'asamoa among transnational social life is astute. Fa'asamoa proffers an ethnic and cultural conceptualisation of Samoan indigeneity in New Zealand. Its political transformation has leaned more towards the sustainability of 'culture,' meaning the preservation of practices considered Samoan in origin, structure, process and content. The 'polyethnic' (Macpherson 2004, p. 142) transmutation enabled and enacted within institutions of public life in particular (e.g. state bureaucracies and policies) is the permeation and centralisation of fa'asamoa concepts and practices as uncritically representative of the multiparty diversity of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.

<sup>11</sup> See Chatterjee 1993.

<sup>12</sup> What I mean by "the majority group discoloured by ethnicity" is that *Pakeha / Palangi* as an identity reference to the White sub-population of contemporary New Zealand suggests the 'White majority' is the binary opposite of a 'brown minority.' With the growing Māori, Pacific and Asian sub-populations reworking New Zealand's 'ethnoscape' (Appadurai 1990, 1996), *Pakeha* [white] identity has experienced certain anxiety over *what* and *who's* culture constitutes the nation and its national identity.

For the 'majority' to be 'discoloured by ethnicity' therefore alludes to two interrelated social factors at work. First, shifts in New Zealand's demographic have led to revisiting historical ideas on the 'place' of **Pakeha** identity in respect to an indigenous population. If Māori are **tangata whenua** [people of the land] then how is the social memory and history of **Pakeha** in **Aotearoa** New Zealand conceptualised and remembered in reference to their changing relationship with **tangata whenua**? Second, the emerging relationship between a **Pakeha** majority and the *new* minorities, Pacific Peoples and Asians, unsettles the idea that the 'majority' will remain a permanent feature. I mean to say that demographic predictions suggest that New Zealand's minorities (including Māori) *may*, in due course, *become* the 'majority masses' because of increasing birthrates. Therefore, **Pakeha** relationships with **Tangata Whenua** and the 'Other' minorities (Said 1978), Pacific Peoples and Asians, are *being* reconfigured on new identity ground which takes into account the social reality of demographic change.

In brief, "the majority group discoloured by ethnicity" implies that **Pakeha / Palangi** identity is represented as 'White' New Zealand in contrast to its 'Brown' opposite and that amidst these cultural politics lies a concern that *if* and *when* the minorities *become* the 'majority' *how* will **Pakeha / Palangi** identity be remembered and recorded?

<sup>13</sup> See Mason 2006, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Bott, E. 1982. *Tongan Society at the Time of Captain Cook's Visits: Discussions with Her Majesty Queen Salote Tupou*. Nuku'alofa: Taulua Press Friendly Islands Bookshop.

Tala-'i-Ha'apepe was succeeded by Talakaifaiki, who ruled Samoa as well as Tonga, and the legends show that connections with Samoa were very important at this time. In the reign of Talakaifaiki, the Tongans were expelled from Samoa by Tuna and Fata, the ancestors of the Malietoa title. This is an important legend in Samoa, but does not occur in Tonga, doubtlessly because the Samoans won on this occasion, and all peoples prefer to remember their victories and forget their defeats. (Bott 1982, p. 94).

The Tu'i Tonga followed up his successful wars by sending men out to live on the conquered islands. He did not succeed in holding Fiji or Samoa, however, though connections with Samoa continued to be very close and there was much intermarriage of the subsequent Tu'i Tonga line with Samoan women, and of Tongan women of high rank with Fijian men. The legend suggests that links between Samoa and Tonga were very close in the early period. Possibly Samoa once ruled Tonga. The fact that Tongan "chiefly language," that is, the language of respect, shows Samoan influence suggests that the rulers of Tonga may originally have been Samoan. But later on it appears as if Tongan rulers were governing Samoa, for there are repeated references in Samoan legends to the driving out of the Tongans. Even after this period, relations between Tonga and Samoa were close. (Bott 1982, p. 95).

<sup>15</sup> Kallen, E. 1982. *The Western Samoan Kinship Bridge*. Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill

Earlier anthropological theories which suggest that Western Samoa is the "Cradle of Polynesia" are more compatible with current Western Samoan beliefs about their peoples' origin. In the Western Samoan view, "Savaii, the larger of the main islands of Western Samoa, is identified as the legendary Hawaiiiki, the original home of the Polynesian people, who were later to conquer the wide expanse of the blue Pacific in their waves of migrations north to Hawaii, west to Easter Island and south to New Zealand." Since this view does not conflict with the Samoan mythological view of their origins - which holds that the Samoans, their islands, and their culture was created by the god Tagaloa - it enables present-day Western Samoans to accept the anthropological evidence as compatible with their traditional *fa'asamoa* perspective. (Kallen 1982, p. 34).

Kallen's (1982, p. 34) analysis of synergy generated between contemporary Samoan and anthropological accounts of Samoa's origins - Savai'i as the origin homeland of Polynesia - resonates with my fieldwork interpretation. The Samoan colleagues whom I worked alongside for one research collaboration (especially the male who exhibited greater familiarity and confidence compared to the female with the reproduction of knowledge in an Upolu-located discourse) invested in the popular social memory that Samoa was Polynesia's ancestral homeland from where Pacific Peoples in New Zealand traced their origin roots.

Linnekin (1990) retells a Marquesan tale which concurred that Savai'i embodied a Polynesian homeland - Hawaiiiki - in the present day identity climate of postcolonial politics. In this sense, origin myths make political statements to stake claims within a contested territory of social memory and history.

Linnekin, J. 1990. The Politics of Culture in the Pacific. *Cultural Identity and Ethnicity in the Pacific*, edited by J. Linnekin and L. Poyer. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

A Marquesan lead dancer with Tavana's Polynesian Revue sought a full-body tattoo "in the style of his ancestors" ... Since tattooing had not been done in the Marquesas for 120 years, a Western Samoan tattoo artist was hired to perform the job after studying pictures of Marquesan body tattoos. Tavana, asked whether the Marquesans should be offended by this cross-cultural effort, replied, "Why should they? We are all Polynesians and we all originated from Savai'i in Western Samoa." (Linnekin 1990, p. 161).

This subject position differed from and intersected with origin histories of Tonga: a popular social memory I came across in the Nuku'alofa area of Tongatapu attributed the origin of Tonga to Maui who fished up the scattered islands constituting Tonga from Manuka (a possible interpretation of Manuka is Manu'a in American Samoa). This version of Tonga's origin history is quite possibly a hybrid interpretation sourced from an amalgamated Tu'i Tonga and Tu'i Kanokupolu discourse. Ha'a Kanokupolu (Fale Upolu/House of Upolu) discourse in modern Tongan history is Samoan-oriented due to the influence of Tohu'ia and her Samoan supporters during Ngata's establishment of the Tu'i Kanokupolu reign (Ngata was Tohu'ia's son).

Bott, E. 1982. *Tongan Society at the Time of Captain Cook's Visits: Discussions with Her Majesty Queen Salote Tupou*. Nuku'alofa: Taulua Press Friendly Islands Bookshop.

Then several of the Maui came from the underworld. They went to Manuka (Manu'a in Samoa) where they found Tonga Fusifonua 'Tonga the Land-Fisher,' a mythical being with a special fishhook that he was using to fish lands up out of the sea. One Maui tricked Tonga into giving them the hook, and promised to name the first land they fished up Tonga, in remembrance of him. They made a trial first to see whether they had been given the right hook, and fished up Tokelau. Then they moved up and fished up their first real land, and named it Tonga. This is the island of Tongatapu. At the same time they discovered the island of 'Ata with its three solitary men, and promised to go back to the under-world to bring them some women. Having done so, they busied themselves in pulling up more islands - Ha'apai, Vava'u, Niua and the other islands of Samoa besides Manuka. The high islands such as Kao and Late - were thrown down from the sky. (Bott 1982, pp. 89-90).

Bott's (1982) text also makes an interesting entry on the establishment of titles during the Tu'i Kanokupolu era which traditionally during the Tu'i Tonga epoch were of little (if any) social value. An obvious Samoan import during Ngata's establishment of Ha'a Kanokupolu political power, titles in modern and contemporary Tongan social life are Samoan in derivation and fewer and far between compared to Samoa's plethora of titles and titleholders in 'homeland' and diasporic settings.

I experienced 'symbol shock' listening to my Samoan colleagues' (especially the female) converse on titles and title holders (she in particular) viewed with esteemed regard. In addition to titles, the female spoke in one-on-one conversation with me on the social status associated to tata'u, pe'a and malu (a point of 'non comprehendez' in my Tongan socialisation due to my Father's aversion to Samoan tata'u).

My own family socialisation (a convergent practice in matrilineal and patrilineal families) had taught 'me' that different to Samoans, Tongans did not (nor do they in the present day) worship, covet or brag about one's family status inherited through title. The difference was that Tongans were seen to understand the 'real' power therein lies in political power. This is located in an individual's ability to demonstrate and thus 'create' their social value within their family, community, village, society and nation through cleverness, skill, talent, practical, functional and/or specialised knowledge useful to achieving a collective and highly valued outcome. It was, by some measure, considered arrogantly foolish and expressly dim-witted for an individual to rely on some *imaginary* social value in 'power from above' being bestowed on 'me' in my family in the form of a meaningless, frivolous and show-pony (but no 'real' power) title.

In context, this is a remnant of Tu'i Tonga discourse which differentiates its difference from the Samoan epoch in Tongan history. Such historical disjuncture represented in the Tu'i Tonga's 'difference' (from the Ha'a Kanokupolu) is considered an 'authentic' Tongan discourse. The Tu'i Tonga as discourse of social memory and history constructs an origin myth/moment which distinguishes Tongan systemic power and structure as centralised and located in collectives and their function (i.e. Ha'a as the organisational basis for group function rather than Nobles as titleholders and their Estates as social-economic capital). The notion of Ha'a in the Tu'i Tonga epoch lies in direct contrast to Tongan discourse of a competitive and fragmented system of power associated with holders of Samoan-derived titles and their individualistic political power (Mahina 2006, 1992).

Tongan family of mine have also made scathing comment on Samoans in the contemporary era buying (by means of cash purchasing power) titles "just because they want one." Titles given for acquiring a university degree in New Zealand, especially when the titleholder can not speak Samoan (or does not speak formal Samoan), does not live in Samoa and does not have a close relationship with family and village-kin (or at its most unimaginable, does not visit or remit to their family and village), are considered spurious, inauthentic, and tackily imitative symbols and acts which seek to emulate 'real' power.

To quote my Father from my 2005 fieldnotes (Tonga): "If you show off about who you are and who your family are the Tongans will rubbish you. They say, "Who the hell do they think they are? What an idiot!" They will really run you down boy. You have to prove yourself by the work you do and keep quiet about it. Don't talk about yourself. How useful you are [and] if the family think highly of you is very important in Tonga. It's not the *lau* you go around saying about yourself and your family or some title or letters in front of your family name. That's just rubbish talk. It means nothing and if you do that, you'll be nothing too."

Dad's commentary is context dependent. By this, I mean that his discussion is located within a Tu'i Tonga discourse of Tongan historical relationships with Samoa. Kolonga 'i Hahake, particularly the Catholic area of Kolonga named Kotongo where Dad's matrilineal ties are associated, were and still are by some measure Tu'i Tonga loyalists. My Father's analysis of Kolonga as a "rebel village" (see endnote 24, paragraph 14) is specifically contextualised within Kotongo-Catholic discourse. The idea of being the "rebel village" is taken to mean that Kolonga were not Ha'a Kanokupolu allies; but rather, supporters of the Tu'i Tonga.

According to Queen Salote, titles were originally comparatively unimportant in the Tongan political system; they became prominent at the time of the foundation of the Tu'i Kanokupolu line and she attributed this development to the influence of Tohu'ia, the Samoan mother of Ngata, and her powerful Samoan followers, for titles are reputed to have been a prominent aspect of Samoan organisation. (Bott 1982, p. 68).

<sup>16</sup> L. D. Holmes. 1988. *Quest for the Real Samoa: The Mead / Freeman Controversy and Beyond*, postscript by E. Leacock. United States: Bergin & Garvey.

This section's title is taken from Holmes' (1988) text, *Quest for the Real Samoa*. It is a tongue and cheek reference to actors who enter and engage in the contested ground of identity politics played out between competing discourses on culture and power.

<sup>17</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Samoa.

18

Duranti, A. 1981. Speechmaking and the Organisation of Discourse in a Samoan Fono. *The Journal of Polynesian Society* 90 (3): 357-400.

The important role played in Samoan society by speechmaking is documented both in early accounts of Samoan way of life (e.g. Brown 1908, 1910; Churchward 1887; Kraemer 1902-3; Turner 1884) and in more recent studies of political struggle and public confrontation (e.g. Freeman 1978; Keesing and Keesing 1956; Shore 1977; Tiffany 1975). Oratory is probably the most sophisticated art form in Samoa and certainly one of the most well-preserved aspects of ancient Polynesia. A food *failauga* "speechmaker" is a highly respected individual in Samoan society. People look up to him for his mastery of verbal and non-verbal tradition. Furthermore, a good speechmaker is often indispensable to his kin and allies in all sorts of economic transactions and social crises. (Shore 1981, p. 357).

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Samoa.

I noted during Saturday dinner conversation with my Samoan friends that the social value of a *soga'imiti* was measured by their oratorical finesse and skill in formal and informal exchanges among Samoans. Oratorical skill construed the manner in which a *soga'imiti* (or in some instances, a Samoan male who assumed a position of representative power within the workplace or a public institution) could persuade dialogue participants of the social value of his political agenda. In this case, social value was threaded into engineering and sustaining transnational "collaborative partnerships" between tertiary institutions.

On Wednesday evening my two Samoan colleagues and I were asked to dinner at an Apia restaurant. Some employees of the Samoan tertiary institution that provided the conference venue had invited us. Cultural politics between 'local' Samoans and the two New Zealand Samoans were evident. I attended this dinner with two 'local' Samoan friends living and working in Apia (I sought permission from the institutional hosts for their attendance). In many ways, I wanted to ensure my own 'cultural safety' (even if this position were 'illusionary') through the security of familiar and cordial company of 'local' friends. One friend was a Samoan (male) friend employed at the Samoan tertiary institution which hosted the dinner and the other Samoan (female) friend was employed by the Government of Samoa.

At the end of the dinner, one Samoan (female) from the host institution made a formal Samoan speech addressing all attendants including my friends. The Samoan (male) colleague from New Zealand returned the formal gesture by making a speech on behalf of his Samoan (female) colleague and myself. My two friends made comment in Samoan to two Samoans from the host institution which created some laughter, smiling and dialogue. One Samoan (male) from the host institution translated part of the dialogical exchange into English for my understanding: "You should ask your institution to pay the [Samoan (male) colleague's] fees so he can enrol in the Samoan formal language course for Matai that we are teaching in Auckland."

The scenario which emerged was that language and culture 'difference' was constructed in respect to the 'locals' making judgement on the competency and authenticity of those dislocated overseas compared to 'Us.' For me, such social engagement performed a familiar play on meaning that I had experienced through Tongan cultural politics. From conversations with family in Tonga, I could relate to the discourse of power and culture that operated as I had encountered a similar logic which shaped the social exchange at dinner between 'local' Samoans on the politics of cultural authenticity via the edited English translation passed on to me. The underlying argument that propelled this discourse of culture and power was therefore comprehensible. Dislocated indigenes living 'overseas' by some measure of self-admission and humility must confront, become critically aware of and negotiate their own fracture and fragmentation from the origin homeland before gaining social acceptance from 'locals' when visiting the homeland. And always remember rule number one. By this, to 'locals' you exist in transience on a visitor's pass. The underlying moral of the story is never get uppity and overestimate your own social value because you simply do not live 'here' with 'Us' - *mahino e?! Io, mo'oni!*

19

Maltz, D. and Borker, R. 2002. A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication. In *Applying Cultural Anthropology: An Introductory Reader*, edited by A. Podolefsky and P. J. Brown. United States: The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc, sixth edition.

... differences in cues resulted in systematic miscommunication over whether a question was being asked, whether an argument was being made, whether a person was being rude or polite, whether a speaker was relinquishing the floor or interrupting, whether and what a speaker was emphasizing, whether interactants were angry, concerned or indifferent. Rather than being seen as problems in communication, the frustrating encounters that resulted were usually chalked up as personality clashes or interpreted in the light of racial stereotypes which tended to exacerbate already bad relations. ... A major advantage of Gumper's framework is that it does not assume that problems are the result of bad faith, but rather sees them as the result of individuals wrongly interpreting cues according to their own rules. (Maltz and Borker 2002, p. 54).

Maltz and Borker's (2002) essay on 'male-female miscommunication' engineers *some* traction with the fieldwork interpretation in my thesis section, 'Quest for the Real Samoa.' Embedded in the inter-ethnic and cross-cultural [mis]communication that transpired (in particular reference to the dialogical exchange between the Samoan male and I) grew a context dependent discourse of gender and power. By this, I became critically aware during the course of our interactions of a significant social fact. I occupied cultured and gendered space as a 'Tongan woman' which created scope for cross-gender tension to become entangled within cross-cultural discourse on 'how' to collapse ideologies of social exclusion without inflicting irreparable damage on the 'Self' and 'Personhood' that such boundaries harness and practice in their gate-keeping power.

20

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Samoa.

21

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Samoa.

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Samoa.

During Tuesday's lunch hour at the conference in Samoa, a Samoan (female) migrant living in Auckland approached me to conduct research on Samoan families (particularly Samoan Mums and their children) who use the social and educational services of Samoan-oriented NGOs which she affiliates to through her work. I was honoured (and quite taken back) that she would specifically identify 'me' as a researcher who could engineer mutually beneficial relations and produce community-based research with an Auckland Samoan group.

I asked her if I could take this request to my two Samoan colleagues, feeling *some* trepidation that I would be disciplined and punished for over-stepping my restricted entry into Samoa, *fa'asamoa* and Samoan communities in Auckland. She agreed to my request. My Samoan colleagues appeared interested in such research collaboration.

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

Although I hoped my Samoan colleagues would 'include' me in a research collaboration to conduct fieldwork, transcribe conversations and provide an analysis for feedback to the researched community, I was not going to hold my breath in my own social imaginary. I was quite prepared to pass on the contact details and move out of their *fa'asamoa* hemisphere. I did not want to endure through any more 'identity trouble.' Early Saturday morning while disembarking at Auckland International Airport from a Samoa flight, more tension emerged - this time an 'in-house' but seething down-played spat between my two Samoan colleagues. The Samoan female disclosed to me that the Samoan male intended to gather Samoan researchers from Auckland University to collaborate in a research venture based on the Auckland Samoan community contact I had made at the conference. She was clearly displeased and stated that, "We" (including 'me' this time) "would need to meet, de-brief and sort it out" (her words). This was my 'cue' to make myself useful and 'sort out' the internal fall-out before it festered into full-scale conflict.

I approached the Samoan male while transiting through New Zealand immigration. Clearly, he did not want to engage with me sensing that I had prickly information to 'sort out' with him. I told him that the Samoan female was displeased with his discussion and wanted to debrief to 'sort out' his suggestion of research collaboration with Auckland University. To avoid getting snared in between Samoan crossfire, I informed him I would provide the contact details of the Auckland Samoan woman who had approached me to conduct research plus my contextualised fieldnotes of the type of research she had in mind. The Samoan male agreed, with some ambivalence, to engage in a post-conference debrief. At the baggage claim area I approached my two Samoan colleagues who were chatting to explain to the female the male had agreed to a post-conference de-brief and that I would provide contact details of the Auckland Samoan woman requesting research plus fieldnotes and contact details of Auckland Samoan-based NGOs and Samoa-based government and NGOs I had made. The Samoan male burst in, stood in front of me obstructing my view of the Samoan female, and gestured loudly with his body using an assertive tone of voice, "Give them to me, give them to me, so I can write a report for [my boss]." I caught a momentary glimpse of the female's face. She was frowning at him.

I entered the departure lounge after my two Samoan colleagues due to the frozen fish I had carried from Samoa which was checked by customs. I was relieved to see they had left the arrival lounge before me with their families so I would not have to continue forged communication in a difficult context of shifting, unclear alliances and the ensuing tensions. Brandon was there to meet me and land in Auckland on a 7 am flight from Samoa. Our three children were with my Mum and Dad. I could relax, laugh and enjoy my drive home chatting with Brandon. He was interested in learning news of how my Samoan friends and their families living in Apia were doing in their lives. He laughed when I told him that one of my friends was pleased to learn he had gained weight and was looking chubby-ish because she's sick of meeting up with friends who haven't gained weight over the past twenty years (this particular female friend is largish in body size). Brandon looked forward to getting home so he could fry some fish for breakfast, "All the way from Samoa" said Brandon, "All the way from Samoa. One day I'll get there."

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

About two months after the Samoa conference I had a chance Saturday afternoon meeting with the migrant Samoan woman living in Auckland who had requested that I conduct research with a Samoan community group. I met her outside Village 6 movie theatre in Manukau City. She introduced herself to my three kids who were milling around, nose to find out who their Mother was chatting and laughing with.

She asked me again if I would conduct research for the Samoan community group whom she affiliated to. I inquired whether my Samoan female colleague had contacted her. She said no and that she had not heard from my Samoan male colleague either. With sincere warmth she told me that she would like for me to conduct the research with her Samoan community group because, "You know how to talk to the people. You value the culture and you're clever. Samoans like that."

Driving home to Te Kauwhata from the Manukau City movie theatre Brandon and our three kids plagued me with questions and comments on the "lady from Samoa who you were talking to" (Rewi's description). "Is she your friend Mum," asked Ani-Katerina. "Does she have any kids I can play with?" added Rewi. "That's good you have Samoan mates here Mum cos' all your mates live in Samoa eh," said Toa. "She's a bit like your Tongan mates," Toa continued, "You know, she laughs, tells good stories." "How do you know my Samoan friend tells good stories? I asked. "We could hear you Mum. The carpark could hear you. The security guard was eye balling you. You talk so loud, you know. Got the FOB styles when you out clowning with your mates. Beware Mum. The noise police will arrest you and your Islander mates in Auckland. They'll lock you up for wearing an orange lavalava to the movies," Ani jested.

"Ani - *tuku launoa!* Brandon, my Samoan friend wants me to do some research for her community group," I said. "Saa group?" asked Brandon. "Yeah. I'd like to give it a go," I replied. "She was so warm. Told me that the people would like me cos' I'm clever and value the culture. And, I know how to talk! What do you think Brandon?"

"Go for it Teena. Don't let one confusing Samoan experience stop you from learning. They your people too."

"Yeah they are, eh. I can feel it some times, with *some* people. I *can* feel close to them."

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

In March, a friend of mine, a Samoan (male) PhD in sociology, returned my answer phone message saying I had received word that he wanted to get hold of me. He called from Auckland to my at home in Te Kauwhata, catching me one Wednesday evening. He said "Your sister called me," referring to the Samoan woman who wanted me to conduct research with her community group in Auckland. The Samoan woman had consulted her group of friends whom she worked alongside in Samoan-based NGOs and they had decided to "get serious" about a research project they had in mind. She had not heard from me and asked my Samoan (male) friend to contact me. It was hoped that I could meet with her and her friends to organise their thoughts on paper before requesting my Samoan (male) friend's assistance in setting a formal research plan.

I was thrilled to have an opportunity to engage with an Auckland Samoan group on a research project they wished to conduct for their community's benefit. After the telephone conversation with my Samoan (male) friend concluded, I fleetingly thought to myself, "This is it. I'm really going to enjoy myself in Samoa this time!"

<sup>23</sup> This story is a re-construction of social memory that *desires* to disentangle *how* and *why* tensions transpire between Samoan and Tongan stakeholders situated in the New Zealand classification of Pacific Peoples. Of course I understand that this account treads the contested ground of identity politics in the contemporary Pacific. However, I have elected to tell this tale *not* to aggravate existing and persisting tensions *but* to offer an explanation of their origin and *how* 'difference' is played out between competing discourses of *imagining* ourselves, our history and our place in the Pacific Peoples mass.

<sup>24</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Samoa.

<sup>25</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Hamilton.

After an August 2006 thesis meeting with my chief supervisor, I deliberated at length as to whether I would include the section titled, 'Quest for the Real Samoa:' the social-political consequences of tale telling some of the experiential tensions between Samoan and Tongan stakeholders in the Pacific Peoples mass could mean that; (a) I would be re-interpreted as a Tongan loyalist, or, (b) I would stir up, rather than navigate my way through, identity trouble.

I have elected to insert the section in this chapter for two context-dependent reasons that relate to contemporary anthropological theory. First, negotiating identity trouble between ethnic and cultural groups conflated into mass 'minority' categories is a discourse that I believe needs closer examination in respect to the Pacific Peoples discourse in contemporary *Aotearoa* New Zealand. Second, *possibilities* for re-arranging ethnic and cultural categories in public life is a debate that could learn from qualitative research into *why* these identity structures are produced and *how* they affect the groups for whom they are designed.

<sup>26</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2002. Turangawaewae / Tu'ungava'e: Echoes of a place to stand and belong. *Journal of Maori and Pacific Development* 2 (3): 14-30.

Polynesian mind is short-term surviving this week to next on the benefit. I blame the churches. Look at our Tongan people in South Auckland. Beneficiaries build the churches, look after the ministers, send money to Tonga. Where the money goes, only God knows. It don't go back to the people. It goes to the rich, the corrupt. The best thing Tongans can do is get behind tangata whenua. But tangata whenua don't want to waste time with islanders who can't see past their noses, can't think past tomorrow, the next puaka they give for the church. Tongans are getting sicker and sicker. If we don't get behind tangata whenua and work in with Maori, then forget it. We'll be another ethnic minority, same as Asians and Indians. That's sick. Oceania belongs to us, we are tangata moana. (Brown Pulu 2002, p. 24).

This fieldwork excerpt was published in an article (Brown Pulu 2002) that I authored. Of interest to my published analysis was the speaker's will to truth in realigning a Tongan-oriented discourse on marginality in Aotearoa with the subject positioning of Māori (e.g. Tangata Whenua). Here, an intersection was drawn between Tangata Whenua (e.g. Māori ki Aotearoa) and Tangata Moana (e.g. Tongans in New Zealand) creating an ideological synergy through their subsequent displacement from, and indigeneity to, origin homelands located throughout the Pacific Ocean. Understandably the new minority outed from the Tangata Moana discourse of Oceania indigeneity became recent migrants, "Asians and Indians" (Brown Pulu 2002, p. 24).

Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

Brandon and I chatted over the fieldwork excerpt (noted above) that I included in a 2002 publication. I found Brandon's analysis remarkably insightful in terms of gaining a Maori-oriented interpretation of its context dependent meaning on culture and power. The speaker was a Tongan friend of mine known to Brandon and my parents, our children. Brandon described him as a "de-colonised Tongan." My friend was employed at what has been publicly constructed as a 'Māori' tertiary provider; although such 'Māori' labelling has been contested in public media by the institution concerned which seeks recognition as a nationally acclaimed tertiary institute that provides a quality education service to students regardless of their ethnic and cultural affiliations.

Brandon said that the speaker had been "Waa-ified" similar to his South African colleague who had taught at this tertiary institute's Gisborne campus. This socially constructed term intrigued me. It was intended as a complement. By this, Brandon was suggesting the ideological and pedagogical influence of employment at this particular tertiary institute had politicised and awoken the speaker to the politics of indigeneity in Aotearoa and its

theoretical application to Pacific Islands' contexts of self-determination and self-determined development in a global era.

An explanation of 'Waa-ified.' The term 'Waa' was an abbreviation of 'Wananga.' Brandon meant it as a reference to the tertiary institute and a Māori pedagogical practice of 'wananga reo;' his meaning was to disseminate the 'word' by speaking and sharing in collaborative, interactive learning contexts. To be 'Waa-ified' meant that one willingly interacted with, and was a participant in, a discourse of cultural knowledge that re-centred indigenous knowledge practices within learning, teaching and communication contexts of social life.

<sup>27</sup> “Located in-between transcript and translation” has been used here to mean that selecting participants’ discussion for my thesis has involved a three-way process of first, re-reading interview transcripts, second, remembering fieldwork conversations as they happened according to my experiential understanding, and third, re-interpreting what the speaker/s intended at the time they spoke with ‘me.’

<sup>28</sup> I see sense in Arvay’s (2003, p. 173) analysis that recording fieldwork conversations as they happened *does not* necessarily *capture* on page the ‘emotion’ and ‘atmosphere’ created in the moment of the conversations’ occurrence. However, the writing techniques I have used to remember and re-enact social memory and history as it is discussed by participants in the field *does*, I believe, provide the reader with a glimpse of the social-emotional exchanges that transpired *particularly* between my family and ‘me.’

<sup>29</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>30</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>31</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>32</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Hamilton.

<sup>33</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Hamilton.

<sup>34</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Hamilton.

<sup>35</sup> Macpherson, C. 2004. From Pacific Islanders to Pacific Peoples and Beyond. In *Tangata Tangata: The Changing Ethnic Contours of New Zealand*, edited by P. Spoonley, C. Macpherson and D. Pearson. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Systemic studies, in which social-economic factors are controlled, have shown that some observed difference, which was supposed to be ethnic, is in fact the consequence of class. When the experiences of different ethnic groups with similar class locations were compared, the consequences of ethnicity were shown to be much smaller than was generally supposed. This strategy is not widely accepted in New Zealand because many people are used to explaining social differentiation in ethnic terms. Discussions of the nature and consequence of ‘class’ differences tend to be sidelined in popular discourse. Policy agencies routinely acknowledge the effects of class and address them by delivering compensatory services to targeted lower income groups. If social and economic differences between populations remain after social policies and programs have targeted these, they are considered to be residual effects and contributed to ethnicity. (Macpherson 2004, p. 145).

McIntosh, T. 2005. Maori Identities: Fixed, Fluid, Forced. In *New Zealand Identities: Departures and Destinations*, edited by J. Liu, T. McCreanor, T. McIntosh and T. Teaiwa. Wellington: Victoria University Press.

Marginalisation can be seen as a potent force in identity making. Marginalisation, a socio-political process, is the peripheralisation of individuals and groups from a dominant, central majority (Hall et al, 1994). ... Marginalisation is both a process and an experience. It is inclusive of oppression but also a consequence of it (Hall, 1999, p. 90). (McIntosh 2005, p. 40).

Macpherson (2004, p. 145) raises a critical disjuncture in New Zealand oriented research that explores social-economic disparity among ethnic groups. Social-economic gaps are quantified and qualified through a host of ethnic discourse, various theoretical lenses which assert through multiple interpretative methods ‘ethnicity’ provides a determining factor that influences social-economic inequality. At the same time, such ethnic discourse exhibits reluctance to situate the relationship between ethnicity and class.

McIntosh’s (2005, p. 40) paper illustrates the type of ethno-specific discourse (e.g. contemporary Māori identity) that intimates around ethnicity as an identity descriptor of marginality. Synonymously, this theoretical strategy defers from unravelling an explicit relationship between ethnicity and class. Such an ideological conversation leans more toward two particular strategies of politicking ethno-specific identity: (1) The conflation of ethnicity and class in New Zealand social-economic politics of identity difference; (2) The elision of class in pursuit of ethnicity in New Zealand social-economic politics of identity difference.

<sup>36</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>37</sup> Amo Amo, B. E. C. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 2, 25 February, Te Kauwhata.

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Brandon and I engaged in weekend conversation reflecting on our working lives and children, family events arising during the year of which we would need to budget for to financially contribute and memories of past events, funerals, family politics at funerals in particular. Brandon's pithy and pensive analogy on the meaning of memory emerged from our Saturday conversation on a clear but cool February afternoon that signalled an incoming change in weather to the pre-winter season.

# PART TWO

# Dialogue

## *Setting One*

# CHAPTER FOUR

## CULTURE AND POWER

My point is that, to understand how relationships work and are done, what they mean, how and why they endure or do not, how they are remembered, emulated or acted against and in general what matters in and about them, we need a methodology and methods that open our perspective to the multi-dimensionality of lived experience. To do that, I want to argue that we need to think creatively and multi-dimensionally about methods, and about our research questions themselves (Mason 2006, pp. 11-12).



*My matrilineal niece performing the ta'olunga at her eldest brother's twenty first birthday*

*Luseane  
Otahuhu, Auckland  
January 2006*

## Poetics of Culture

### Verse 1

Some of my [Tongan] cousins think I'm kind of *Palangi*  
 But hell no!  
 Nah, I don't see myself as you know *fie' palangi* [wanna' be White]  
 I don't think of myself as a *FOB*

I'm just me

And if they think that I'm *plastic* [inauthentic] because I can speak proper  
 English and read  
 And just because I don't speak fluent Tongan  
 Then that's their problem

Like when people ask me my nationality I'll always say Māori and Tongan  
 They think that I'm like you know from Tonga or whatever  
 And I'll say, "No I was born here"

And they'd always ask me, "Oh so you're *Kiwi?*" [New Zealander]  
 And I'd be like, "No I'm not *Kiwi*  
 I'm Māori and Tongan!"  
 You know cos' I don't identify as *Kiwi*  
 Yeah

## Verse 2

What's it like in Tonga?

Swimming, yeah!

Church

It's boring there

You'll get so hot and you'll never have to leave the church

Some people would, like Granddad

I kind of like the *manioke* [cassava]

They got those bananas too but brown!?

I don't really go with the others to get yams but sometimes I do

But sometimes you have to watch out for the ant hills

There are some around there

We went to the same place we were before on the mango tree

And there were some red ants pinching us

They're just tiny but itchy

It's like mosquito bites

Sometimes I miss Tonga when I come back here

But I don't want to live there

I had to run for the girls' team [at *Takuilau* College athletics day 2005]

Once I ran and beat a twelve year old boy

Grandma Siu [my Granddad's mum] is kind of a bit older than *Koro* [Grandpa]

Rewi [my Dad's granduncle]

She's really old

She wears the same glasses

And they've got New Zealand food there now like chips, potato chips

The village [Kolonga] is kind of nice

Oh yeah, Grandma Siu's brother took us

Uncle Latae

Yeah

Back to Auntie Nina's [at] Havelu [Havelu'loto]

Close to town

## **Interpretive Interlude One**

Wrapped in thought my daughter Ani-Kāterina analysed the intricacies of cultural politics in contemporary New Zealand and her in-between position of self-identifying as Māori and Tongan. Her brother Rewi hovered by us in the living room anxious to interpose, Ani talking, me responding while gleaning Rewi's interest. Their older sister Toa, my only child named by Dad after his Father's sister, stopped by on her way to the kitchen to tune into Ani-Kāterina's discussion. Perched behind her sister she noticed her young brother giving him a smile of approval to speak. Rewi's tone was crisp and clear, "Tonga? Are you talking about Tonga?" "Ani, do you have any questions you'd like to ask Rewi?" I diverted to Rewi's enquiry feeling relieved he had created an entry after seeing him circle the conversation's border. "What's it like in Tonga?" asked Ani. "What's it like in Tonga," began Rewi, pausing to unfurl the transnational scenery of an eight year old boy.

### **Positions of Culture**

Oceanic cultural identities are becoming (or have become) institutionalised along the lines of the Western model of ethnic groups, largely for political reasons. ... In the Pacific today we see indigenous cultural identities apparently transformed into ethnic identities. The principles of alignment espoused by politically emergent groups seem to share with the Western concept of ethnicity the premise that a culture is coterminous with a bounded social unit (cf. Howard and Howard 1977, 191). Increasingly prevalent is the notion that cultural affiliations are rooted in descent. Nationalist ideologies, in other words, have much in common with 'primordialist' ethnic categories in anthropology. For anthropologists and indigenous nationalists alike, the most problematic issue is whether the adoption of ethnic strategies is merely an instrumentality employed at a political level, or a sign of thorough-going change in Oceanic conceptual models (Linnekin 1990, p. 149).

Part of the importance of the "fragmentary" point of view lays in this, that it resists the drive for a shallow homogenisation and struggles for other, potentially richer definitions of the "nation" and the future political community (Pandey 1978, cited in Chatterjee 1993).

If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined community from certain "modular" forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anticolonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized (Chatterjee 1993, p. 5).

## **Repositioning Culture**

Linnekin (1990, p. 149) and Chatterjee's (1993, p. 5) versions on how we imagine ourselves and social relationships into existence gave voice to problematic questions of the time in which their publications were released in academic media. I have chosen to initiate theoretical conversation from cross-reading an anthropologist of the Pacific and a historian of India because their work combined resonates through my own university education. Their intersecting ideas speak to the layers, colours and fields of thought I have been exposed to in formal lecture room learning as a once-was-New Zealand-historian swimming (at times drowning) in an ocean of Tongan transnational ethnography. The in-between positioning of the Pandey (1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993) extract is possibly more reflective of where and how I am intellectually and culturally positioned as 'subject' and 'author' of my thesis.

In between the haziness of text and context, the blur of memory and experience, it is Pandey's (1978) "fragmentary point of view" that I collide and wrestle with and for the most part, situate myself in. My view is especially repositioned in a 'fragmentary' kaleidoscope when cross-fertilising Linnekin (1990) and Chatterjee's (1993) theories. Linnekin (1990) argued that politicised Pacific identities have acculturated 'modular [Western] form' (Chatterjee 1993, p. 5) while Chatterjee's (1993) analysis was resolved to transcend the deliverance of 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983) invented for 'Us' (Said 1978) by another's will to truth and power to do so (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a, 1991b).

One may discern that even before I begin to explain my own theoretical trail I have uncovered the disjuncture which my analysis attempts to trace by exploring *how* and *why* social memory and history reconstructed among Tongan generations negotiates fracture and fragmentation. It is not simply the myths and moments of family origin reproduced among Tongan generations in New Zealand that sketch a contour of 'me' in my family. But more, the 'how' as in *how* we perform these ideological conversations in social memory and history which corroborate my becoming the 'me' that I am in my family. I mean, how and through what structural mechanisms and social referents do Tongan generations reinvent 'me' in the process of imagining community, humanity and identity in familial relationships? (Foucault 1991a). Moreover, why does the meaning of 'Us' in the presence of remembering the past (Said 1978; Archibald 2002) become the crucial site of departure, transition and arrival in our social lives when experiencing and making sense of change?

If I had linear sense then I would argue that we make up stories of ourselves in the present to assuage our fragmentation from any 'authentic' past ... end of transmission. My life, however, has not unscrambled straight lines of sense; nor am I

convinced the storyline of family memories and their relationship to history which I have navigated (and near drowned in) during five years fieldwork is that simple, convenient or consistently packaged in strict ‘modular form’ (Chatterjee 1993, p. 5). At this moment in my story’s telling and history’s making, the unfixed, ambiguous and indefinite position of culture is perhaps its salient and unswerving feature. In saying this, it is important to restate my interest in culture not as “symbolically constituted” (Linnekin 1990, p. 152) meanings harvested in knowledge reproduced for mass consumption by Pacific ethnicities (such as the *fa’asamoa* discourse I experienced and edited in chapter three’s memory). Rather, it is culture as a *modus operandi* for exercising, circumscribing and making sense of political relations within and without a family of stories, which creates an entry for my own personal-public trajectory of power and knowledge (Foucault 1980, 1991a; Appadurai and Breckenridge 1988).

Linnekin's (1990) entry in the ‘culture’ wars of rivalled discourse on Pacific history squatted on the border of twenty first century theory (Tupouniua, Crocombe and Slatter 1980; Awatere 1984; Trask 1991). Reworking Richard Handler’s (1984, 1985) notion of ‘cultural objectification’ she revisited modes and methods in which the politics of culture in the contemporary Pacific engineered “a process whereby culture becomes a thing outside the individual to be contemplated, discussed and reflexively modified” (Keesing 1982, p. 300 cited in Linnekin 1990, p. 130). In Keesing’s (1982, p. 300) words, it was “the externalization of culture as symbol” in the Pacific which preoccupied Linnekin’s (1990) analysis on the repositioning of culture in a 1990s political climate.

A performative (Butler 1998) feature of Linnekin's (1990) research strategy on culture and power in the Pacific was to explore the limits of reinventing tradition and history by indigenous identity discourse. Here, the theoretical crux expounded that culture change among indigenous Pacific identities may be traced by rationalising “tradition [as] the contemporary interpretation of the past, rather than something passively received” (1990, p. 152). Linnekin’s (1990, pp. 151-152) theory walks among a two-pronged relationship of culture and power. Firstly, ‘culture’ may exude custom made authenticity as a reaction to divergent practices labelled as spurious imitations of tradition. Secondly, ‘culture’ signifies the identity construct that organises political relationships in the contemporary Pacific. Borrowing Keesing’s (1982, p. 298) idea that “self-reflexiveness is a process of culture change,” Linnekin (1990, p. 152) asserts that in the Pacific today, political relationships induce self-examination of “one’s own culture.” In Linnekin’s (1990, pp. 181-182) subtext, it is ‘the political’ that defines the social and thus stimulates culture change among *how* indigenous Pacific groups

imagine and conduct 'Themselves' in response to their international, national and local relationships.

When cultural identity is a means of structuring political relations, as it is today in the Pacific, the pressure to reflect upon and redefine one's life ways is intensified. The modern international context dictates a reexamination of one's own culture in contradistinction to others as Pacific Islanders sort out their cultural, national, regional Third and Fourth World interests. Inevitably, this ongoing "self-reflexiveness" (Keesing 1982a, 298) is a process of culture change (Linnekin 1990, pp. 151-152).

Linnekin's (1990, pp. 151-152) adaptation of Keesing's (1982a, p. 298) idea of "self-reflexiveness" is a significant point of examination. Reflexivity reproduces the critical mechanism which activates culture change through reassessment of a group's social practices in respect to a host of local and transnational relationships (Arvey 2003; Doane 2003). Culture is thus modified according to the context of power relations that define and confine its purpose and meaning as an instrument of the past reworked for use in the political present (Austin-Broos 1987; Archer 1990; Dore 1990; Giddens 1990; Hall 1991b, 1995). As Linnekin (1990, p. 158) astutely observed in the contemporary identities of Maori and Hawaiian sovereignties:

But it is also quite clear that because of their political history and the nature of the political present, Hawaiians and Maori must formulate and use their cultural identity in the context of a struggle for power. [What then are] some of the implications of politicization for Oceanic cultural models - that is, for the ways in which Pacific Islanders conceptualize their own cultures. I return here to the theme of objectification: what happens to a people's model of themselves as they solidify and mobilize group identity?

This thesis shifts Linnekin's (1990) borrowed theory of culture and power in the contemporary Pacific (Keesing 1982) into an ethnographic terrain of social memory and history among Tongan generations living in Auckland. Firstly, it is argued that in contemporary New Zealand's climate of reconfiguring national identity for a 'best fit' in the twenty first century context, the relationship between culture and power has amplified. Augmentation of, and sensitivity to, cultural politics has increased the proliferation of politicised identities among minority groups in their "struggle for power" (Linnekin 1990, p. 158) amidst the nation's changing ethnoscape (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33-34).

Secondly, it is proposed that the name 'Pacific Peoples in New Zealand' is a political device of ethnic massification and a public identity marker which collapses in the face of complex social realities. Pacific Peoples in New Zealand are not defined by Third World or Fourth World status as Linnekin's (1990, p. 152) theory of culture

and power in the contemporary Pacific suggests. Their subject positioning within the nation's social memory and history is redefined by a series of border crossings: one, through transnational allegiances and lifestyles (Kearney 1995; Spoonley 2001) and two, by the ambivalence of place and belonging in New Zealand as third space peoples who are the third largest ethnic mass *after Pakeha* [White] and Māori and the awkward third party to a bicultural marriage *between Pakeha* and Māori (Bhabha 1994, McIntosh 2001, Brown Pulu 2002, Teaiwa and Mallon 2005).

In addition to these identity anxieties, there is uneasiness over a social reality that is fast approaching. Demographic shifts to New Zealand's population makeup indicate that the *new* third space peoples who will occupy third place as the third largest ethnic mass *after Pakeha* and Māori is Asian by classification. Hence, ethnic tensions between the mass categories 'Pacific' and 'Asian' *become* ignited *over* rights of access to third space positioning in New Zealand's changing ethnoscape and the production of a national identity that is framed by transnational history (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, pp. 33-34; Craw 1990).

Thirdly, it is suggested that the mass categorisation 'Pacific Peoples in New Zealand' is a contested identity site which is challenged, side-stepped or debunked in stories told by Tongan generations in New Zealand that recollect social memory and reinvent history (Lambek 1996; Ladson-Billings 2000; Mackenzie 2001). A family of stories emphasise the distinctiveness of Tongan culture and its relationship to power (Lavie and Swedenburg 1996). In contemporary New Zealand, the social imaginary of Tongan 'independence' from a Pacific mass associated with a Samoan centre is a political testimony (Morton 2001). It performs a series of speech acts engaged in the ideological reproduction of a context-dependent will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a). It desires to reconnect social memory of Tonga to the present history of who 'We' are and what 'Our' identity relationships mean among generations.

This is not to say that Tongan generations living in New Zealand are not part of, or affected by, the identity construct of Pacific Peoples and its Samoan-centred conceptualisation and practice. But rather, it implies that Tongan tales assert an identity distinctiveness which makes claim to its own self-determining authority within the Pacific Peoples mass. Reflecting and refracting the popular historical account of 'colonial independence' in modern Tonga, Tongan identity stories among generations in New Zealand stress the inter-cultural tensions and conflicts of staking out political sovereignty from the dominant Pacific Peoples rule of a Samoan-centre.

To return to Partha Chatterjee's (1993, p. 5) citation that appeared in this chapter's section named 'Positions of Culture,' her telling statement revealed that "Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized." Chatterjee's protest was

against colonising the sociological imagination (Mills 1970). She objected to prohibitions imposed on minority groups that prevented them from seeing an alternative vision for inventing ourselves in our communities and nations by preordained modes and mechanisms of ideological meaning and its subsequent practice gifted to ‘Us’ by ‘Them’ (Said 1978). By this, her interpretation of ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson 1983) was that it represented a systemic process by which minorities were, and still are, instructed to think of the contemporary ‘Self’ in relation to ‘Others’ through mirror images of the dominant culture and its social norms and political institutions.

Fourthly, this study contends that Pacific Peoples in New Zealand is a “modular form” (Chatterjee 1993, p. 5) of minority community imagined into existence by conceptualising and practicing the plural state (Gailey 1983). ‘The nation and its fragments’ (Chatterjee 1990), however, is reworked in stories among Tongan generations to echo discontent and discontinuity with the “modular form” (Chatterjee 1993, p. 5) that stratifies those [dis]located in the Pacific Peoples confine. Identity stories, therefore, travel in pursuit of discrete spaces for culture and power to exist and persist in contemporary New Zealand (Bhabha 1994).

### **Family Borders**

This study sought to shed light on the experiences of Tongan immigrants in New Zealand. Three major areas were explored: the migration decision-making process, socio-economic changes in the host country, and transnational networks with Tonga. With respect to migration decision-making, the nuclear family plays an important role as the final decision-making unit. Family-related reasons, jobs and study were the typical reasons for migration to New Zealand. Regarding socio-economic changes, the immigrants’ income tends to decrease as their duration of stay in New Zealand lengthens. Most of them work at blue-collar jobs. Many immigrants who were unmarried at the time of migration married after moving to New Zealand, mostly to other Tongans. The church serves as a critical support system for the immigrants. Tongans tend to prefer permanent residency visas over New Zealand citizenship. Remittances continue to play an important role in immigrants’ links to Tonga, as do communication with family members and visits to Tonga. Despite these continuing links with their home country, most of the immigrants do not wish to return to Tonga permanently (‘Esau 2005, p. 441).

The majority of ‘official’ family participants resided in Otahuhu, a suburb of Auckland City positioned on the northern border of what is now colloquially termed, ‘South Auckland.’ My matrilineal and patrilineal families have therefore favoured resettlement in Otahuhu on the Auckland City and Manukau City boundary of South Auckland for context-dependent reasons.

Most importantly, both families are predominantly Catholic. The period of post-1960s migration led to Otahuhu becoming an Auckland locale for the establishment and growth of a Tongan Catholic community (Smith 1980; Smith 1984; Sudo 1996; Fisi'lahi 2001). The local parish, St Joseph, and accompanying St Joseph Primary School as well as the Catholic girls' secondary school, McAuley College, have offered Catholic education options for a Tongan sub-population increasing due to "natural growth" from upward New Zealand birth rates (Esau 2005, p. 444). Next, Tongan Catholic families are predominantly affiliated to certain villages in Tonga. Otahuhu suburb therefore embodies Tongan Catholic families with kinship ties to, and many with *api* [homestead] and/or *uta* [bush/tax] allotments in, Lapaha, Kolonga, Ma'ufanga and Longoteme villages in *Tongatapu* [largest and most populated island in the Kingdom of Tonga]. These four villages fall within the *Tofi'a* [estate/s] of three major *Nopele* [Noble/s] who hold large estates and one minor *Nopele* designated a smaller estate territory (Stevens 1997).

Families with connections to villages and quarters of Nuku'alofa outside of Tonga's Catholic domains also reside in Otahuhu. Generally, the opinion of many first generation participants was that non-Catholic Tongan families were enthusiastic to resettle in Otahuhu because the Catholic girls' secondary school was considered a 'superior' education alternative for daughters and granddaughters in contrast to a mainstream co-educational provider (Forman 1978; Ellem 1983). Concomitant to this, a Catholic boys' secondary school, De La Salle College, located in Mangere suburb of Manukau City – the area situated on Otahuhu's southern border – offered the 'superior' education option for sons and grandsons. The demographic reality was that a larger Tongan sub-population of secondary students attended Otahuhu College, the mainstream co-educational provider. Although family participants openly reified the education 'superiority' of Catholic secondary providers illustrating their denominational and village biases, the majority of Tongan students living in Otahuhu and South Auckland suburbs where the Tongan sub-population is most numerous are enrolled in mainstream co-educational schools (Jones 1991; Manu'atu 2000; Statistics New Zealand 2001a).

Specific to my patrilineal family, the regular meeting place for the Kolonga village association and its affiliated *Kalapu Faikava* [kava club] – *'Utu-longo'a-a* [ancient name for Kolonga] is the private home of my Grandmother's younger sister in Otahuhu. By comparison, the home of one matrilineal first cousin who migrated from Tonga with his parents and siblings during young adulthood in the mid-1970s is the base for the *Kalapu Faikava – Fufua'anga* in Otahuhu. The original *Fufua'anga* club is located in Fasi Moe Afi where its patrons are largely

men living in and around **Kolo**, a colloquial reference to residents of ‘town’ or central Nuku’alofa. In Auckland City, two clubs named **Fufua’anga** in remembrance of its **Kalapu Faikava** origins in Tonga have emerged. One **Fufua’anga** club is located in Grey Lynn in a **Fale Kalapu** [club house] built on the property of the private home belonging to a founding member. The second hybrid construction of **Fufua’anga** is based in a **Fale Kalapu** at my first cousin’s residence in Otahuhu.

In terms of employment and income generating capacity, types of ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ work for both matrilineal and patrilineal families were wide ranging. The locales of Otahuhu and surrounding South Auckland suburbs provided workplaces conveniently situated close to dwellings. The service industry featured as a prevalent employment sector. Many first, second and third generation participants worked part-time or full-time in supermarkets, retail chains and service (petrol) stations as shop assistants or at Middlemore (public) Hospital as cleaners and kitchen assistants. Factory or chain production work in bakeries and refuge, recycling and waste management plants was another area of ‘official’ employment popular among generations one and two. Minimally, one participant from generation two was a registered health professional who earned an annual salary in the middle income bracket categorised by the New Zealand Census 2005 as over NZ \$50,000.

An informal system of economy offered income making options mainly for men from generation one. Organising and administering **Fale Kalapu** – ‘**Utu-longo’a-a** and **Fufua’anga** was a method for producing informal revenue. Proceeds from a NZ \$10 entry fee per male at each **Kava** session were collectively managed. For ‘**Utu-longo’a-a**, an allocated amount of collected fees was remitted to Kolonga village primarily for infrastructure development such as upgrading the water system and roads as well as paying for street light electricity (Morton 1978, 1987; Toren 1989; Marcus 1974, 1993; Faemani 1995; Vete 1995). In the case of **Fufua’anga**, however, collected entry fees were allocated toward social needs and fundraising causes in Auckland and Tonga decided by **Kalapu** [club] members in consultation with the patron (Beck-Gernsheim 1998; Evans 2001). Private home owners who provided **Kalapu** sites for male patrons were remunerated for the use of their properties and buildings in the form of financial donations for maintenance, electricity and renovations.

Informal produce sales of **talo** [taro], **ufi** [yam], **kape** [root vegetable] and **manioke** as well as **kava** imported from Tonga in shipping containers presented an income generating opportunity for some families. Village, extended family and church networks in and around the Otahuhu and South Auckland area afforded produce suppliers a market of regular consumers. In addition, ‘under the table’

labour on building sites or in stone fence construction was a method of securing informal income for men from generation one.

‘Official’ unemployment and ‘unofficial’ employment were interrelated practices in the culture of everyday life for my matrilineal and patrilineal families residing in Otahuhu. By this, Tongan men from generation one in particular may officially register as unemployed and concurrently collect income from a state provided allowance and an informal system of economy such as produce or *kava* sales. Moreover, for some families there exists a hazy association between ‘official’ employment and ‘unofficial’ employment. In this sense, participants predominantly from generation one and to a lesser degree from generation two are remunerated by both official employment and an informal system of economy such as produce or *kava* sales (Teaiwa and Mallon 2005).

The informal economy which flourishes in Otahuhu and neighbourhoods of South Auckland challenges the knowledge authority of New Zealand Census statistics on income status among Tongan generations (Scott 1985; Eames and Good 1988). What I am suggesting is that income making methods unmeasured and unrecorded by a state bureaucracy supplement officially documented salary levels *sometimes* (not all the time) to the point where official statistics may not accurately project the social reality of money flows throughout households (Marx 1962). This is not to say that *all* Tongan families in Otahuhu and certain suburbs affiliated to South Auckland have access to, and practice, an informal system of economy. However, in fieldwork conversations participants located in suburbs of Auckland Region’s four cities outside of Otahuhu and South Auckland perceived their supposed low social-economic *famili* and *kainga* as willing and capable of generating additional income through an active informal system of economy.

In saying this, conceptualising the everyday lives of family living in Otahuhu and densely populated Pacific areas of South Auckland (e.g. Otara and Mangere of Manukau City) was an enduring speech act undertaken by Tongan generations living in suburbs of the Auckland Region where Tongan and Pacific families were comparably smaller in population (e.g. Browns Bay of North Shore City, Mt Roskill, Grey Lynn and Ponsonby in Auckland City). The social-psychological association between Tongan families and Otahuhu and South Auckland as a specific geographic location in the Auckland Region carried out a noteworthy identity construction prevalent throughout inter-generation storytelling conversations (Harvey 1985, 1989; ‘Esau 2004).

The pervasiveness of imagining ‘Ourselves’ in scenes and settings of South Auckland persists in family identity stories for two interconnected reasons. Firstly,

the self-portrait of South Auckland as an urban Māori and Pacific Peoples 'town' represents the type of social iconography that has emerged from reconfiguring New Zealand's national identity in the twenty first century (Massey 1993). This significant point is further analysed in the following section. Secondly, naming South Auckland performs a double identity act. At once, social memory of Tonga's history is transferred to how we imagine 'Our' present lives in contemporary New Zealand. Consequently, relationships of connectedness become relocated within new family borders that make claims to the past.

The notion of 'family borders' has been employed here to signify two mutually related social factors at work in stories from Tongan generations of my matrilineal and patrilineal families (Jackson 1991). Family origins are remembered and recounted through social memory of Tonga and its relevance to, and reworking through, New Zealand lifestyles and life choices (Saunders 1985a, 1985b). However, the repositioning of a Tongan history in New Zealand is carefully bordered within an Auckland location, a specific designation named as suburbs of South Auckland where notable clusters of Tongan families reside and their village, church and community sites of identity feature as part of the social landscape. Moreover, family participants living outside of selected areas of South Auckland resituate themselves in some of their storytelling conversations within the bordered terrain of a Tongan history in New Zealand identified as integral to a South Auckland lifestyle. In this context, the power of social memory and its relationship to history illustrates that through storytelling 'Our' lives in New Zealand *some* family participants transcend geographic boundaries to speak as 'insider' experts despite the contradictory reality of their 'outsider' living locations (Brayboy and Dehyle 2000).

### **Contours of South Auckland**

A great majority of the Tongan ethnic population lives in the main urban areas, with 78 per cent in the Auckland urban areas and five per cent in the Wellington urban areas. According to the 2001 census, Tongans have tended to concentrate in the southern and central areas of Auckland. A similar geographic distribution holds for other Pacific ethnic populations. This distribution of Pacific ethnicity is due mainly to the availability of employment opportunities in the industrial areas in the southern part of Auckland (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 1999a: 12) ('Esau 2005, p. 444).

Certain locales of Manukau City constitute South Auckland in New Zealand's social imaginary, a community imagined into existence (Anderson 1983) by an identifiable Pacific Peoples sub-population that predominates in the suburbs of Otara and Mangere (Zeanah 2001). Naming 'South Auckland' by public and academic

media (Brown Pulu 2002; Borell 2005) is intended to display a performative identity (Butler 1998) that constructs 'The **Bro[wn] Town**' (Firehouse Films 2005), an urban setting where Pacific social life is embodied in schools, streets, shops, houses and an environment of everyday culture. In a journal article I commented that (Brown Pulu 2002, p. 14):

South Auckland is the *imagined* terrain of brown-skinned urban-ness and migrant Maori and Pacific Island communities in crisis. It is visualised as the Nation's poor house: cheap homes, State housing on market rents, flea markets and backyard sales, island produce and cheap meat off-cuts, white tank-loaves, *pani popo* and *pani maa* from largely Asian owned bakeries, and brown-skinned bodies.

As an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) South Auckland represents a social iconography which is located and dislocated within narratives of the nation. One account positions contemporary **Aotearoa** [slash] New Zealand<sup>3</sup> as the bicultural nation with South Auckland representing its exoticised 'Other' (Said 1978), a counter-identity to the historical past in the political present (Devalle 1989; Stoler 1995). South Auckland thus becomes the sub-nation of urban Māori [slash] Pacific Peoples<sup>4</sup> and new relationships forged to place and belonging in a shifting national ethnoscape (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33-34).

To explain how context-dependent relationships of newness are created between people and place, the ideological value of the identity reference to 'urban Māori' in a South Auckland landscape of social memory and history is first recounted. As a signifier of culture and power, urban Māori is a name from which a genealogy of meanings has matured entering the twenty first century (Maaka 1994). The ideologies and practices of urban Māori youth living in South Auckland creatively reinvent, for the most part, an assortment of culture and power arrangements that are modified by Pacific youth. In context, Pacific youth make use of the circumstances of everyday life by developing a cultural identity which intersects with urban Māori youth due to its grounding in youth culture, geographic location, inter-generation change alongside ancestral ties to islands of history.

Urban Māori is an identity term which signifies two distinguishable groups in the Auckland Region. Firstly, urban Māori includes local **Iwi** [tribe/s] or **Tangata Whenua** [people of the land] such as **Tainui ki Manukau** and **Ngāti Whatua ki Orakei** who are indigenous to areas of Auckland Region's four cities, Auckland, Manukau, Waitakere and North Shore (Kawharu 1977). Secondly and more commonly, urban Māori is a social referent to Māori families who have migrated and resettled throughout the region's four cities where many families now span multiple

generations as urban Māori with *Iwi* affiliations to *rohe* [tribal territories] outside of the Auckland Region (Walker 1970; Maaka 1994; Brown Pulu 1999).

Belinda Borell suggested the 'new' relationship to people and place that urban Māori youth in South Auckland have constructed to distinguish their identity difference functions on the same 'old' principles of connectedness (2005, pp. 203-204).

The opinion that urban Maori in general and urban Maori young people in particular are somehow 'lost' as Maori and do not possess the connections to land and community that exist in the tribal heartlands simply denies the reality for many Maori evidenced by this study. What is highlighted here is strong and meaningful associations to the local land, environment and community that engender the same feelings of security, belonging and connection that some may claim as the sole domain of Maori in tribal communities. Rather than defining urban Maori in terms of their deviance from the more conventional markers of Maori identity, affirmation and support of these very real connections can only contribute to more positive and embracing perspectives of what is a strong Maori identity. Just as our tupuna in coming to Aotearoa would have constructed their identity in different ways in relation to their changing environments, so too today identity for young people was shaped by both the local and wider settings.

Borell's (2005, pp. 203-204) analysis exercises an identity tactic which intersects with stories from generation three of my Tongan family who were born and raised predominantly in Auckland and are descended from second generation New Zealand-born Tongan parents and migrant Tongan grandparents. The strategy at play reinvents new ideologies and practices of Tongan identity as reconfigurations of our past history transferred from Tonga to an Auckland environment (Irwin 2005). Borell (2005, pp. 203-204) likens the process of identity reinvention for urban Māori youth living in South Auckland to an origin history of the ancestors of contemporary Māori and their navigation from *Hawaiiki* [the place of ancient origin] to, and resettlement in, Aotearoa (Hanson 1989; Howe 1999). Tales of migration, resettlement and the new generation create popular accounts of identity persistence and resistance in *Aotearoa* for contextualising the historical discourse of Pacific Peoples. This type of political ploy is infused throughout family stories retold by generation three to resituate the Tongan experience as an independent tale to the Samoan-centred version of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand while concurrently replanting identity roots firmly in Tonga (Talakai 1999; Tau'akipulu 2000).

By contrast, it was largely through indirect speech acts that identity narratives of this kind reverberated among generation one and two's tales of Tongan social life in New Zealand. However, at times some participants from generation two veered towards generation three's direct approach of naming troubled relationships between

Tongan and Samoan stakeholders to Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. In addition to this, *some* participants from generation one would, during certain places in their storytelling conversations, speak candidly of the differences between Tongan and Samoan practices of culture and power.

In a family of Tongan stories retold in Auckland it was generation three's acculturation of contemporary readings of the past which were intimately tied to political processes of identity reconstruction enacted by urban Māori youth in South Auckland. For generation three of my Tongan family and urban Māori youth in South Auckland, their methods converged in that storytelling our everyday lives in relation to past origins rekindled social memories and histories of continuity in kinship and culture (Rasmussen 1995). Their storytelling practices also diverged. By this, generation three employed a social memory and history of Tonga in the political present of social life in Auckland which forged a new cultural space within the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand narrative. The political agenda of this counter-narrative was to demarcate their distinctiveness from a Samoan centre.

By comparison, urban Māori youth in South Auckland do not appear centrally concerned with anxiety and angst activated by a Samoan-centred representation of Pacific Peoples (Bishop, Berryman and Richardson 2003). It is understandable that such identity trouble may not consume urban Māori youth in South Auckland for two interrelated reasons. Firstly, their conflation with Pacific youth in state policy on 'closing the gaps' and 'reducing social inequalities' does not resituate them *inside* the Pacific Peoples mass but *alongside* as the contemporary embodiment of ***Tangata Whenua*** in Manukau City, the city of Auckland Region with the nation's highest Māori and Pacific sub-populations.<sup>5</sup> In this context, urban Māori youth living in South Auckland affiliated to ***Iwi outside*** of the Auckland Region are considered ***Tangata Whenua*** when compared to Pacific youth because their identity 'difference' is shaped by indigeneity in ***Aotearoa*** (Green 1998). Secondly, *some* (not all) urban Māori youth are engaged in their situational identity of living in South Auckland and the relationships between people and place which represent the social reality of a new generation's culture and power.

Belinda Borell (2005, p. 205) observed methods by which urban Māori youth in South Auckland conceptualise and practice their relationship connectedness to people and place.

As clearly evidenced by many of the young people in this study, many Maori young people in South Auckland have real and strong connections with Pacific People. Maori and Pacific young people in this community share many things. Firstly, some share genetic connections having parents from different

ethnic groups. Many Maori and Pacific young people are physically similar, have similar body types and tend to have common styles of dress. They also live in the same place and have similar experiences of school and community. Many have comparable family situations, share similar financial and material conditions, and most have an understanding of the shared historical and ancestral connections between their respective cultures. Many Maori and Pacific youth also have similar collective experiences of racism and discrimination.

Moreover, Borell explained that there are acute differences between urban Māori and Pacific youth living in South Auckland. However, their experiential connectedness to people and place is, according to Borell's analysis, unmatched in its context-dependent history. The author therefore cautions that for urban Māori youth who speak of an "affinity" with Pacific youth experienced through their situational identity of living in South Auckland, a social reality *may* prevail in which positive social interactions outweigh negative cross-cultural baggage.

This is not to say that Maori and Pacific young people think they are the *same*, only that an *affinity* exists in this community - perhaps like nowhere else in the world - that is impossible to ignore. It should be acknowledged and taken into account when conceptualising youth development in this community. Those who view an affinity between Maori and Pacific people solely as negative must consider what impact this may have on the young people who take strength, confidence and belonging from these connections (Borell 2005, p. 205).

Similar to Borell's position, this thesis proposes relationships between generation three of my Tongan family and urban Māori youth in South Auckland may not always be overburdened by tension and discord. However, this is *not* to suggest that conflict, especially violent conflict, does not exist and persist as a relationship tactic played out between *some* individuals and groups associated to a particular generation of urban Māori and Pacific youth. Unlike Borell's study, my thesis argues that an understated borrowing and adaptation of ideas from urban Māori youth is carried out through generation three's Tongan identity stories of social memory and history.

The movement of ideas from one culture to another is subtle (Goldsmith 1992). It may not take place by a mode and method of communication that Borell describes as overt and explicit. Rather, it is layered in-between speech acts which describe how the interplay of culture and power affects Tongan generations in New Zealand. Generation three, therefore, makes identity claims to independence from a Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples construct in retaining ancestral and historical links to Tonga's past in the political present. It is the reinvention of the past in the

presence of our everyday lives which signals that the politicisation of identity is the social practice which connects urban Māori youth and generation three of my Tongan family in a web of culture and power relationships that are context-dependent to the political climate of contemporary New Zealand life.

### **The [S]Pacific Third Space**

Social memory and history in *A Tale of Two Cities* (Dickens 1997) on national identity situates biculturalism and multiculturalism as competing discourses of culture and power. Biculturalism affords Māori and Pakeha the relationship of cultural priority through the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi as the origin moment of becoming a nation (Mohanram 1999; McIntosh 2001). Conversely, multiculturalism signifies the nation's post-1980s newness (Meredith 1999). The social reality is that the changing demographic profile of New Zealand in the late twentieth century, entering the twenty first century, induces consideration of where and how a third party fits in, and falls out of, a bicultural arrangement (Kelsey 1995). Pacific Peoples as New Zealand's third largest ethnic mass constructs a notable third place in a bicultural nation hinged on a multicultural landscape in the Auckland Region.

In previous writing (Brown Pulu 2002) I have pointed out the difficulty of occupying the newness of the third space in a two-party relationship which is remembered and revered as the nation's history (Bhabha 1994). Representing a postcolonial Pacific in New Zealand is thus fraught with political tension on two counts: firstly, in locating a place for Pacific Peoples that does not dislocate Māori as indigenous to *Aotearoa* and secondly, by forging a heterogeneous identity for Pacific Peoples which defers from sweeping categorisations of mass sameness.

The identity of post-colonial New Zealand as it enters the 21st century is an uncertain one. On the one hand, there is the rhetoric of a plural, multicultural nation state. On the other, there is the enduring perception of the nation as a Pacific Island seeking to forge a bicultural identity that is inclusive of the indigenous Maori population and European settlers, one that cannot readily locate or accommodate third parties (Brown Pulu 2002, p. 15).

The emergence of South Auckland as the sub-nation of urban Māori and Pacific Peoples has led to the compressed packaging of Māori [slash] Pacific social-economic disadvantage, political manufacturing coloured by ethnicity and culture (McIntosh 2003). Decoding ethnicity and culture's relationship to the discourse of Māori and Pacific marginality is de-emphasised because it is the social-economic gaps evident in a specific urban territory which demarcates minority difference in contrast to the majority norm. My point is that being problematised due to geographic location and ethnic minority-ness manufactures a culture of social-

economic disadvantage where the differences by which Māori and Pacific Peoples read and understand each other are downplayed in the face of bulk deficit.

Divergences between groups which constitute Pacific Peoples are rendered invisible by the power invested in mass deficit theory reproduced by the state, public and academic media. Consequently, the conflation of Māori and Pacific Peoples in South Auckland reconfigures this sub-nation's difference in the simplistic formula of easing social-economic disadvantage by integrating aspects of show-and-tell culture, the conventional markers of material culture demonstrated by performing arts, crafts and indigenous language (Kahn 1989; Obeyesekere 1990; Anae 1997; Gupta and Ferguson 2002).

In the same article I spoke of the balancing act that is performed through the discourse of mass deficit theory. Here, Māori and Pacific Peoples living in South Auckland are packed together in a subaltern terrain. By this, I mean that the territory is mapped out by associated indicators of social-economic drawbacks and a readymade suitcase of *cultural* sounding solutions (Brown Pulu 2002, pp. 14-15).

South Auckland is the national icon of Aotearoa/Pasifika culture - a brown skinned ghetto. This national icon is conceptualised from the outside in terms of 'behavioural deviancy' and 'behavioural modification.' On the one hand, there is a perception of rising crime, graffiti, volunteer services and food banks, decile/docile one schools, unemployment, benefit fraud, overcrowded households, unlicensed drivers and tin-door city (garage doors over shop windows). On the other hand, there is task blue project (recruitment of Maori/Pacific police trainees to dispatch in South Auckland), Maori/Pacific language maintenance programmes, bilingual units, multicultural curricula, alternative learning programmes, performing arts festivals, hip-hop, churches, cultural centres and Marae.

Conflated imagery of urban Māori and Pacific Peoples drenched in anxiety towards this burgeoning youth population's *lower* social-economic value as the nation's future workforce has activated the public elision of ethnic and cultural difference (Smith 1985; So 1990). Public awareness of an increasing urban Māori and Pacific youth population located in South Auckland is compounded by unease as to *how* this 'mass' will be placed within New Zealand's employment sectors. Disquiet hinges on a sensitive question: if New Zealand's future workforce is increasingly urban Māori and Pacific Peoples and this mass category is largely over-painted by a statistical picture of social-economic and tertiary education disparity, then how will the nation's economy fear in a global market economy? (Anae, Anderson, Benseman and Coxon 2002; Education Review Office 2004). Given that prevailing public discourse is infused with worry that an urban Māori and Pacific youth population may not be adequately prepared to contribute to national production and the

sustainability of living standards idealised as the New Zealand culture of everyday life, it is understandable that collapsing the Māori-Pacific mass categorisation in favour of ethnic and cultural ‘difference’ is surpassed by economic motives.

Michael King’s (2003, pp. 504-505) analysis of ‘post-history’ described twenty first century New Zealand as immersed in a historical epoch in which ‘configuring old and new,’ reconciling the past with the political present of a global economy, forges the nation’s cultural priority.

The most important political and social challenges of the new era would be those surrounding the sustainable use of the country’s primary resources, finding sufficient stable markets abroad for its goods and services to sustain the degree of prosperity most New Zealanders had come to expect, constructing a welfare system that helped the genuinely needy but did not at the same time drain the enterprise of the potentially able, and negotiating a new social contract between Maori and Pakeha. History, as always, offered signposts to suggest ways in which these problematic territories might be negotiated.

Michael King’s ode to twenty first century ‘post-history’ re-establishes the nation’s roots in a bicultural New Zealand (Gibbons 1992; Deloria 1998; Day 2001). Thus, the historical ties between Māori and **Pakeha** remembered through the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi forms the social precedent upon which cross-cultural relationships are replicated among the changing national ethnoscape (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33-34). Linked to this is the urgency of economic sustainability which relies in part on effective resource management of the state and also, negotiated interests of Māori and **Pakeha** stakeholders. Structural constraints confine King’s imagined New Zealanders, a nation imagined into existence (Anderson 1983). The invisibility of ‘third space’ (Bhabha 1994) ethnic and cultural groupings such as Pacific Peoples and minorities categorised as Asian, European, Middle Eastern and African blurs the multicultural screen in favour of a two-party picture.

It is the persistence of King’s nation-making discourse, a contextualised account of bicultural New Zealand interpreted from ‘outside’ of the Auckland Region – home to the majority of the nation’s population, which is positioned somewhat at odds with the public conflation of urban Māori and Pacific Peoples in South Auckland (Ritchie 1992, p. 8; Belich 2001; McCreanor 2005).<sup>6</sup> Reconstructing the bicultural nation as the ‘official’ representation of twenty first century New Zealand challenges the authority of the multicultural metropolis to shift and sift urban Māori and Pacific Peoples through the ‘same’ mass production gauze (King 1999). However, it is not simply or singly urban Māori and Pacific Peoples living in the borderlands of two South Auckland cities – Auckland and Manukau, who socially transform bicultural

New Zealand into a Māori [slash] Pacific outlet of globalisation's world factory (Ihimaera 1986). Rather, it is the tri-relationship between state, its policy making machine and the national economy which manufactures both the social-economic gaps of a stratified society and the makeshift solutions for groups named as 'subjects' of disparity, disjuncture and disenfranchisement (Baudrillard 1981; Amin 1989, 1990, 1992; Belich 2001, p. 535).<sup>7</sup>

This study contends that despite political interest in merging urban Māori and Pacific Peoples into a 'problematic territory' of a growing youth population enclosed in South Auckland these groups express a will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a) to conceptualise and practice their ethnic and cultural difference from each other. Making sense of *how* 'difference' is reasoned produces a necessary ingredient for understanding the purpose and function of social memory and history. Urban Māori and Pacific youth identity stories diverge considerably in tracing historical origins and the political present of *how* relationships between people and their place of residence and belonging are made (Brown Pulu 1999, 2002). Their identity tracks may converge through situational living circumstances and experiences of public institutions such as education and employment (Ryan 1999; Borrell 2005). However, the modes, methods and means in which urban Māori and Pacific youth envision and enact their difference from each other is pivotal to making claims to *being* an ethnic and culture-specific group in contemporary New Zealand history (Featherstone 1990; Friedman 1994).

### **Histories of Cultural Difference**

In the case of Pacific Peoples as narrative and discourse, an integral point of analytical entry is to interpret the speaker's code of politicking difference between and within ethnic and cultural groups associated with Pacific ancestry. As a research strategy, a context-dependent examination stimulates interest in *how* and *why* fertile tensions constrict mass mobilisation and the type of political movement associated with contemporary histories of minority rights and social justice. By this, I mean that an ideological leap is performed when experiences constructed as integral to Pacific Peoples are analysed by borrowing a North American theoretical frame of organised struggle and civil rights advocacy to interpret historical meaning in a New Zealand context of cross-cultural conflict (e.g. Dawn Raid, Polynesian Panthers). The social grounds for such borrowing, cross-fertilisation, adaptation and replanting is perhaps more effectively analysed as a political stratagem of making identity claims to culture and power rather than the historical study of Pacific social life in the epoch of globalisation (Friedman 1993, 1994, 1998).

Radhika Mohanram (1999, p. 92) is therefore astute to suggest that in contemporary New Zealand political alliances between Māori and ethnic minorities such as Pacific Peoples and Asians are not organised, salient, strategic or structured by identity bearers and their respective communities on collaborative terms of engagement, agreement and mobilisation. The idea that multiculturalism *may* displace biculturalism, in particular, Māori stakes in a bicultural relationship with *Pakeha*, aggravates anxiety over the risks involved in social change.<sup>8</sup> However, my thesis *differs* from Mohranram's analysis (1999, p. 92) by proposing that an informal system of social exchange is at work among urban Māori and Pacific Peoples living across the Auckland Region, more specifically, for families and communities residing in suburbs demarcated as South Auckland.

This is not to say that informal alliances forged through borrowing and adapting ideas of, and strategies for, asserting culture and power fit tidily with political movements of organised resistance documented in contemporary North American histories (e.g. Black Civil Rights). Strategies for social change envisioned and enacted by Pacific Peoples, in particular, oscillate between the situational condition of *being* classified as a Pacific mass living in Auckland and a social 'desire' to sustain ethnic diversity and cultural *difference* amidst that Pacific mass.

What I am implying is that a type of 'organic intellectualism' is manufactured and transmitted (Gramsci 1971). The reproduction of social thought is context-dependent to the situational realities of urban Māori and Pacific Peoples living in the Auckland Region generally and in South Auckland expressly. The organic function of identity stories crafted from day-to-day living circumstances permit cultural ideas to travel and reposition their purpose among the lives of urban Māori and Pacific Peoples. Once the historical conditions that shape social realities become relocated among divergent ethnic and cultural groups the relevance and meaning of negotiating connections to the past in the present takes on multiple forms of storytelling.

Perhaps Belinda Borrell's (2005, p. 205) description of "an *affinity* that exists in this community" which connects urban Māori and Pacific youth through living in South Auckland gestures towards the idea of "sharing emotional landscapes" (Kahn 1996). It is therefore emotional ties to a South Auckland landscape and the ensuing relationships between the situated 'Self' and people/places which signify belonging to a family and ethnic-cultural group. Such sensitivities and attachments set off identity intersections for urban Māori and Pacific youth. By no means am I suggesting that an equivalent 'likeness' or 'sameness' operates across systems of culture and power couched within ethnic categories (e.g. urban Māori and Pacific Peoples). What I am saying is emotional bonds to a named metropolitan landscape (e.g. South Auckland)

share a convergent position within a national hierarchy of culture and power (i.e. urban Māori and Pacific Peoples as ethnic sub-populations living in specific locales of New Zealand).

In my experience, fieldwork conversations that spin tales of origin, belonging and identity are not analysed by Tongan storytellers living in the Auckland Region as akin to non-Tongan constructions of culture and power. I have not encountered speakers who recommend or request their personal narratives, the stories of ‘me’ in my family, *become* blended together to concoct a fruit salad of Māori-Pacific sameness. Such an overpowering act may be interpreted as transferring ideas of *race* and its colonial history of *racial* discrimination. *Racism* operates through the brutal force of making Māori and Pacific Peoples *racially* the ‘same’ for the bureaucracy (Husband 1982) whose function is to record institutional memory on the political will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a) of state driven policies and interventions designed for those herded together “‘in the minority.’”<sup>9</sup>

Contextualised by ‘Pacific’ cultural politics in New Zealand, fieldwork among Tongan generations who tell tales of family origins and present lives illustrated a consistent speech act in process. Tongan participants have not petitioned for their memories and stories to be assimilated by a Pacific Peoples history, nor have they asked for their experiences to be fused with narratives by Samoan families resident in the Auckland Region. If anything, tellers of identity tales purposefully detach Tongan social memory and history – past and present – from the Pacific mass in New Zealand and make a concerted effort to distinguish their “selfhood – singular or communal”<sup>10</sup> from Samoans.

My own three children, who are bearers of multiple ethnicities, differentiate their *famili Tonga* [Tongan family] from *whānau Maori* [Māori family] in storytelling conversations and note that ‘different’ beliefs and practices inform the two systems of culture and power to which they affiliate. In everyday life my children select, mix, edit and release performative identity tracks from both Tongan and Māori familial ties (Meredith 1999). The “social articulation of difference, from the minority perspective, is a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorise cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation.”<sup>11</sup> By borrowing Bhabha’s words and acumen I am highlighting that no homogeneous understanding of ‘difference’ ebbs and flows within and between minority groups categorised as urban Māori and Pacific Peoples located in the Auckland Region. Subsequently, Tongan family who contributed memories and stories to this work detected, explained and experienced *variable* ideologies of ‘difference,’ at times

recounting their own generational and transnational differences as an ethnic and culture-specific group.

Reasoned within a discourse of inter-culture and power relations, Tongan generations generally sanctioned their ‘difference’ from Samoans in particular as well as other ethnicities associated to Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. Immersed within an intra-culture and power system of identity, Tongan participants noted the politics of ‘difference’ at work among generations. Entangled within these observations lay an entry into the landscape of ‘difference’ between social life in Tonga compared to everyday life in New Zealand. The view of a global landscape attributed ‘difference’ at play among the ‘American Tongans,’ a sub-culture interpreted as strikingly distinct from families in Tonga and New Zealand. The situated identities of my children reproduced sites of ‘difference’ among themselves as siblings shaped by their experiences of, and preferences towards, systems of culture and power from which their multiple ethnic affiliations operate. However, their “singular or communal” ‘difference’ within a family of stories among Tongan generations is interpreted through self-realisation that their “strategies of selfhood”<sup>12</sup> are negotiated and changeable depending on the context in which they are socially expected to enact performative identity (Butler 1997b, 1998). My point is that ‘difference’ becomes experienced and reasoned *differently*. The incongruity is that in writing difference there exists an overwhelming inclination to analyse multiple subject positions by a one-size-fits-all theoretical lens and thus, see ‘Them’ and describe “their conflicts and struggles”<sup>13</sup> as remarkably alike, similar or relatively the ‘same’ (Gupta and Ferguson 2002).

The following section speaks of an emerging ‘Site of Contestation – Samoa and Tonga in *‘Okalani*,’ a social construction that plays out one of “these ‘in-between’ spaces [which] provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood,” political manoeuvres “that initiate new signs of identity.”<sup>14</sup> Adapting Bhabha’s theory on [dis]locations of culture in postcolonial settings, I propose that “the exchange of values, meanings and priorities” between Samoans and Tongans in the Auckland Region – either in “singular or communal” contexts – “may not always be collaborative and dialogical but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even incommensurable.”<sup>15</sup> Memories of the past can provide a historical discourse in which to rationalise why conflict erupts between Samoan and Tongan individuals and groups in contemporary New Zealand life, as described in chapter three’s story of the tumultuous relationship and political fall out that transpired between my ‘Self’ and two former Samoan colleagues.

This tactic of employing the past to validate the present is used by Tongan participants to validate *how* disputes break out between Samoans and Tongans and *why* conflict breaks down fragile tolerance and breaks through a cautious *détente*. My argument is that social memory and history reinvent local ‘tradition’ as responses to the global economy’s control of culture and power. Thus, discord and hostility transacted between Samoan and Tongan individuals/groups in the Auckland Region is not a repeat performance of history, a type of customary engagement grounded in tradition. It is, as Homi K. Bhabha indicates, “resourced by the power of tradition to be reinscribed through the conditions of contingency and contradictoriness that attend upon the lives of those who are ‘in the minority.’”<sup>16</sup>

### **Site of Contestation: Samoa and Tonga in ‘Okalani**

In contrast to many colonized peoples, Tongans have little interest in the myths and legends of their ancient past. Their most valued origin tales concern the reigns of Tupou I and Queen Salote – periods remembered for the safeguarding of Tonga’s independence and cultural integrity. Unlike colonized peoples such as Hawaiians, Maori, and Australian Aborigines, Tongans have not had to turn to their ancient stories to reassert their identity and authenticate their claims to lands stolen by foreigners. Tongans land remained in Tongan hands. And despite the radical reforms introduced by Tupou, “the continuities in Tongan history were thus greater than the innovations” (Campbell 1992b: 226). Campbell argues that the patterns of Tongan life “reasserted themselves so strongly that everyday life scarcely changed for a century after the Edict of Emancipation. In many respects, to look at the Tongan present was to see its past.” Changes that did occur tended to be viewed from a perspective of agency and choice: Tonga in control of its own history (Morton 2001, p. 50).

Samoans can be arrogant towards Maori because they were one of the first nations in the Pacific to become independent. They successfully fought colonisation and kept hold of their land and can’t really understand where Maori people are (Leilua cited in McIntosh 2001, p. 149).

It is in the emergence of the interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference – that the intersubjective and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated. How are subjects formed ‘in-between,’ or in excess of, the sum of the ‘parts’ of difference (usually intoned as race / class / gender etc.)? How do strategies of representation or empowerment come to be formulated in the competing claims of communities where, despite shared histories of deprivation and discrimination, the exchange of values, meanings and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical, but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even incommensurable? (Bhabha 1994, p. 2).

Helen Morton’s (2001, p. 50) account of how Tongans value history notices social disjuncture in the contemporary silence of an ancient past. Morton argues that

Tongans have forgotten and displaced their ancient roots because their land, resources and political system were not forcibly overtaken by colonial rule. Here, the author perceived that an absence of colonisation executed by foreigners has created a historical context in which Tongans reify the Kingdom of Tonga's origins through the advent of the current *Tupou* monarchy inaugurated by George I (Gailey 1987a, 1987b, 1992; Jolly 1992; Jolly and Nicholas 1992). Thus, Morton's view that Tonga took historical leave from the nineteenth century stage of colonisation enters a contested area of social memory and history (Marcus 1977b; George 1977).

Tonga's status as a British protectorate until 1970 exposed the Kingdom and its subjects to social neuroses infected by British and Western European superiority discourse, an epidemic of colonial culture and power (Said 1978; Dresser 1989; Hempenstall 1994). Modern Tonga's acculturation of British Empire has occurred in the sense that the present monarchy's mimicry of Royal mannerisms, airs, tastes, educational pursuits and clumsily contrived public school accents construct a rich ethnographic terrain in which to analyse the subtleties, tones and variances of colonisation (Bhabha 1994, pp. 85-92; Amin 1989, 1990, 1992; Cooper and Stoler 1997). The telling hangover of colonisation's desecration of social memory and history is evident in the majority's disregard of an ancient past in contemporary remembrances of connectedness. Colonisation in Tonga has therefore culminated in a two-fold process of interwoven internal and external displacements of the historical past in the political present (Morton 2001).

Firstly, internal colonisation took place in the nineteenth century by the *Tu'i Kanokupolu's* [modern kingship] overtaking the *Tu'i Tonga* [ancient kingship] as the seat of power, the supreme ruler of Tonga (Campbell 1992b). Subsequently, the systemic replacement of the *Tu'i Tonga's* social organisation of Tonga with a Samoan-centred adaptation of hierarchy, rank and titles was enacted. Secondly, external colonisation was exercised by George I's integration of a Wesleyan sculpted and British-centred system of modern governance and society (Higham 1990). In this context, the 1875 Constitution strategically designed a parliamentary arrangement, a land tenure system and a host of civil freedoms to theoretically supplant feudalism and serfdom (Niu 1984; Faka'osi 1993; Fukofuka 1994). The colonisation of social memory has informed a contemporary Tongan social-psychological [dis]association in which *Tu'i Tonga* history is buried in repressed memory in favour of a sentimental recollection of the *Tupou* monarchy as the founding forebears of the modern nation (Friedman 1985).

Contradictions of culture and power reproduce sites of social change in which Tongan generations may detect and question constitutional shortcomings (Mazrui

1990; Helu-Thaman 1994; McAdams, Tarrow and Tilly 2001). In the twenty-first century the ‘ideal’ of a fully elected parliament has prescribed an antidote for social-economic inequalities experienced between classes. An intricate two-step waltz is performed by criticism of Tonga’s social structure and political arrangement. Advocacy for a fully democratised parliamentary system induces a fresh version of the modern state. Songs of newness, however, replicate an old anthem of romantic nationalism (Moala 2002). Kalafi Moala’s (2002, p. 296) plea for a democratised Tonga echoes a neo-nationalist predisposition.

Leadership selection must no longer be based on inherited birthright, as in the present failed system. Rather, it should be talented, educated and hard working individuals with moral integrity that should be given the opportunity to seek the country’s top political posts. Tonga will not move forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century without a full democratic system of Government, with the Monarch as a social force without political power, and the nobility abolished for good. Those in power will not easily give up their hold. Regardless, the inevitable democratisation of Tonga must take place. Democracy will not solve Tonga’s problems overnight, but it will certainly create the structure and social environment needed to facilitate growth and positive development.

Moala’s speech provocatively draws on a discourse of ‘moral high ground’ to delineate the ‘goodies’ from the ‘baddies’ in a showdown on the Kingdom’s corral (Pohiva 1995). The systemic method in which democratisation will take place in Tonga and the relationship consequences of reorganising political actors on distinct stages of ‘state’ and ‘society’ are not detailed in Moala’s spiel. Instead, reassurance that democracy is essential to “facilitate growth and positive development”<sup>17</sup> provides idealised imagery of modernity – economic growth and progressive development – to appease queries on the technicality of how, when and by whom will such ground breaking work be carried out.

Naïve interpretations of democracy as the nation’s virtue of truth, knowledge and freedom *bereft* of historical ties to [post]industrial society and [hyper]capitalism etch out speech on culture and power in contemporary Tongan media (Maude 1971). The reproduction of this kind of discourse among Tongan generations who contributed to this study is ‘fragmented’ (Dirlik 1992, 1994). Moala’s sentiments were not manufactured wholesale in a family of stories without edited sound bites and guarded interruptions sparking background noise to stress the multiple subject positions of speakers. In saying this, my view is that in the Auckland Region, Tongan perceptions of democratising Tonga’s current political arrangement are ambivalent and uncertain. This is not to say that ardent pro-democracy supporters do not exist

within the nation's sub-population categorised as Tongans in New Zealand (Gailey 1996).

The idea of a fully democratised parliamentary structure has increasingly consumed dialogical exchanges in Tongan language media and conversation (Hall 1986b; Hau'ofa 1987, 1994b; Besnier 1995, 2004). However, a sub-population's position on social and political change is unclear, shifting and heterogeneous. Just as the politics of 'difference' rewrite social memory and history among Tongan generations living in New Zealand – specifically for those families located in the Auckland Region – an apparent difference of opinion also seeps into, shapes and shifts social exchanges conducted between loyal subjects and their “strategies of selfhood.”<sup>18</sup>

What I am saying is that to capture the sub-population's singular moment of imagining the 'nation' of Tonga and characterising its political actors is a slippery, treacherous task. There exists no one remarkable event and outstanding character to define *how* 'nation and narration' (Bhabha 1990) is recovered by social memory and inscribed in history. Although commemorate events and characters which signify modern Tonga's emergence during the *Tupou* monarchy persist in varying degrees among inter-generation stories in New Zealand, attempting to seize and freeze precise moments in social memory and history illustrates that social life is subject to wide-ranging influences.

One new influence is institutionally designed strategies to retain indigenous Māori and Pacific languages. The impetus and power of Māori language revival in the state education system has motivated Tongan and Samoan educators to pursue the formal inclusion of their indigenous languages within the current *NCEA* system.<sup>19</sup> Cultural sustainability has prompted the reinvention of ancient tradition or specifically, the remaking of histories which predate Christianity, constitutional modernity and political independence in Tonga and Samoa (Hall 1991b, 1995). With such political activity tied to culture, power and identity retention set in motion it is understandable that the stage of 'goodies' and 'baddies' described in Kalafi Moala's rendition of the trouble with Tonga becomes blurred.<sup>20</sup> In turn, characterisations of 'Us' and 'Them,' the elite versus the people and the Monarchy versus democracy are de-emphasised in a haze of cultural priority in contemporary New Zealand life: the priority of culture being inter-generation identity maintenance and negotiating safe passage through the minefields which exacerbate the politics of 'difference.'

In contrast, Iulia Leilua's (1995, p. 26) 'Self' description of how Samoans perceive their 'difference' from Māori in histories of colonisation throughout the Pacific Region uncovers a context of relationship tension. The historical context I am

speaking of is traced to Samoa's 1962 independence, an event interpreted by some historians as signifying Samoa's social and political resilience (Meleisea 1987; Meleisea and Schoeffel-Meleisea 1987). Firstly, independence took place in an earlier decade compared to *some* (not all) Pacific nation-states with the exception of Nauru's independence in 1965 and to a lesser extent, the Cook Islands in 1965 which elected self-government in free association with New Zealand. Such an occurrence is interlaced in social memory of the Mau movement's influence on mobilising the ideology of ***Samoa mo Samoa*** – Samoa for Samoans (Field 1984). Secondly, the reinvention of ***Fa'asamoa*** in the epoch of political independence provided a social structure in which Samoans in New Zealand have envisioned an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) of Samoans worldwide retaining ideologies and practices in remembrance of, and reverence to, the origin 'nation' (Howard 1989; Lawson 1997).

When social memory is converted into a sacrosanct history of the nation, the notion of cultural priority permeates the relevance and meaning of remembering the past in the present (Hobsbawm 1983; Pierre 1989). Relationship tension created from a Samoan reading of Māori colonial history in respect to perceptions of Samoa's 1962 independence from New Zealand is indicative of cultural priority's influence over context-dependent interpretations of the past (Pitt 1970). In this sense, the cultural priority of Samoan versions of independence constructed in New Zealand life lies in contrasting competing "histories of cultural difference" to determine an outcome.<sup>21</sup>

The outcome, in this situation, is measured by independence. Political independence thus reproduces the 'result' which privileges one historical context over another. In respect to Māori, the historical circumstances of their contemporary society are downplayed because independence is the successor, the defining moment of 'nation and narration' (Bhabha 1990). If anything, this type of cross-cultural reading of one past weighed up against another highlights how subjectivity and identity can deemphasise cross-context 'difference.' Leilua's story quoted earlier (see p. 137) illustrated the dissimilarity between Third and Fourth World histories of colonisation in the Pacific Region was collapsed in pursuit of homogenising 'difference' so that a Samoan theoretical lens accounted for those "in the minority" of a developed First World nation.<sup>22</sup>

The political act of massifying 'difference' is executed through the 'official' representative voice afforded to those "in the minority" by those in the majority.<sup>23</sup> It is therefore resistance against the 'voice' imposed over different interpretations of the past that feeds the ideology upon which Tongan generations ground, heat and dish up

criticism of Samoan-centred servings of the Pacific Peoples pineapple pie in New Zealand. An interplay unfolds when theorising who is [dis]located “‘in the minority’” (Bhabha 1994, p. 2) in contrast to how ‘the majority’ is reconfigured within a Pacific Peoples discourse. Surfacing in Tongan dialogue contributed to this study is an inter-generation idea that Tongans are doubly resituated. At once, Tongans are inscribed in a Pacific Peoples minority by the nation’s majority and, within this discourse, Tongans are subject to *being* an ethnic minority in respect to the Samoan majority (Park and Morris 2004).

To illustrate this point I have elected to insert a conversation snippet which tells the tale of how a family participant from generation two understands the structural constraints that constrict Tongan and Samoan movement within a Pacific mass categorisation in New Zealand. The speaker suggests the politics of difference is played out through the ‘different’ modes and means in which Tongans compared to Samoans respond to, and by some measure resist, *being* resituated within an identity confine that is not of their own making. In this social reading of the present, Tongans exercise identity resistance, their desire to remain independent from ‘Pacific Peoples,’ whereas Samoans manoeuvre the mass marker ‘Pacific Peoples’ to achieve their own political ends which is to create benefits for Samoans.

#### Prelude

[Politicking Tongan and Samoan difference within the mass categorisation – Pacific Islanders]

Tongans aren't Pacific Islanders  
They're Tongans

Samoans don't rule Pacific Islanders  
They're not interested in Pacific Islanders  
But they just use the name  
It's a tool to get stuff

The way Samoans work  
They use culture to get stuff  
They got a Ministry  
They got heaps of stuff for their people

Different to Tongans  
They just want to be Tongans

By Generation 2d

Homi K. Bhabha argued that competing communities flourish amidst the “‘in-between’ spaces” of the nation, sites of identity allotted to those “‘in the minority.’”<sup>24</sup>

His analysis is contextualised in the fertile soil of inter-generation speech on how Tongan ideologies and practices of culture and power are systemically displaced. In fieldwork conversations, family participants suggest a Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples discourse dominates a ‘minority’ part on the stage of New Zealand nationhood and in acting out this role, silences the politics of difference that proliferate within and between those “in the minority.”<sup>25</sup>

Consequently, Tongans *become* conflated within a Pacific Peoples mass and are also interpreted through a Samoan-centred role play on culture and power. In relation to this point, Bhabha observed that communities resituated within minority discourse may contest each other’s identity claims to the point where “the exchange of values, meanings and priorities may not always be collaborative and dialogical, but may be profoundly antagonistic, conflictual and even incommensurable.”<sup>26</sup> And therein lays the contest for power that shapes conflicting Samoan and Tongan social memories and histories of ‘cultural difference,’ stammered the uneasy subject (Gupta and Ferguson 2002).

A historical intersection may be interpreted through the comparative notions of political independence remembered, recited and reified in Samoan and Tongan social memories. The Mau movement’s ideology of *Samoa mo Samoa* – Samoa for Samoans – resonates in George Tupou I’s decree of *Tonga ma Tonga* – Tonga for Tongans (Field 1984; Morton 2001). Understandably these verses of two nations converge and diverge through the historical context of *how* their utterance emerged and the contemporary meaning which moulds *how* their remembrance is recited. For the purpose of this chapter, however, my interest veers toward the methods in which Tongans invest in social memory of their nation’s origins to validate how they conceptualise and practice their new ‘place’ in New Zealand while retaining ties to an old ‘position’ of culture and power specific to distinguishing Tongans from Samoans. In this story, the politics of ‘difference’ unravels that to juxtapose ‘Samoa for Samoans’ and ‘Tonga for Tongans’ may set off irreconcilable and somewhat non-negotiable subject positions in recalling and revering social memory and history in the “political *conditions* of the present”<sup>27</sup> (Franco 1991; Morton Lee 2003).

My “‘fragmentary’ point of view”<sup>28</sup> is intertwined in Homi K. Bhabha’s provocative insight on the reinvented notion of “disrespect” among those “in the minority.” The author contends that the powerful authority of tradition is called up when “disrespect” is named as the catalyst for conflict. Here, Bhabha (1994, p. 2) commented that:

The force of these questions is borne out of the ‘language’ of recent social crises sparked off by histories of cultural difference. Conflicts in South Central Los Angeles between Koreans, Mexican-Americans and African-Americans focus on the concept of ‘disrespect’ – a term forged on the borderlines of ethnic deprivation that is, at once, the sign of racialised violence and the symptom of social victimage. ... Terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively. The representation of difference must not be hastily read as the reflection of *pre-given* ethnic or cultural traits set in the fixed tablet of tradition. ... The ‘right’ to signify from the periphery of authorised power and privilege does not depend on the persistence of tradition; it is resourced by the power of tradition to be reinscribed through the conditions of contingency and contradictoriness that attend upon the lives of those who are ‘in the minority.’

Bhabha’s analysis is relevant to the situated identities of Samoan and Tongan individuals/groups in the Auckland Region which are created from social circumstance and the nation’s political hierarchy of place and belonging. The concept of “borderlines of ethnic deprivation” at work among “in-between spaces” for those [dis]located “in the minority” is infused throughout the Pacific Peoples discourse, its reason for *being* and the power that it expresses in naming, defining and confining.<sup>29</sup> ‘Pacific Peoples’ as discourse and rhetoric (Butler 1997a) has thus *become* a synonym for “ethnic deprivation.”<sup>30</sup>

Tongan participants who contributed fieldwork conversations to this thesis theorised that “ethnic deprivation” operated by the act of conflating multiple ethnic and cultural groups within the mass category ‘Pacific Peoples,’ an identity construct which [dis]located Tongans on the periphery of a Samoan centre. Thus, Tongan ethnicity and its specific system of culture and power was devalued in the public life of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. In public and academic media, ethnic deprivation *becomes* imagined into existence when reading Pacific Peoples in New Zealand as an identity trope symptomatic of social-economic disparity – income and living standards of Pacific minority versus national majority – and minority conflict – violence and social deviancy indicative of the nation’s margins.

Bhabha’s proposition that “ethnic deprivation is ... the sign of racialised violence and the symptom of social victimage” echoes a will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a) in the dialogical transmission of Tongan generations on their subject positioning within contemporary New Zealand’s landscape of cultural politics.<sup>31</sup> To adapt Spivak’s (1990) term, ‘epistemic violence’ is the racialised violence enacted against an ethnic group when their system of culture and power is reduced to a subject, a subjugated knowledge (Foucault 1980) inferiorised by its [dis]location as and “in the minority.”<sup>32</sup> Epistemic violence therefore permeates the purpose,

function and outcome of ‘Pacific Peoples’ as discourse and rhetoric in relation to Tongan subjects of its authoritative power in New Zealand.

The “strategies of selfhood” that prevail in this context are that Tongan generations reinvent tradition through remembrances of the past to validate their imagined ‘independence’ as a minority community in New Zealand, distinct from the Pacific Peoples narrative and markedly different from its Samoan centre.<sup>33</sup> As Bhabha mentioned, reconstructing tradition in the political present stimulates “histories of cultural difference” by calling up social memories of the past to legitimise why ‘We’ are not *naturally* the same as ‘Them’<sup>34</sup> (Said 1978; Jacobson-Widding 1983; Johnson-Bailey 1999).

This does not, however, indicate that frozen ethnic and cultural characteristics bound to timeless tradition are making a grand tour around the contemporary stage of social life (Fabian 1983; Torgovnick 1990). What it does signify is that evoking the past performs a strategic identity act that stakes out claims amidst the territory set aside for those “in the minority,” igniting “histories of cultural difference” and concurrently negotiating the newness and complexity of “cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation.”<sup>35</sup>

The following section named, ‘The *Faka’apa’apa* [respect] Verses,’ presents a reading of family participants among three generations of Tongans living in the Auckland Region. Bhabha’s notion of “disrespect” is interpreted by speakers as the root cause which engenders conflict between Samoan and Tongan stakeholders in the minority terrain apportioned to Pacific Peoples in New Zealand. Violent encounters between Māori and Pacific youth and within Māori and Pacific mass groupings are also described. Respect is at once, reinvented as the core principle of culture and power that defines mutually beneficial relations between individuals and groups in a Tongan context of envisioning the past in the present.

Disrespect, its binary opposite, is thus designated the inferior position of un-Tongan-like speech and behaviour. Moreover, it is coloured by, and loaded with, histories of cultural difference so that its oppositional relationship to Tongan culture and power is named as Samoan and to a lesser extent, *Palangi* identity. Like Bhabha, I argue that “in restaging the past,” the discourse of disrespect co-constructed among Tongan generations produces reinvented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) without “any immediate access to an originary identity.”<sup>36</sup> Rather, an explanation of the ‘Self’ in relation to ‘Others’ is constructed to make sense of the complex and shifting ‘difference’ of social life in the present (Said 1978).

What's the point of coming here if we can't be free to be Tongan?

There's no point  
That's my point

Generation 1d

## **The Faka'apa'apa Verses**

Verse 1

[Respect is the 'Tongan' of all Tongan behaviours]

I think it's just that Tongans are changing. Isn't it? They're changing. In the olden days they'd never write anything bad about the Royal Family. That was a no no because we had so much respect for them. But now, because when I was brought up my Mum always said to me, "First and foremost you must respect, even if they're bad," you know, "Respect your elders. Respect people who are wiser than you, even respect your fellow colleagues and if you respect them then they'll do the same to you. Even if you're very angry with them, you still have to respect them." I think that's the most important thing that the Tongans sort of, most Tongans are. They may sound it or may look against the Samoans, they may be weak, come across weak because they're not aggressive like the Samoans are, especially here. But it's just because they've been brought up to respect people. That's why they look weak but not really. It's just the way that they carry themselves; they're humble, respectful.

I think it is changing because they're more educated and the generations living here and in Tonga, it's quite changed. It's too modern; too many Western influences, yeah, caused by a lot of them going overseas.

It's the Tongan way of doing things. There's a way of talking and there's a way of disagreeing and that's just the way we do it. I think the Western way - it's direct, isn't it? Or the *Palangi* way, you have to be direct and Samoans are more direct; they're more assertive and they're more aggressive than the Tongans. We're very polite. We're too polite and too respectful. But it doesn't mean that we agree or we're weak; no, it just portrays that to a *Palangi* or from a Samoan perspective but not in the Tongan way, from a Tongan perspective. It's just that Tongans look at a person like that as being *kai mu'a* [rude]. Yeah,

but I mean a Tongan that doesn't do that, that's always respectful and loyal especially when they have to carry on with people like that - *kai mu'a* - they're looked upon as more superior by the Tongans. They're better; they dealt with it in a better way from the Tongan perspective.

By Patricia Brown<sup>37</sup>  
Generation 1

Verse 2  
[Close encounters of the third space]

The most important Tongan custom is *faka'apa'apa* - respect. Everything you say and do has to be *faka'apa'apa*, you know, respectful, to treat everyone with respect. Yeah, I think it's changing now. The generations here they don't live by the old ways. They're quite against their parents, some of them. I suppose they're influenced by the New Zealand way of life and the Samoans too, I mean they get their way here. When you think about Pacific Islanders here, it's all Samoan way of doing things. Their way is very different to Tongans, old Tongan way of *faka'apa'apa*.

But at the same time a lot of Tongans and Samoans don't like, don't get on. They compete; they want the power, fight each other for it. Not just the adults doing all Pacific stuff, health community work, social work, teachers, but the kids too. There's always been trouble with Tongan and Samoan school kids and it's gotten worse. I think it's bad.

*PolyFest* [the Auckland Region's secondary schools performing arts festival], the fights that go down with school kids: police just watch that festival now. They're all over it, bag search, body search, cops and security everywhere, not like when we were at school. You know it's being watched; you can feel it, feel the police watching for something bad to happen. They make it worse cos' they just jump all over the kids and search them, even if they're just walking passed and not doing anything. A lot of the violence and it is violence, we can't bury our heads and pretend it's not happening, but it's kids trying to put their identity up there. And I suppose when respect breaks down, the only way

they know how to get it is to fight for it; fight for their identity, even if it means fighting each other to get it.

As for where you are, you can keep it. I came from working in the community to *uni* [university] thinking it'd be better, you know, the politics where I was it just screwed up a lot of good work. *Uni* is just the same, maybe worse cos' they're out of touch with the community; most of them have never worked there. Just fighting for power in the *unis* [universities]; fighting each other for status, trying to show off. No unity, just doing stuff that's no help to our people out there in the community. Only helping them get status and a big salary. They call themselves 'leaders.' Leaders of who? Who are their communities? Themselves, they're the leaders of themselves in their own little world.

By Generation 2e

Verse 3

[Politics of respect and disrespect for those in the minority]

I have lots of Island friends and Māori friends, like we all mix pretty well. And cos' like, you know, we're a minority at school we kind of stick together, stick up for each other and stuff. Well, put it this way. We kind of have to stick together because it's a *Palangi* school. We're just the Māori and Islander kids, you know, "Those Māori and Islander kids!" But it's cos' we live on *The Shore* [North Shore City] why we mix pretty well. You know, we're mostly middle class, not poor families with no jobs or anything like that. And like I said, we're the minority. We're totally outnumbered by *Palangi* and Asians. Asians *wanna' be Palangi* [try to be something they are not]. They don't like us much cos' we're brown.

Sometimes there's fights, but not bad fights, between Māori kids or the *Saas* [Samoans] trying to *out-staunch* [be bigger than] the Tongans. One time police turned up in riot gears. *Saas* start a lot of the fights; well, that's what I think. I think they start fights with the Tongan kids cos' they're disrespectful.

They say bad stuff to the Tongans about their culture, that they're Tongan, that their King is corrupt, Tongans are dumb, you know, just follow the King cos' they're dumb. They can be very mean with their words. Sometimes they do it on purpose. I guess it's their mentality, the way their parents bring them up. They like word fights cos' it makes them feel brainier than the Tongans.

But to the Tongans it's just cruel and unusual; you know, disrespectful. We don't tell them bad stuff like their people go to Samoa to buy a title like it's the *Island bling* [Pacific equivalent of gold and diamonds] or something *fie' lahi* [something big to show off about]. That's just *anga kovi* [very bad behaviour]. It's very bad to say mean stuff and that and cos' they're from another culture you respect them, respect their culture, even if it isn't right to you. But it's not fighting like Māori against Islander: it's Māori-Māori and Islander-Islander.

It's different in South Auckland where my cousins go to school. The schools there are all Islander kids and Māori, but mostly Islanders. There's always fights, bad fights - Māori against Islander. Tongans against *Saas* - it's like a tradition, I suppose. You know, back in the olden days when we used to fight each other. Tongans are *Crips* [American gang name], *Saas* the *Bloods* [American gang name]. They have heaps of other gangs too. They can be very vicious when someone's getting a hiding. There are some big haters out there. It's like they're trying to kill each other.

And they have all these jokes that the teachers run away cos' they're scared of the gangs, big Tongans and *Saas*. The security guards they have patrolling the South Auckland schools; big gates, high fences to keep the kids locked up at lunch time like they're *Pare* [Pāremoremo Prison]. Yeah, security get there before the cops cos', "The Cops were at the shops." That's the big joke; the cops are always down at the shops or somewhere else when there's bad fights. Probably cos' they're scared too.

When they turn up there's a whole army of them. Too late, some kid's already in hospital, been nearly bashed to death with a baseball bat or something, some kind of weapon. So they're just there to take down the details,

write a report for the judge. Next day, court case down at *Otahu* [Otahuhu] courthouse or at Manukau [City courthouse]. Yeah, page five of the [New Zealand] Herald, "Tongan kid almost bashed to death at South Auckland High School by Samoan gang." But if it was a death then it'd probably make page three and a letter to the editor: "I don't know why the Islander kids are so violent these days. New Zealand was never like that. I remember when the Islanders worked side by side in the corned beef factory. They were very happy to be poor and brown. Why can't they all get along?" Yeah, shit, I mean stuff like that.

By Ani-Kāterina Amoamo<sup>38</sup>  
Generation 3

### **Doing a Rushdie**

My husband Brandon suggested I inscribe 'The *Faka'apa'apa* Verses' with a signature closer to the original text such as, 'The *Faka'tevolo* [Satanic] Verses.' However, it is not my intention for Rushdie (1988) to [pur]sue me for carbon copying a genre's brand name. Nor am I attempting to inflame the wrath of state and society's high ranking authorities in a global age which has ignited the volatile reinvention of local traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

Perhaps consciously and unconsciously I am doing a Rushdie (1988) by scanning memories of Tonga's history and relocating them in the political present of inter-generation Tongan lives in the Auckland Region. Social memory and history, as I have proposed by adapting Homi K. Bhabha's theory on *The Location of Culture* (1994) in postcolonial settings, is disjunctive and dislocated from an instantaneous past. It is conjured up in our contemporary lives to fit in, and fetter to, the social situations we find our 'Selves' negotiating entry into, transition within and exit from, sometimes in haste, especially if negotiated identity involves conflict resolution on compromised ground.

Constructions of culture and power among Tongan living generations in the Auckland Region are cultural hybridities, road signs that motion to cultural temporalities reproduced in transitory moments of social engagement. The one lingering constant is social change – the fleetingness of living in the now and the power of recalling tradition to assuage our immersion in, and association to, the politics of 'difference' as individuals and collectives resituated "in the minority."<sup>39</sup>

As Bhabha wrote of the political present inspired by Rushdie's (1988) *The Satanic Verses*:

In the aftermath of the *The Satanic Verses* affair in Great Britain, Black and Irish feminists, despite their different constituencies, have made common cause against the 'racialisation of religion' as the dominant discourse through which the State represents their conflicts and struggles, however secular or even 'sexual' they may be.<sup>40</sup>

To rework Bhabha's sentiments, it is *not just* the "racialisation" of minority discourse in contemporary New Zealand's naming, conflating and bordering of Pacific Peoples that irks me. More, it is the power and authority of state intervention and trajectories of social commentary on "their conflicts and struggles" which prohibits "strategies for selfhood" from shifting beyond discourse "borderlines of ethnic deprivation" (Talakai 2000; Tau'akipulu 2000).<sup>41</sup> State surveillance and reporting methods deployed for monitoring those [dis]located "in the minority" dissuades and delimits minority constituents from speaking of, speaking as, and in turn seeking explanations for "cultural histories of difference" on terms of engagement, interpretation and intercession relevant to expressing 'difference' (Foucault 1971, 1979).<sup>42</sup> What I am saying is that the language of theorising 'difference' in public and academic media, particularly the word imagery of state education and intervention, has made 'Us' all the same (Said 1978). The language of 'difference' discharges a will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1981, 1991a) which subjugates knowledge scented and sensed as too 'different' from that prescribed as the institutionally accepted norm cooked up for the 'minority' as their standard model.

In academic media, a standard model deems that it is socially unacceptable and distasteful to walk through and at times, travel across the borders of 'hate speech' projected by individuals and groups conflated "in the minority" *against* each other's difference (Wetherell and Potter 1992).<sup>43</sup> However, 'hate speech' is ostensibly an overt "sign of racialised violence and social victimage" provoked and prompted by the hegemonic control over, and homogenising of, 'difference.'<sup>44</sup> What is more violent than state driven 'epistemic violence' (Spivak 1990) in which the bureaucracy speaks for "their struggles and conflicts" is when the 'Other' uncritically consumes and excretes interventions and "strategies for selfhood" defined by the state for 'Them' (Said 1978; Young 1990).<sup>45</sup> Thus, the emission of 'hate speech' is not an act of hatred directed against another to purposefully harm, injure or impair 'Them.' Instead, it is symptomatic of the frustration and resentment generated from disempowerment – an individual and collective 'knowing' that the system of culture and power specific to one's social memory and history is subordinate to, fractured by, and in many

situations invisible from, the dominant discourse authorised by state and society for those “in the minority.”<sup>46</sup>

Subtle and overt intimations around, references to, and criticisms of what is perceived by Tongan generations as the Samoan centre of Pacific Peoples discourse in New Zealand are not indicative of racialised attacks. They are, as I see it, feelings, reflections and musings on “ethnic deprivation” and its discontents released through storytelling conversation in the transience of our social engagements.<sup>47</sup> A demographic reality which constitutes and empowers the Pacific Peoples categorisation in public life is that fifty per cent of this mass affiliates on statistical returns for bureaucratic use as Samoan ethnicity (Statistics New Zealand 2001b). The lived and living reality for Tongan generations who contributed to this thesis, however, is ambivalent (Young 1995).

The privileging of Samoan ethnicity as the cultural priority of Pacific Peoples discourse has confined Tongan generations within its structural borders in public life. By this, to determine *how* culture and power is transmitted, remembered and reinvented among Tongan generations in New Zealand involves, *in part*, reading the context-dependent ‘Self’ in relation to those conflated “‘in the minority’” of Pacific Peoples.<sup>48</sup> Hence, Tongan generations may desire to exercise their ‘difference’ as an independent community to reflect social memory of how culture and power specific to ‘Them’ is conceptualised and practiced by ‘Them’ (Said 1978) *without* the presence of state surveillance and Samoan-centred guidelines on how to organise, manage and facilitate ‘best’ outcomes for Pacific Peoples. But to migrate beyond the borderlines of “ethnic deprivation” entails double-edged “strategies for selfhood ... that initiate new signs [and sites] of identity.”<sup>49</sup> First, asserting identity independence from the Pacific Peoples massification machine and second, explaining the politics of difference that rationalise such transformational change in imagining the nation and its *counter* narration, coalesce. Combined, these strategies assemble the structure in which Tongan identity stakes *become* redefined and in the *counter* tale’s telling, refined.

Globalisation has collapsed cultural and geographical boundaries to a certain extent in which the transnational ‘Self’ seeps through Tongan identity stories among generations in New Zealand. The type of transnationalism in which participants imagine themselves and their familial connectedness through a complex moving web of relationships that crisscross to and from Tonga and span the globe, surpasses the territorially fixed nationalism of modernity. An interesting situational reinvention, however, is that transnationalism traced through the tales of Tongan generations is context-dependent to, and circumstantially shaped by, living in the Auckland Region

and imagining South '*Okalani*' into existence as the geo-political "terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood."<sup>50</sup>

Thus, Tongan mobilisation initiatives as well as Tongan identity trouble is viewed as 'best' taking place and 'most' playing out in the South Auckland suburbs among families and communities that collaboratively and dialogically engineer collective power by *being* larger in numbers compared to other areas of the Auckland Region. I am not suggesting that Tongan transnational imagery is geographically bound to an origin story owned and operated in South Auckland. Instead, I am saying that the "fragmentary' point of view" conjures up roots and routes of [dis]location in which culture and power is envisioned as living, thriving and multiplying.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps Homi K. Bhabha's (1994, p. 1) selection and citation of Heidegger's (1971, pp. 152-153) analogy of a 'boundary' as concept and practice summarises the variant threads of 'difference' that have woven this chapter's social tapestry.

A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which *something begins its presencing*.

Similar to Heidegger's story, Tongan identity tales and trails recognise boundaries and borders are invented to confine, contain and control. An understanding surfaces in the half-light shades, tones and subtleties of speech that "*something begins its presencing*" (Heidegger 1971, pp. 152-153) at the boundary which demarcates 'difference.' There emerges, I believe, a conscious and unconscious 'knowing' in a family of stories that the *presencing* of the 'Self' and "strategies for [Tongan] selfhood" become, in many ways, more political, active and important at the border.<sup>52</sup> Their salience and significance manifests because the boundary – as in the Pacific Peoples categorisation in New Zealand – requires a passport for entry. Thus, definition of the 'Self' is questioned and modified for public acceptance – a series of checkpoints determined, controlled and conferred *outside* of the 'Self.' Reprogramming individuals and groups for [dis]location "in the minority" permits the boundary to exercise censorship over social memory and history.<sup>53</sup> Once again, the context-dependent 'Self' makes its *presence* known by illuminating the politics of 'difference' at work on the border and in its clench thus contrasting the 'freedom' of selfhood remembered, revered and reinvented as existing beyond its limits.

Imagining beyond the limits of "the political *conditions* of the present" is an intricate process of memory reconstruction imbued with nostalgic reminiscences of 'home.'<sup>54</sup> Home as 'over there' compared to 'over here' or home as 'here and there' saturates identity stories in zigzagging trails that travel beyond the border constraints

of life in the now, in the present, in the moment of its retelling. Of course I am not as naïve and uncritical to announce that living in contemporary New Zealand, specifically in the Auckland Region's locale of South Auckland, provides *poorer* quality of, and security in, life for Tongan generations. Nor am I as scornful and sceptical to suggest that everyday life in Tonga is pitiable due to dismal poverty and the social abjection of exploitation and maltreatment by the monarchy and nobility. Neither version of simplistic, over popularised and one-dimensional 'truth' critically interrogates its own subjectivity and identity in terms of who speaks for whom within these types of discourses on culture and power (Handler 1984; Spivak 1990).

Hence, beyond the borderlines of everyday life exists the social imaginary – it is a reconstructed memory of *how* we imagine the politically empowered and socially enlarged 'Self' in relation to kin and affine.<sup>55</sup> For Tongan generations in New Zealand, projects of political empowerment may not unequivocally signal well-organised and regimented resistance – but rather, they may organically release strategies for culture and power among a family of stories.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>2</sup> Amoamo, R. M. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 2, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>3</sup> I have inserted [slash] in parenthesis (e.g. *Aotearoa* [slash] New Zealand) to signify two interrelated identity mechanisms at work in New Zealand social memory and history. First, the postcolonial newness of using *Aotearoa* as a foreground place name for New Zealand in written and oral record indicates the appropriation of Maori language in everyday English language use. Second, the [slash] in parenthesis alludes to the social-political relationship between the revitalisation of Māori language in the present-day and its historical origins in a colonial past where spoken Māori language was repressed in public life (i.e. prohibition of spoken Māori in Native Schools, the privileging of English language in parliament and government bureaucracies).

<sup>4</sup> 'Māori [slash] Pacific' has been used here to highlight the public act of conflating two *different* ethnic and cultural masses into a classification which frames a group's positioning in a national hierarchy that measures one's identity rank in respect to ethnicity and social-economic power: thus, 'Māori [slash] Pacific' is cited during the thesis when I am *emphasising* this point.

<sup>5</sup> The references to 'Closing the Gaps' and 'Reducing Social Inequalities' are identity statements manufactured for public consumption in New Zealand state policy and bureaucratic procedure. In 1999, the Labour-Coalition Government produced a host of state-driven policy targeted at Māori and Pacific development in New Zealand ministries of education, health and social development under the brand name, 'Closing the Gaps.' This policy motto was made redundant in 2001 and replaced with a new title, 'Reducing Social Inequalities.' Criticism from Māori and Pacific stakeholders influenced a policy name change where critics saw that 'Closing the Gaps' was a demeaning statement that did not take into account the historical context of how social-economic disparities between ethnic and cultural groups in New Zealand had been created and sustained into the twenty first century.

<sup>6</sup> Ritchie, J. 1992. *Being Bicultural*. Wellington: Victoria University Press.

This book as a whole defines biculturalism as I see it, but if a simple statement is needed it is this: there are two predominant cultures here, not one. Pakeha culture (about which we know surprisingly little, anthropologically speaking) is dominant by power, history and majority. Maori culture is dominant by longer history, by legacy and its strength of survival and the passionate commitment of its people. ... People of other ethnicity, religion or original nationality (from the islands of the Pacific or elsewhere) are of similar [Treaty of Waitangi] status to other non-Maori [Pakeha] New Zealanders. ... Polynesian groups [Maori and Pacific Islanders] are, after all, members of one larger Pacific family, with similar languages and cultural elements and patterns. ... But, whatever regional connections there may be to create Polynesian goodwill, filial warmth and friendliness, all have other homelands. Their cultural and historical roots bind them to other lands. For the Maori, this is the homeland; there is nowhere else to go. For this reason my focus will be on bicultural issues and questions. (Ritchie 1992, p. 8).

<sup>7</sup> Belich, J. 2001. *Paradise Reforged: A History of the New Zealanders from the 1800s to the Year 2000*. Auckland: Penguin Books.

It seems likely to me that the intensified antagonism to Pacific Islanders was part of the scapegoat hunt caused by the Pakeha identity crisis that accompanied decolonisation – all the more because decolonisation was not acknowledged. Pacific Islanders were not the only scapegoat. (Belich 2001, p. 535).

<sup>8</sup> Mohanram, R. 1999. *Black Body: Women, Colonialism and Space*. Sydney: St Leonard's Press.

New Zealand is the only white-settler nation other than South Africa which contains a large population of indigenous people. This ethnic balance has resulted in a call for biculturalism or partnership sharing between Maori and Pakeha, unlike Australia because of its greater ethnic diversity and decimated Aboriginal population (between 1-2 per cent), has gone the way of multiculturalism. Such clear demarcations in the racial groups makes it easier to think of Aotearoa/New Zealand as a bicultural rather than a multicultural nation. Mohanty's argument about a common context of struggle ought to build alliances between 'black'/brown women – Maori, Asian, Pacific Islander – but in reality, no such alliance appears. Instead, Asians in particular are perceived as usurpers of that which rightfully belongs to Maori, rather than being perceived as victims of the global economy. The prevailing feeling among Maori has been the inclusion of Asian women in the equation will render New Zealand a multicultural nation, completely bypassing indigenous rights and biculturalism. (Mohanram 1999, p. 92).

<sup>9</sup> See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.

The Bhabha quotation cited on p. 127 in this chapter is re-worked throughout the thesis script to explain how and why I have adapted his idea that 'culture' is *not* fixed or located but rather, a representation of social change and 'hybridy.'

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> See Moala 2002, p. 296.

<sup>18</sup> See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> Brown Pulu, T. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

In March 2006, Dad excitedly told me he had spoken to his friend Melenaite Taumoefolau, a senior lecturer in Tongan language at the University of Auckland. From their conversation, Dad learnt that Edmund Hillary Collegiate – the secondary provider on a dual-sector campus located in the Otara suburb of Manukau City, South Auckland – was offering NCEA level 1 Tongan language to Year 11 students as an academic subject. Dad was rapt with the introduction of Tongan language at NCEA secondary school level and hoped other secondary providers in the South Auckland area with notable Tongan student sub-populations would follow suit. His rationale was that a subject pass in Tongan language would, theoretically, motivate Tongan students to achieve in other academic subjects and thus, gain entry into tertiary education. As opposed to the unwavering 'sustainability of indigenous language' discourse, my Father's position was that success in studying Tongan language could act as a motivating factor for achieving across a range of academic subjects and on to tertiary study.

<sup>20</sup> See Moala 2002, p. 296.

<sup>21</sup> See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> See Bhabha 1994, pp. 1-2.

<sup>25</sup> See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.

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- 26        *ibid.*
- 27        See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 28        See Pandey 1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993.
- 29        See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 30        *ibid.*
- 31        *ibid.*
- 32        *ibid.*
- 33        *ibid.*
- 34        *ibid.*
- 35        *ibid.*
- 36        *ibid.*
- 37        Brown, P. 2006. *Fieldwork Conversation 2*, 19 March, Auckland.
- 38        Amoamo, A. K. 2005b. *Fieldwork Conversation 2*, 13 December, Auckland.
- 39        See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 40        *ibid.*
- 41        *ibid.*
- 42        *ibid.*
- 43        *ibid.*
- 44        *ibid.*
- 45        *ibid.*
- 46        *ibid.*
- 47        *ibid.*
- 48        *ibid.*
- 49        *ibid.*
- 50        *ibid.*
- 51        See Pandey 1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993.
- 52        See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 53        *ibid.*
- 54        See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 55        *ibid.*

# PART TWO

# Dialogue

## *Setting Two*

# CHAPTER FIVE

'TIS<sup>1</sup>

Tongan

Identity

Stories

I am conscious of how little I remember about my childhood or youth or even details from last week, but memory is not a rote recording of the entire past of any of us. My mind sorts between the pieces that it will add to my story and those that it will discard. But my story also changes daily, and those pieces that I can recall take on new meanings as I rethink the experience of my life and even my own identity. We increasingly reinvent ourselves, and we modify the story of ourselves to maintain consistency. In some instances, the distinctions between what I really remember and what I was told are blurred. I do not know for certain now whether some memories are remembered experience or remembered conversation (Archibald 2002, p. 66).



*Fight The Power  
Power To The People*

*Pro-democracy graffiti on a **falekoloa** owned by a Chinese family across from my matrilineal homestead  
Havelu'oto, Tongatapu  
December 2005*

## Tongan Tattoo Dot Com

Tom's tattoo was cool eh Mum?  
 Did he get it in Niue?  
 It's Niue fishing boats or something

Sione Lauaki's got Māori *koru* [spiral pattern]  
 He lives in Waikato-Tainui, respect for the *iwi* [tribe/s],  
 the *Kingitanga* [Maori King Movement]

I want a Tongan tattoo  
 No, Tongan tattoos aren't Samoan  
 They're not!  
 I researched it on Tongan tattoo dot com  
 Email them  
 Ask how much it is to get one in Auckland  
 They can do them in Tonga  
 I don't have to be eighteen  
 You can come with me

My friend got an arm band  
 I want a leg band, above my knee  
 It's different from Samoan bands  
 Tongan tattoos are finer, the detail's finer  
 You should get one

I told Granddad you wanted to get an *anga* [shark]  
 with *Hina* [shark goddess] for Kolonga  
 Yeah, Granddad said you should get '*Utu-longo'a-a* because *Hina* is for Tonga  
 But if you say '*Utu-longo'a-a* then everyone knows you're a Kolonga

I told Granddad your friend Malia had a *fonu* [turtle]  
 He said that's ok because she's a Ha'apai and that's where the *fonu* are  
 Ha'apai people don't *no'o anga* [shark hunt]  
 No they don't!  
 It's just Kolonga

You know Granddad, Grandma, they had this fight over tattoos right  
 Toa and me were *cracking up* [laughing raucously]  
 Like Grandma said Auntie Nina said Tongans got tattoos from Samoa  
 They had to stop it when the King went Christian  
 He banned it or something, whatever

Granddad said, "Tonga don't have tattoos. That's Samoa."  
 Grandma said, "Yes they did. It's in the ..."  
 What's that book?  
 Mariner's book, yeah yeah that's it  
 Granddad's like, "Mariner's in Ha'apai, close to Samoa.  
 Kolonga never had tattoos."

*Hoiaue!* [Oh goodness!]  
 You Dad's too funny, *e!* [eh!]

## Interpretive Interlude Two

Ani-Kāterina was busy doing research, pounding on the computer keyboard in my doctoral student office. Tongan Tattoo Dot Com provided the ethnographic site [sight] from where ‘cultural’ knowledge could be sourced by potential Tongan tattoo wearers worldwide, my middle child included. Excitedly she chatted, surveyed the screen and drummed on the keys. Perhaps she would send her email requesting costs and samples. Or maybe Mum should make contact; adults were probably taken more seriously as purchasers of pricey patterned ‘culture.’ She could send her own design requesting a quote. Or possibly she might wait to see the *tufuga tatau* [traditional Samoan tattooist] for risk her original could be carbon copied; authenticity was the key to being a bonafide bearer of ‘traditional’ body art.

In between her musings transmitted in conversation with her Mother, “Mum, are you listening?,” I etched her into my fieldnotes. I selected and framed her thoughts into word pictures of Tongan Tattoo Dot Com and the politics of borrowed power, a Samoan derivation making a guest reappearance in contemporary Tongan taste, perhaps? (St Cartmail 1997). Ani-Kāterina read her edited script and laughed. “Let’s do another one!,” she said cheekily.

### Part II: U-Turn to the Origin Story

[Teena’s cue: ask the question]

What’s it like living with your Tongan grandparents and going to school in Auckland?

It can be difficult at times because they’re not very Tongan but they’re not very *Palangi* either. You know, they’re kind of in-between. We don’t live like Tongans. They’re not very strict in that sense. Like you know, boys aren’t allowed to be in the same room with you and you’re not allowed to be out after dark, stuff like that. In a *Palangi* family they would be quite hard because they don’t mind hitting their kids.

They don’t mind, like they’ve only just recently started letting me drink. My Grandma still doesn’t like it. My Dad doesn’t like it. My Granddad, he makes me pace myself. They don’t let me go and see my friends on week nights or after dark or stay at their houses for too long. I’m not allowed to go to parties. You get all the dumb things that *fobby* [new immigrant Tongan] parents will do

and then you get all the dumb things that *Palangi* parents will do and none of the cool stuff.

Probably my Granddad is more Tongan. My Grandma, my Granddad, they're from different classes. My Grandma, her family they were quite liberal. Is that the word? Liberated? Their Dad was a rich *Palangi* dude. I don't know what he did. And their Mum was a Tongan Noble, or something like that, so they were quite high class. Whereas my Granddad he was like from this little village out in the *wop wops* where he had to, well, he didn't have it as easy as my Grandma. He had to rough it.

[Conversation pause: cue the next question]

What do you mean you Granddad is more Tongan?

Stupid things he says; his *fobby* English. But I think it's more like he's translating Tongan into English and gets confused, uses wrong words. Like, "Ani, do some fing destructive." Yeah, but he means *constructive*. He like walks around the house in his *vala* [wrap-around garment] and boxer short thingies with his big pot belly hanging out, his big hairy belly. And my friends, you know, they don't know whether to look at him or what!

[Transmission interruption: Ani has taken over the questioning!]

So what do you think? You think your Dad's more Tongan don't you?

[Red alert role reversal: "Oh crap, I'm on the spot!"]

OK. So the reason why I think my Dad is more Tongan than my Mum is both his parents are Tongan. I don't know if it's more or just the way he's been raised and he's more comfortable there because he has a place. It's like, well this is 'me,' this is who I am in my family and it's what I know, it's how I belong.

You know how Grandma's considered to be *Palangi* or sometimes a half-caste cos' her Father wasn't a Tongan. And also like how you were saying there's

class differences. Her Father was *Palangi* and had money. He was wealthy. Class is a biggie in Tonga for saying who's different.

[Danger, danger: Ani is better at questioning than you are!]

So what did he do? Grandma's Dad?

He was manager of the Tonga Copra Board. He was their general manager. So there's class differences, ethnic differences and also cultural differences. Grandma doesn't really practice Tongan culture in the way Granddad does. She kind of blends it and her idea of Tongan culture is going to stuff like birthdays and funerals. But not in her everyday life; only when she gets angry and wants to beat someone up. You know what I mean?

But I think Granddad's more Tongan in the way that he's a lot warmer than Mum. I don't know how to say it. That sounds awful. When you see him around his family he's a very warm person. He watches what he says around people. He doesn't just blurt things out like Grandma, or 'me.' I always get in trouble with the Tongans for blurting out stuff.

He's always quicker to speak Tongan than Mum. Dad talks Tongan when he's speaking English, like you said. Mum says she doesn't like speaking Tongan and doesn't feel comfortable around them. Compared to Dad, her Tongan's very basic. Dad uses flash *heliaki* words, the big words, when he's talking formally, respectfully to people. Mum prefers English and that's ok. I mean it's her first language.

And he gives things to his family. He's always thinking about his family and what he's going to send back to Tonga or who he's going to help in Auckland. You know how he's always going around helping Tongans. He's famous in Tonga and Auckland for helping Tongans.

[Bleep, transmission glitch: Ani has returned to the research participant role]

And he helps Grandma's sister in Tonga too.

[Warning: turn the conversation so that *you* ask the questions]

Yeah, so what do you think?

[Original technique: you have repeated the question your kid put to you]

Grandma can be warm too. She can be a very nice person. She was very kind to Uncle Stanley and she's especially nice to Tina Leka because she favours her. She's her favourite niece. She always takes food for them cos' she knows that they don't have money and they've got lots of kids to feed. But that's her family.

She doesn't like Granddad's family. Granddad, he doesn't like her family but he goes to their family stuff. Grandma only comes cos' she feels she has to and she doesn't really like him hanging around with his uncles and his cousins and all that, cos' she thinks they're a bad influence.

[Hold the line: please remain seated in the questioner's role]

How?

Like he always goes and drinks kava or drinks beer with them, or goes and has a bar-b with them and all that. You know their bar-b, *puaka tunu* [pig-on-a-spit] and *haka* [baked food]. It's not *Palangi* bar-b with meat patties and salads. And when they bar-b they're like there for the whole weekend. It's like every weekend let's have a bar-b.

And I think she just gets jealous because she doesn't have that, not drinking buddies but you know, just mates. Granddad's uncles, his cousins, they're family and they're like mates too. It's kind of like they know when to be serious and when to clown it out and have fun together. Yeah, they really like being together. They're very close family.

[Cue card: prompt another question]

Do you think they're a bad influence?

They can start trouble with *Grandma* and *Granddad* if that's what you mean. Like when they come over for a bar-b and *Granddad's* all happy to see them. But when *Grandma* and *Granddad* get angry they like verbally abuse each other in Tongan and it's like *Grandma's* having a *angus* [angry fit] cos' of *Granddad's* family. *Grandma* will start hitting *Granddad*.

He won't do anything back to her even though he knows he can, but he won't. That whole respect thing. Again, I think that's how he's more Tongan cos' in Tonga women are higher than men and you're not supposed to touch your wife.

But *Grandma* she's very *Palangi*. She thinks, "Oooh! You little *bush kanaka!* [primitive/inferior bushman!]. I can beat you up!" *Grandma* can be quite mean sometimes when she's angry about *Granddad's* family and all their *fobby* stuff and I think if you're with them for too long you can go nutty. I think that's how they're a bad influence.

[Is Ani saying that's why I'm nutty?! What is my face doing?]

But they're also very nice. They can be very nice. *Grandma* tries to be responsible. She tries to be a Mum with me, I guess. She thinks she's my Mum. *Granddad's* just *Granddad*. Yeah, he's more a *FOB Granddad* than anything else. He's nothing like my Dad! With me and my brother and sister, no matter what they say when they're abusing each other in Tongan, we still think they're nice. They're just *Grandma* and *Granddad*. We're used to them. And they love us. We know that. We know they're not perfect. And that we ain't the *brown Brady Bunch* [Maori and Pacific People's version of the Brady Bunch, a 1970s White-American television family] or anything.

[Watch for the cues: squeeze that "bad influence" pimple]

What about *Granddad's* family? Do you think they're a bad influence over him?

Nah! They're just *FOBs*. Like they're really into their everyday life stuff. They like practice that culture stuff, like speaking Tongan and you know, all the Tongan stuff. I don't know all of them too well. Well, there's so many of them, eh. So I don't go to see them that much. Not all of them, the whole bloody village.

But they are quite nice when I go to Kolonga stuff and see Granddad's family and the whole village all talking Tongan and laughing loud, having a big *FOB* party in the South '*Okalani*'. It's like being in the islands. When you go to their house it's like a village. Auntie 'Oli with the *kalapu* [kava club] in her garage; all the Kolonga *FOBs*, some [sitting] on the footpath, yeah. I like their singing. And I think it's cool how they're proud of Nuku. Kolonga think Nuku's better than the King cos' he's their Noble.

[Keep cuing before Ani gets you talking]

Are there any of Granddad's family you can relate to?

I especially feel comfortable around Uncle Pino and them because I used to see them lots when I was little. I saw them everyday before I started school. They looked after me. Auntie Lome always says I'm their girl. Even though I used to see Auntie Tina and them lots too when I was little, they're not like Granddad's family. They can be mean. And they'll be mean to each other in front of you. And they'll be mean to you too in some ways.

But Granddad's family's like lots nicer to each other and other people. Yeah, it's like what you said, they're warm people. They make you feel at home with them. They want you to be part of them. They want you to be Kolonga like them! And I suppose it's that whole respect thing again; that they're village people. Not 'YMCA The Village People,' Mum. Dry! Like they're family but they're a village too. Do you get that? The way they live they're real Tongans. Not like Townies [Nuku'alofa people], they're all *pala* [unsightly sores] - bullshit *wanna' be's* [fakes pretending to be Tongans]. Like old styles village; it's pretty cool some of their village stuff.

[Push the button: keep poking for “everyday life stuff”]

What's everyday life stuff for you?

I think with my *Grandma* and *Granddad* they try to live like *Palangi*. I think that's quite a Tongan thing for their generation. They try to be *Palangi*. They don't speak Tongan to me unless I speak to them first. And they're like all proud and praising me up cos' I'm trying my best. But they don't try to speak Tongan to me first. *Granddad* does sometimes when we're on our own or when his family's around.

But they try to live like *Palangis*. Like everyday, wake up, go to work, come home, make dinner, watch TV, stuff like that. They're quite middle class. I mean, we're not extremely wealthy but we're not poor or anything. They don't like pray or go to church, all that Islandie stuff. It's like *Granddad* does that *FOB* stuff on his own but not with *Grandma* cos' she doesn't like his family.

[Paranoia: I think Ani's going to try to get me talking again]

What do you think of that that?

[What does that mean? You are *so* disconnected from the internet!]

I suppose that's why he doesn't force his kids to do Tongan stuff. Not like some of my Island mates, their parents are *oh-tee-tee* [over-the-top]. Yeah, I kind of want to do some of it. Not cos' I have to but cos' I want to learn how to speak fluent Tongan like *Granddad*. It'd probably be different if *Granddad* had married a *FOB*. He'd make us do *FOB* culture everyday. Then we'd probably try and run away from it. My mates are like that. They think I'm real cool cos' my *Grandma* and *Granddad* are like not too fresh, like just landed in Mangere from the *wops* [bush/village]. And I kind of get more freedom than them to do stuff, stuff they think only *Palangi* do.

*Grandma's* family stuff, well it's not like *FOB* stuff or anything. Well, it is a little bit, I guess. But not like *Granddad's* family, 'The Village People' from Kolonga! Yeah, but their everyday life is try to live like *Palangis*.

[Last cue: I need a drink after the show. Is this Jerry Springer?]

Does it work for you as a grandchild?

I wouldn't say I like it better. It's easier cos' I go to a *Palangi* school and I'm like in a *Palangi* environment everyday and I'm around *Palangi* people in a *Palangi* neighbourhood. But I wouldn't mind it living in a *FOB*, living in a real Tongan household. It's be a nice change from where I live on *The Shore*. I wouldn't mind it.

But the way we live now, I guess it suits me. For now, anyway. It'll probably change when I go to *uni* [university] like I'll do Tongan papers and stuff. And I'll go live in Tonga for a bit to learn the culture properly. Yeah, go stay out in the bush with 'The Village People.' Grandma will have the biggest *angus*.

I was going to go to '*Apifo'ou* [Catholic College in Ma'ufanga village] in Year 10; that would've suited me. But not this year cos' I need *NCEA* achievement standards to get into *uni*. I didn't go cos' Grandma, Granddad, mostly Grandma reckoned I was getting too many *after schools* [after school detentions]. Reports, Grandma's having another *angus* but not Granddad. He's proud cos' I got excellents for *NCEA* level 2 Māori; Year 12 Māori in my Year 10. I think he would've been happy if I'd gone to '*Apifo'ou* cos' it's his old school. Yeah, he was pretty famous at school. Sports captain, drum major - led the '*Apifo'ou* band, head prefect and I think he was dux. I'm quite famous too! But in a different way, eh Mum?! Ha, ha, ha!

[Intermission: scene change. Check the interviewer's pulse!]

### **Ani in Between**

Of course, I am not foolish enough to think that I can treat this day as a normal work day – that I can schedule interviews, and gather material methodically and without difficulty. I know better than to predict Tupou's physiological and attitudinal fancies. I know I have to be ready for whatever Tupou's day will bring. Will she want to eat? Will she want to bathe? Will

she want to sleep? She will always want to go *some* place. Where will she want to go today? (Fanua and Webster 1996, pp. vii-viii).

Ani-Kāterina's favourite television situation comedy is 'Malcolm in the Middle,' an American series that she and her Father share enjoyment and laughter over in each other's viewer-critic company. Ani-Kāterina readily identified with Malcolm's social life predicament of being the in-between child in a family of five (male) siblings; the middle child who outshone his parents' aspiring average family-ness with his cleverness, playfulness and canniness to read the plot and understand how it thickened, over spilled and created more mess in the muddle of everyday life.

I have elected to u-turn to the origin story in part two for interrelated reasons. An opportunity to contextualise Ani-Kāterina's identity performance which opened my thesis prologue can be afforded to readers in the story's detailed script. Secondly and perhaps more importantly for me, it creates an occasion to reflexively mull over how the story's retelling impacts on the construction of social memory and history among my children and me (McAdams 1993; Hoskins and Arvay 1999; Doane 2003).

The nervous commentary that appears in-between our conversation's lines in parenthesis was purposefully inserted. While the discussion travelled across waves of remembering and reworking the 'stuff of me' (Archibald 2002, p. 66) I composed notes to myself to remind 'me' *how* I was uncoiling the play's plot during segments in the script when I secretly hoped the scene change was fast approaching (Hermans, Rijks and Kempen 1993; Maso 2003). This section on 'Ani in Between' and 'me' on the edge began with a quote from Lois Webster's (1996) ethnographic biography of Tupou Poesi Fanua's memories of childhood in Tonga. It was thoughtfully selected (Richardson 1990; Riessman 1993).

Tupou Poesi was my Mother's aunt in her matrilateral Kaho family. She was a first cousin to Mum's Mother, 'Anaseini Kaho. Her Father, Fe'iloakitau Kaho, was the younger brother of 'Anaseini's Father, Manase Kaho. Remembered as an intelligent, forthright and eccentric character, a 'Kaho' family trait so Mum has claimed, my Mother has on more than one occasion told me that Ani-Kāterina and I are "very clever but a bit odd like Tupou Poesi." Laughing when visiting one Sunday afternoon in Te Kauwhata and finding me wearing pyjamas absorbed in writing, hidden behind boxes of paper, Mum said, "You'd better be careful or you'll end up like Tupou Poesi."<sup>4</sup>

Tupou is said to have come from a long line of independent thinkers on her father's side, ones who, although holding responsible government positions, often confronted the authority of the ruling monarchy. It was in this context that she learned about genealogy, ceremony, tradition and social organisation

in the Kingdom of Tonga. ... Tupou credits her knowledge of history to her father, Fe'iloakitau. From him, Tupou says, came her passion for history, and in particular an interest in relationships between family and community members together with the stories and customs that enclose those relationships. From him came the conviction that, with a good knowledge of genealogy, one can gain status in Tongan society and, even more importantly, that without a good knowledge of genealogy one can lose status – “You must know your genealogy well, or you may very well be used as a doormat.” Tupou’s fascination for *fananga* (tales and legends), her easy command of storytelling, and the urge to write down her own tales, came from her grandmother, Mafile’o. Tupou exhibited, apparently at an early age, an uncanny knack of loving and remembering anything to do with stories, customs and family histories. But Tupou is quick to add that she is hopeless with her hands: “My knowledge of such things is all in my mind, I’m afraid.” (Fanua and Webster 1996, pp. xi-xii).

I am not proposing an argument based on genetic inheritance, that acts of remembrance and storytelling are somehow biologically determined in DNA (Sahlins 1977). I am, however, saying that memories and stories constitute inherited legacies among generations who claim family ties through their will to recall and reinvent their relationships to each other in historical narrative which worlds the world we remember (Spivak 1990, 1999; Archibald 2002; Smith 2003). An origin moment resounds in Tupou’s memory reconstruction of her Father: ‘status’ or social value is determined by one’s will to retain and recall ‘genealogy’ as a familial act of power and knowledge. Thus, to forfeit control over remembrance of family allows someone else, or perhaps a nameless faceless institution, to define one’s role as an actor in history and in turn, trample like “a doormat” the power of the ‘Self’ to express, own and represent social memory through storytelling (Fanua and Webster 1996, p. xii).

When I was nineteen and had completed my first year at university I visited Tonga during the summer break staying at my maternal homestead in Havelu’loto with my Mother’s sister (who has since passed away), Auntie Tina. My Aunt told me Grandma Tupou Posesi had travelled overseas to Hawai’i, Australia and New Zealand to conduct university and museum seminars on Tongan history. Jestingly she had asked Tupou, “What do you do on these overseas trips?” Apparently the response she received was, “Oh you know, I just make up stories to tell the *Palangi*.” Upon hearing this second-hand story, a story retold especially for my hearing, I fell back in my chair laughing.<sup>5</sup>

Retrospectively I chortled because the story’s punch line expressed humour. Probing into the laughter’s depths the funniness was located somewhere in-between ‘making up stories’ and the audience for whom the construction was designed. In-house banter can be stirred among a family of stories if it is known that the speaker has creatively *spun a yarn* [created a tale] for the attentive audience. In context,

when the speaker makes light of their storytelling by admission to ‘making it up,’ a comical edge emerges. Humour’s brim is by some measure funnier when the story’s recipient is located outside the family border, a non-relative or non-affine. I am not, by any means, implying that Tupou’s storytelling seminars were spun entirely of inventive fabric. What I am suggesting is the receiving audience become funny in a family of stories when the speaker admits to ‘making up’ verse for them to remember.

Humour may be employed as a speech act in storytelling conversation to diffuse tension from escalating into conflict between contending viewpoints and competing speakers (Morton 1995). In the situation of my Aunt recalling dialogue transacted between her and Grandma Tupou Posesi, my laughter was triggered by imagining the speaker spin tailor-made memories of family stories to fit the size and fashion of an awaiting audience. Humour and laughter in this subtext was not intended to diffuse tension but enacted as a method of criticism. Criticism was not directed at Tupou’s will to ‘make up’ tales for makeshift recipients, a temporary gathering that possibly may never reassemble in such circumstances for a repeat rendition of ‘stories from [my life as] the field’ (Te Momo 2002).

Criticism was focussed on the ‘gaze,’ the listening, watchful, observant crowd that had congregated to purposefully draw knowledge about the ‘Other’ (Said 1978) from the speaker’s word images and play on meanings. Thus, the assembly’s intrigue and interest in the production of meaning through storytelling becomes funny because the speaker’s power does not lie in their will to tell the ‘truth’ about Tonga; but more, power operates through the speaker’s will to sustain their role as editor and director of meaning (Foucault 1980).<sup>6</sup>

Webster’s opening memory of her relationship experiences with Tupou Posesi Fanua in ‘the field’ intimates around a discourse on the production of meaning that I am attempting here to uncoil (Fanua and Webster 1996, p. vii).

Tupou is not always at home when I arrive late morning like this, but today she is here. She sits, bare feet crossed and eyes half-closed, in her stained, cushioned arm-chair, the one that takes two minutes longer to get out of than to get into. She wears nothing but a long, flowered, loose-fitting nightie, her ever-ready brown leather handbag and eighty years. I sit next to her, perched on a wooden end table, setting up my machine and my wires and my various papers. She giggles as I try to organise myself. I anticipate a good day and, as though to confirm it, I gently attach the mini-microphone to Tupou’s nightie. She likes the mike – and the feigned authority it demands.

Arranging the stage for the storyteller’s performance sets off giggling, according to Webster’s memory: the chuckle may be interpreted by two mutually related circumstances. At once, there is humour in observing the inquirer and

immediate audience combined in one political actor unscramble the tools of their trade. In another sense, giggling is directed at the 'Self,' the storyteller. The humour lies in conscious and unconscious self-awareness of one's positionality as the 'voice,' a sojourner between memory and transmission, a mediator between remembering and repositioning one's story in [counter]history; an interpretive [sub]text which may not be widely accepted unless the storyteller gives voice to its meaning, its value, its *becoming* a social history of 'me' in my family.

A third situational factor is carefully threaded in-between giggling at the scene setter and 'me' preparing to speak as my family of stories; here, the audience thus *becomes* funny. The audience of readers is viewed through the immediate audience – the 'researcher,' whose anticipation that this will be "a good day" to collect stories (Fanua and Webster 1996, p. xii) may be interpreted as funnily enthusiastic bordering pushily expectant while hinging, ever so delicately, on exasperatingly pedantic.

To recap my analysis, power ebbs and flows through the storyteller's will to manoeuvre the transmission of dialogue. To a certain degree, the speaker's desire to steer the talk is woven in monitoring, probing and provoking interactive engagement. Such speech acts become exercised through the way in which the immediate audience – the researcher, responds, reacts and recycles the memory's delivery and interpretive meaning. The identity co-construction that transpired between my daughter Ani-Kāterina and 'me' in the field exemplified this point. In our storytelling conversation a process eventuated of stepping into social fracture and familial conflict while negotiating 'me' in its presence (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1991). Ani-Kāterina was, during edgy seas in our dialogical exchange, the navigator and 'me,' the co-correspondent (near drowning) in the field (Arvay 1998). Once again I was enticed to "ride the bus" (see p. 98) of family stories. This time the place of departure, transition and arrival was not Fale Fa in Upolu's Western District of Samoa but memories closer to 'home' – a shared Tongan origin as interpreted through my parents' relationship to, experience in, and relocation [slash] dislocation<sup>7</sup> of Tonga in our everyday lives.

Certain places visited by Ani-Kāterina's memory and story were drenched in irrepressible giggling and critical theorising. The relationship forged in speech acts of humour and conceptualisation was significant and by some measure, purposeful. At a conscious level her chuckling interspersed in conversation which was cutting, raw and poignant enacted a counter-response. It talked back to the story's reception uncovered through my facial expression, body language, stuttering pauses, grappling dialogue, flighty writing and floundering questions. Situated in contextualised and

politicised discourse which wilfully produced meaning, Ani-Kāterina read ‘me’ carefully. At times, she prodded deliberately with her ‘too close to home’ memories that not singly re-enacted her life’s story but impinged on, wrestled with, won over and mingled in mine (Agar 1986; Behar 1996).

At an unconscious but close to the surface level, Ani-Kāterina laughed to her ‘Self’ as an act that reassured the ‘Self’ the story’s retelling squatted (even if it was somewhat tenuously) within the social border of what was considered permissible in terms of critically (but fairly) evaluating family relationships (McNamee and Gergen 1999). She had to console her social conscience that criticism provided the necessary communication device for interpreting and delivering the story’s road map to meaning. In criticism’s grasp, spontaneous giggling erupted as if to intuitively remind her ‘Self’ and my ‘Self’ that memory and history are not simply contested ‘out there’ in what we imagine are the domains of public and academic media. Making social memory and history becomes identity work overburdened in disputation and fraught in conflict within a family of stories.

In between the storyline  
My middle child  
Moved me to the edge  
Of what I could see  
Was a reflection  
Of my life in hers

My wondering on wandering too close to memory’s edge

## **What Kind of a Researcher are You?**

“Do you want to start with when you where born?” begins the researcher. “How can I know anything about when I was born, you silly fool,” answers Tupou. The words that follow record some of the stories that Tupou did, indeed come to hear and remember and tell. Woven in the fabric of her own life story are the stories of others, stories within stories, and stories about stories. Together they epitomise the lifeblood of Tupou’s coming and going, and are passed on to her readers with the invitation to tell and re-tell them, to modify and slice them, to refine and embellish them – as they inevitably will – thus becoming their own stories, and encapsulating the lifeblood of their own coming and going. (Fanua and Webster 1996).

As an anthropologist, I can intimately read my own positionality through Webster’s memory of Tupou Poesi Fanua, the subject of her research in co-constructing the story of a Tongan woman’s childhood in early twentieth century Tonga. Such a reading can be performed by linking memorable situations in the documented experience to mine. That is, I am able to glimpse my positioning

through the researcher's memoir of the subject in relation to the depths and layers of social exchange. I empathised with Webster's anxiety that Tupou's transmission of memory into taped conversation may not take place in a manner or mode which allowed the researcher to clearly decode its meaning for readers who have not conversed or kept company with Tupou.

I understood that the interplay of power and knowledge in social memory and history can be learned from the researcher's first-hand experience with the storyteller's colourful eccentricity and somewhat wilful non-compliance with convention. I connected with the author's finicky almost nit-picking 'need' to qualify, to validate, to explain the context-dependent relationships and "associated surroundings" (Mason 2006, pp. 18) of recording and rewriting social life in the field. I identified with the desire to *capture* the mood which gave rise to the story's release into the world, into the researcher's tape recorder and into the researcher's selection and sorting process. I knew the labour of toiled decisions transferred onto paper which kindled the *hope* that a family of stories may transcend the human experience beyond reading words in straight lines of black print on white paper. I have related 'me' to Webster's multiple identity sites as a researcher, co-storyteller, scribe, listener, converser, confidante and editor of social memory and history. For the most part of this tale, I can relate (Bridges 2001).

Webster reclaims her own memory interwoven in Tupou's (1996, p. xiv).

I remember when I first met Tupou she said to me that I reminded her of her foster mother. I didn't know who she meant, of course, but I was to find out. With this exercise in mental archaeology, Tupou's foster mother and many others in Tupou's personal life became part of mine. It took me a while to sort out the features of Tupou's life, the order in which events occurred, the effect they had, and how those effects sustained or changed Tupou's life circumstances - for example, the birth of Tupou's seven children, the loss of three others and her eventual separation from and remarriage to Posesi.

Tupou's memory spun to Webster who has recreated its meaning in her social life is a situational position that a researcher in the field adopts and adapts to sustain relationship consistency with the restless subject and to organise an unwieldy story. The point of departure where my positioning as 'researcher' diverges from Webster's is that I have doubled-up as the 'researcher' and the 'researched' in the storytelling and co-construction process. I am implying that the type of social memory and history co-construction that I have collaboratively engineered in the field is different to Webster's *modus operandi*. Webster starring in the role of 'researcher' and Tupou playing the 'researched' have reconstructed the subject's memory in storytelling conversation: here, the 'subject' is the 'researched.' Webster's memory inherited

from Tupou's stories did not constitute direct memory shaped, sculpted and coloured by lived and living experience: hence, the 'researcher' is *not* the 'subject.' Nor was the memory that Webster traced to Tupou Posesi understood as the remembrance of her own genealogical ancestry or familial connectedness to a shared Tongan origin: again, the 'researcher' is *not* the 'researched.' And therein lies the difference, stammered the nervy subject (Trask 1991, 1993).

I am not seeking to privilege my own researcher and researched position, nor am I suggesting that a dichotomising binary between insider and outsider research is at work here (Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee and Kee 2001). Webster's research strategy intersects with mine through the principle of memory reconstruction via storytelling conversation. Difference is played out, however, through the researcher's positionality in respect to the researched subject. By this, the research questions and modes of analysis that shape my study differ from Webster's political interests in reconstructing the childhood memory of a Tongan woman. The distinctive factor is power relations between the researcher and the researched. In my case, I am attuned to my own social desire to interrogate my political interests and the relationships of power and knowledge that proliferate between my subject positioning as the researcher and the researched subject. Such consciousness in turn becomes the priority of 'culture,' my own social reality that chisels and refines the research process. My capacity to critically analyse memory reconstruction via storytelling conversation and its relocation [slash] dislocation<sup>8</sup> in history is subject to my position in a family of stories and ensuing relationships: it is distinguished by my sensitivity to "associated surroundings" (Mason 2006, p. 18) that inform memory transmission and my interpretation of my 'Self' as the crucial political actor in narration. I am not simply retelling another's story as told to me. I am weaving my 'Self' and 'Personhood' in and out of the trails and traces of memory reconstruction, storytelling genre and historical discourse.

As a play on situating the 'Self' I will attempt to contextualise some of the social behaviour described in the co-constructed storytelling conversation which emerged between my middle child, Miss 'Ani in Between' and my 'Self.' Ani-Kāterina reiterated in her script one glaring place of identity collision and collusion. We had both reconstructed this social disjuncture by various interpretive lenses. The negotiated space in which we agreed was that anger constituted 'culture-specific' behaviour influenced by shades, shadows and shards of class, ethnicity and culture submerged in Tongan identity discourse. Ani-Kāterina continued theorising this politically loaded imagery in her dialogue of which I have elected to insert some of her ideas in chapter six.

Our theoretical musings intersected through the subject of how ‘difference’ is rationalised through ideas of class, ethnicity and culture in Tonga. Investing in a family social history which had coloured my Mother’s subject positioning among layers of shifting identity discourse I stated (see p. 163):

So there's class differences, ethnic differences and also cultural differences. Grandma doesn't really practice Tongan culture in the way Granddad does. She kind of blends it and her idea of Tongan culture is going to stuff like birthdays and funerals. But not in her everyday life; only when she gets angry and wants to beat someone up. You know what I mean?

My statement, “You know what I mean?” intended to create a conversation pause, a distraction that allowed me to shift the subject away from becoming snared in politicking anger as an outlawed emotion in Tongan behaviour, especially because I had constructed my Mother’s social life as an object and subject of analysis. Momentarily my language bordered the prohibited territory of ‘dangerous words’ (Brenneis and Myers 1984). An immediate recant enacted by moving the discussion to my Father, the obvious subject of comparison, seemed the most effective strategy for one, *not* speaking frankly of family breaches of social taboo and two, surviving any potential political fall-out with my Mother (Urwin 1984).

Ani-Kāterina’s dialogue rotated to explain intra-generation divergence, a feature of her grandparents’ social behaviour (see pp. 3, 162). Their dissimilarity from each other was read against an ethnographic backdrop of class, ethnicity and culture (Vincent 1974; van den Berghe 1981). However, I noted that there was an even deeper point of difference between her ‘Self’ as a third generation Tongan descendant born in New Zealand, and her grandparents as products of the migrant Tongan generation, which she desired to make clear from her story’s introduction (see p. 161).

In a *Palangi* family they would be quite hard because they don't mind hitting their kids.

My daughter pursued her line of ‘difference’ by critically observing with a mind to sustaining her in-between positionality as the generation newer than mine that endured through compromised living relationships with the generation older than mine (see p. 165):

But when *Grandma* and *Granddad* get angry they like verbally abuse each other in Tongan and it's like *Grandma's* having a *angus* [angry fit] cos' of *Granddad's* family. *Grandma* will start hitting *Granddad*. He won't do anything back to her even though he knows he can, but he won't. That whole respect thing. Again, I think that's how he's more Tongan cos' in Tonga women are higher than men and you're not supposed to touch your wife. But *Grandma* she's very *Palangi*. She thinks, "Oooh! You little *bush kanaka!* [primitive/inferior bushman!]. I can beat you up!" *Grandma* can be quite mean sometimes when she's angry about *Granddad's* family and I think if you're with them for too long you can go nutty. I think that's how they're a bad influence.

Different to my generation-located analysis, Ani-Kāterina constructed my Mother's emotional engagement with, and exercise of, anger as "very *Palangi*" (see p. 150) social behaviour (Valentine 1963). My interpretation was that outbursts of fury exhibited a type of Tongan social-psychology to which the behaviour could be traced. Combined, our conceptualising converged on one point; that is, we coloured in the type of social behaviour with an ethnic descriptive crayon by labelling it as either *Palangi* or Tongan. Comparatively, our theories diverged on one point; that is, our 'different' subject positioning as either generation two or generation three adjusted the lenses with which we viewed the play on meaning. The threads which wove our subject positions into a multi-coloured tapestry of family stories is that Ani-Kāterina's interpretation of anger and its dislocated appearance in Tongan social behaviour was influenced by my Father's transmission of memory. I, my 'Self,' veered towards my Mother's stories of her matrilineal family, the descendants of the illustrious 'Kaho' brothers.

My interpretive preference was read from a script of family narratives transmitted by Mum, her siblings and cousins of a characteristic attributed to *some* of the Kaho brothers, in particular the eldest brother Tu'ivakano. To contextualise the narrative's meaning I have cited Tupou Posesi Fanua's memory of her Father, Fe'iloakitau Kaho's story of his brother, Polutele Kaho Tu'ivakano (Fanua and Webster 1996, p. 58).

Dad tried to give me an example – a kind of demonstration. "Like this," he said to me, "like my brother, Tu'ivakano. He was Premier and he did well enough in his own time. He was a man of force, and he used to force people, because people were afraid of him, and in that way he used to get things done. But it came a time for another Premier, the Prince Consort Tungi." At that time more educated Europeans were coming into Tonga and if my Uncle Polutele had had a chance to use his usual force – you see, he was sometimes a very hard man – he would surely have ended up in prison overseas or somewhere, because he used to beat people with chairs and all sorts of things.

Ani-Kāterina's analysis was couched in my Father's reconstructed memory of social behaviour reasoned as out of control and out of bounds in Tongan adulthood. To contextualise my daughter's rationale inherited through her Granddad's memory, I have cited Wendy Cowling's explanation of anger as an emotional rejoinder which releases 'dangerous words' (Brenneis and Myers 1984) and borderline behaviour into the world (Cowling 2005, p. 152).

Nevertheless, angry words are still seen as dangerous. Emotional control is generally a mark of a mature person in any society. In most societies, the social domain is usually organized in a variety of ways to permit individuals to express their self-awareness, feelings and emotions in culturally-accepted ways. In Tonga, the expression of emotions such as anger or even mild dissent is consensually controlled by the linkage of restraint with traditional values of respect and harmony. ... The more conservative but influential members of the community prefer to maintain a particular form of social structure. In this way dissent may be construed not just as dangerous but as morally reprehensible. A socially-acceptable way has yet to be devised which would enable people to express their individual and collective feelings of disaffection, without being accused of being disrespectful or traitorous or (at worst) of being '*fie-Palangi*' ('like a European').

At the outset, Ani-Kāterina and I elected to rename 'anger' as a social behaviour of ethnic distinction; Ani-Kāterina choosing the description "very *Palangi*" (see p. 165) and 'me' selecting the label "Tongan." Conflated in our ethnicity and emotion narratives was the understated place in which we collided and colluded. Here, I am alluding to the notion of class. Although we employed different ethnic categories to describe the origin of anger in social behaviour, it was the idea of class that created an overpass to cross-read our dissimilarity. By this, the covert meaning in my discussion intended to confide in my daughter that Tongan class distinction afforded my Mother the kind of social memory and history which remembered and reinvented anger' and its performative identity in a family of stories. Conversely, Ani-Kāterina discretely conveyed to her Mother (through reading her Granddad's memory) that "very *Palangi*" (see p. 165) social behaviour is a class delineator in Tonga. Hence, class consciousness permits members within the house to behave towards those outed from its confines in a manner considered by the silent majority as un-Tongan-like, unreasonable and undesirable.

Cluny Macpherson has offered brief thoughts on the fringe positioning of class as an analytical device that explored social-economic disparity between ethnic groups living in New Zealand and intra-ethnic power differentials played out within groups (2004, p. 145).

Systematic studies, in which social-economic factors are controlled, have shown that some observed difference, which was supposed to be ethnic, is in fact the consequence of class. When the experiences of different ethnic groups with similar class locations were compared, the consequences of ethnicity were shown to be much smaller than was generally supposed. This strategy is not widely accepted in New Zealand because many people are used to explaining social differentiation in ethnic terms. Discussions of the nature and consequences of 'class' differences tend to be sidelined in popular discourse.

Re-contextualising Macpherson's (2004, p. 145) discussion in the field of our storytelling conversation, my parents have relocated their social memory and history amidst our inter-generation lives in New Zealand. Therefore, when Ani-Kāterina commented that "They're quite middle class" (see p. 167) she was suggesting their life choices are directly related to social-economic capacity in terms of income generation and semi-professional employment. For Ani-Kāterina and my 'Self' to unwind the identity trope of 'middle class in New Zealand' means looking at how 'Their' lives and life choices are in turn, played out through 'Ours.' This act of memory reconstruction requires tracing the travelling origin of 'class' to socialisation experiences in the Kingdom of Tonga. What I am saying is my parents' relationship to a middle class lifestyle in New Zealand is underpinned by spectres of class politics in their place of departure from 1960s Tonga (Johnson-Bailey 1999).

At times when their conflicting social memories and histories tempt a head on collision, my parents instantly renegotiate their middle class in New Zealand lifestyle and redeploy to their assumed positions – sometimes at battle stations, which were carved in the 1960s landscape of politics, power and place in the Kingdom of Tonga (Jacobson-Widding 1983). Conflict resolution strategies provide another opposing feature inherited through their contrasting experiences of social memory and history. As Ani-Kāterina and I discussed in our storytelling conversation which reorganised direct memories of 'Them,' our Tongan origin in New Zealand, anger reproduces a site of contested identity that unfolds inter-generation theorising as to how such speech and social behaviour is understood in relation to culture and power. Expressing anger in adult life, as Cowling (2005, p. 152) explained, quite possibly oscillates on the border of taboo in the sense that this type of social behaviour becomes subject to discipline and management through a host of prevention and punishment strategies for many human groups, not singly Tongan society.

My 'Self' and my three children have engraved my Mother and Father's tomb of difference from each other with class distinction, a recurring idea passed onto, and reinvented by, 'Us' through 'Their' storytelling memory and its relocation [slash]

dislocation in history<sup>9</sup> (see pp. 232-239). In context, class as the distinguisher of difference repositions our Tongan origin in a disjunctive identity place to the social memory and history co-constructed by matrilineal and patrilineal family. It engenders the kind of familial fracture and social fragmentation which is subtle but understandable given the context-dependent relationships and “associated surroundings” (Mason 2006, pp. 18) that inform our inter-generation experiences in New Zealand.

I deliberately chose to situate the ‘Self,’ reposition my ‘Self’ that is, in respect to the reproduction of meaning that endures among three generations – my parents, ‘me’ and my middle child, Ani-Kāterina (Jenkins and Csordas 1997). The subject of analysis was the ‘Self’ in terms of how Ani-Kāterina and I co-constructed various interpretations of anger and its relationship to culture and power. The place in which we converged was our generation locale; Ani-Kāterina reading the play on meaning through her Granddad’s memory of Tonga and ‘me’ framing my view from within the family of stories by Mum’s maternal ‘Kaho’ clan. In this subtext, culture and its relationship to power is interpreted by employing the microscopic lens which best fits the political interests and popular tastes informed by our position as either generation two or generation three made and raised in New Zealand.

Ani-Kāterina’s generation tastes, canons and preferences opted for analysing social behaviour through what was perceived as ‘traditional’ culture and its relationship to power. The comparison imagined into existence was “very ***Palangi***” (see p. 165) behaviour sits in direct opposition to the “real Tongan” (see p. 168) lifestyle. ***Palangi*** therefore equates to class imposed elitism and culture constitutes a Tongan code of superior conduct. My ‘Self,’ I elected the shade of my generation comfort zone by recalling a family of stories to analyse how class privilege and power performs a duet in Tongan historical discourse. Thus, cultural politics of class in twentieth century Tonga have afforded members of the in-house to exercise power over sentencing certain individuals and groups to the outhouse; especially those bold enough to exhibit wilful dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Perhaps Tupou Posesi Fanua’s (1996, p. 58) reconstructed memory of her Father’s story speaks in-between the identity binary of “very ***Palangi***” (see p. 165) versus “Tongan” class consciousness. Tupou disabled the oppositional culture of socially bounded ethnicity from playing out conflicting roles in her production of meaning on twentieth century politics of modern Tonga. Her performative identity moulded in social memory and history made two insightful observations on power and culture. Firstly, the transition of power during the Salote Tupou era of modern Tonga entailed the establishment of a ‘different’ political leadership style. Secondly,

this shift in political power led to the social transformation of what was considered ‘traditional’ Tongan speech and behaviour. From my microscopic lens, the transformation of social meaning traced to the Salote Tupou reign has been, and continues to be, reproduced and reworked among Tongan generations in New Zealand. The situated identity of my middle child has borrowed and adapted interpretations of the ‘traditional’ past from her Granddad’s memory. Granddad has in turn carried and redesigned the Tongan past from his primary socialisation experiences in Tonga. Ani-Kāterina has thus relocated the reinvented past among our presence, our present day lives, by speaking and behaving as an expert in her own social life – the life of a generation three Tongan granddaughter who desires to “go to *uni*” as well as “speak fluent Tongan like Granddad” and “learn the [Tongan] culture properly” (see pp. 167-168).

Well anyway, Prince Tungi came along and he became Premier. He was a gentle man, you know. He was also very friendly with foreigners, many of whom were well educated, and he was able to meet them with an easy manner. Tungi was, you see, a person loved for his gentle ways, and what my father meant was that Prince Tungi was the *lohu* of that time – the right *lohu* for that time. He did not make people fear him. He made them admire and love him. He had a knowledge of the world, the world outside of Tonga, which was becoming a very important thing already in those days (My emphasis; Fanua and Webster 1996, p. 58).

### **Meet the [Grand] Parents**

Teena, do I speak with a British accent?

What?

The girls at work say I don't speak English with a New Zealand accent  
They say I sound British

You speak like Auntie Nina

That's nice

Auntie Nina speaks lovely doesn't she?  
She pronounces her words properly

Yes, Auntie Nina's got a thing for speaking properly  
She told me that New Zealand English is deteriorating  
People don't speak properly, she reckons  
They sound awful

I think she's right  
Even written English is poor these days

I'm forever correcting mistakes in transcripts at work  
It's quite sad isn't it?

Co-constructed by Mum and 'me'<sup>10</sup>

In an essay on how Tongans discipline emotions and feelings by social rules of restraint and constraint, Wendy Cowling (2005, pp. 151-152) noted in a section named 'generation gap' that:

What particularly concerns teachers and welfare workers is what they consider to be an excessive use of physical violence in disciplining children. Criticism of this kind has led parents to send their children back to Tonga to be cared for by close relatives: grandparents, aunts and uncles, perhaps and older brother or sister. The need for a more considerate view of children and young people is obvious but will take some time to be addressed.

Conflicting ideologies and practices governing caregiver-child relationships among Tongan generations in New Zealand intensifies a contested identity site. My family of stories, however, does not interrogate inter-generation relationships using the microscopic lens of risk assessment and child safety associated with social work, particularly statutory social work in New Zealand. It is not that I do not comprehend that 'intervention' strategies are designed by the state to *prevent* harm by, if need be, removing a child from an unsafe environment. But rather, my analytical interest and political motive for reconstructing identity stories and resituating them in historical context is derived from my own desire. This thesis decodes my intention to gain closer intimacy with, and understanding of, *how* social memory reproduces itself in the presence of our everyday lives.

In our storytelling conversation Ani-Kāterina and my 'Self' navigated through social landmines of culture and power. Ani-Kāterina in particular skilfully negotiated her story's route across familial fracture and social fragmentation. Criticising the conflicting ideologies and practices which informed her grandparents' middle class in New Zealand routine, she retracted her position somewhat by commending the 'stuff' that made 'Them,' her matrilineal Tongan origin, real people; that is, grandparents negotiating complex lives that move and mingle through shifts and schisms of social change. Ani-Kāterina's social memory resituated her grandchild relationship to her grandparents in word images that analysed the interplay between inter-generation disjuncture and familial cohesion. The identity descriptor she performed extolled and censured social life read in-between her grandparents' relationship to culture and power (see pp. 161-168).

In-between  
 Hard  
 Dumb Things  
 None of the Cool Stuff  
 Different Classes  
 Warm  
 Nice  
 Kind  
 Bad Influence  
 Jealous  
**Angus**  
 Verbally Abuse Each Other in Tongan  
 Respect Thing  
 Responsible  
 They Love Us  
 They're Not Perfect  
 Ain't the **Brown Brady Bunch**  
 Try to Live Like **Palangi**  
 Don't Try to Speak Tongan to 'Me' First  
 Middle Class  
**FOB** Stuff  
 Proud  
 Happy  
 Pretty Famous

'Me' In-between My Grandparents  
 Ani-Kāterina Amoamo<sup>11</sup>

Shrouded in this word picture is a significant identity factor that operates among a family of stories. Social memory and history does not merely provide a script for reinventing the 'stuff of me' (Archibald 2002, p. 66). More importantly, memory and meaning proffers a role play in which social behaviour is modelled and modified according its relevance to, and practical application in, everyday life. Ani-Kāterina's desire to learn and adapt what she rationalises as a more 'traditional' Tongan lifestyle in her everyday routine is therefore a considered response to the subject positioning of generation one – her migrant grandparents, and generation two – her made in New Zealand Mother. Revelling in her generation-located discourse is a strategic departure from the class politics of her Tongan origin and the middle class mundane of living on "**The Shore**" (see p. 168).

Cluny Macpherson envisioned that ethnicity's increasing importance in a globalised landscape may possibly create the political climate for the rejuvenation of Pacific languages and cultures to endure in New Zealand.

It is possible that, a generation on, New Zealand-born Pacific people might seek quite deliberately to reclaim elements of their cultural and linguistic heritage to establish an identity which distinguishes them from others in an increasingly homogenising social world. Many early migrants invested time and energy in strategies which they believed would make their children more accepted and successful in a society which was at best uninterested and, at worst, hostile to their presence. Their New Zealand-born children and grandchildren are here as of right, and have a confidence born of familiarity with the society. They have no need to accommodate to the assimilationist expectations of some Palangi New Zealanders in the way that their parents may once have done. Indeed, the increasing acceptance of, and even enthusiasm, for Pacific cultural values and practices among Palangi New Zealanders, which is also born out of increasing familiarity with them, may make this unnecessary. New Zealand-born Pacific People might increasingly 'revalue' their cultural and linguistic heritage to allow them to make social linkages and claims in a New Zealand society in which ethnicity seems to be coming more, rather than less, significant and to establish deeper links with a place and a history in an increasingly transient world (Macpherson 2004, p. 153).

Although I desire to share Macpherson's optimism in the culture and power possibility, I am not wholeheartedly convinced that an inter-generation transition will take place in a simple linear discourse of Pacific mass movement towards sustaining "cultural and linguistic heritage," as insinuated. In Macpherson's text, the critical question which arises is who are these faceless "New Zealand-born Pacific People [who] might ... 'revalue' their cultural and linguistic heritage"?<sup>12</sup> I would suggest the answer lies somewhere in-between the named Pacific ethnicities of "New Zealand-born Cook Islanders, Samoans and Niueans" who, according to the author's analysis, have co-constructed a "sub-culture based on common descent and similar practices."<sup>13</sup> The in-between location listed in a Cook Islands, Samoan and Niuean triplicate of made and raised in New Zealand Pacific Peoples is the Samoan contingent; the largest Pacific ethnicity and possibly the influential shaper and shifter, shaker and mover, of forging ethnic and culture specific movement towards adopting and adapting the Pacific Peoples mass identity marker.

In the situated identity of my middle child, Miss 'Ani in Between,' my familial and political interests in her will to adopt and adapt a more 'traditional' Tongan lifestyle are two-fold. Firstly, familial discourses of culture and power are traced to experiences of social memory and history in Tonga and thus, remembered, forgotten and reinvented in New Zealand among the moving social life of Tongan generations. Secondly, Macpherson's (2004) analysis intimates around institutional discourses of culture and power currently in play among a shifting ethnoscape of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33). The point I wish to raise is where, how and when do two discourses of culture and power – familial and

institutional – intersect, intercept and intercede in a plethora of diversity and difference that is active (and at times, reactive) among the mass identity marker of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.

To contextualise my theoretical disquiet I have cited Macpherson's (2004, p. 148) viewpoint on the supposed interest of “New Zealand-born [Pacific] parents” in sustaining indigenous Pacific languages as the vehicle for socially mobilising culture and power among their children’s generation.

The increasing support for Pacific language medium early childhood education and the inclusion of Pacific languages and cultures in the secondary and tertiary curriculum may partially address the loss. Growing numbers of New Zealand-born parents, aware of the personal consequences of their own language loss, are demanding, forming and supporting pre-school Pacific language centres which are opening in urban areas.

Perhaps this analysis is somewhat applicable to the Pacific identity triplicate of “New Zealand-born Cook Islanders, Samoans and Niueans.”<sup>14</sup> However, fieldwork conversations I have conducted with adult participants in Tongan language providers of early childhood education in Auckland suggest the migrant generation, *not* New Zealand-born parents, constitute the core advocates, supporters and facilitators of total immersion in Tongan language learning (Taufe’ulungaki 1994; Tavana 1994).<sup>15</sup>

A closer inspection of my family of stories reveals intra-diversity among inter-generation positions on Tongan language as a medium in formal education. It brings into question a host of views on whether integrating Tongan language within learning institutions reclaims and exercises culture and power. In fieldwork conversation with a matrilineal first cousin who was born in Tonga and migrated to Auckland with her parents and siblings at age thirteen to attend Catholic secondary school, I enquired why her two children had not attended a Tongan language early childhood provider. Her amused reply was, “I think I can do a better job myself. I think my Mum can do a better job.” My cousin understood Tongan language as a function of the home, an integral aspect of familial social life. Its everyday retention and sustainability was therefore the inter-generation role and responsibility of parents and grandparents *not* the state or *non*-familial teachers.<sup>16</sup>

For my Father, integrating Tongan language as a medium in formal education conflicts with part of his original intention for migrating to New Zealand; this was to acquire greater learning and achievement opportunities for his descendants not easily accessible to most citizens of 1960s Tonga, particularly university education in which formal English was the medium of transmission. My Mother’s standpoint concurs with Dad’s in the sense that employability in New Zealand, especially in the

professional sector, is largely determined by proficiency to communicate in formal English, spoken and written. Infused in this position is my Mother's experiential knowledge of *being* an English as a first language speaker; a woman who was socialised in the 'home' by her Father's language of instruction and identity.

Mum and Dad attribute varying shades and tones of social value to sustaining Tongan language among generations in New Zealand. Interestingly (and perhaps somewhat at odds with their culture and power specific lifestyle), the primary site of sustainability is sourced to the 'home,' which *may* be interpreted as a family's will to engineer and maintain tangible ties to Tonga as the origin place of culture, power and *language*. My Father was, however, politically aware that Tongan language would *become* integrated into secondary education as a **NCEA** subject for Years 11-13 students. This type of institution-driven discourse on Tongan language retention in New Zealand was reworked by Dad. He viewed secondary study of Tongan language as a stepping stone towards gaining entry into tertiary education, rather than a cultural sustainability strategy (Taufe'ulungaki 2000). My Father interpreted the formal integration of Tongan language into the New Zealand secondary school qualifications framework as a move towards encouraging Tongan students to use their success in studying Tongan language as motivation for achieving in a wide range of academic subjects to gain university entrance (Helu-Thaman 1992a, 1992b).

My 'Self,' I have adapted my parents' position and shifted its meaning to negotiate identity space in respect to the cultural politics that shape my children's formal learning situations. My three children have experienced and developed by participation in Māori total immersion education a type of social consciousness which rationalises that the *survival* of culture and power is connected to language retention among generations. Hence, Ani-Kāterina's will to learn "to speak fluent Tongan like Granddad" (see p. 167) performs a subject position influenced by her formal education background in **Kura Kaupapa Māori** [Māori total immersion school] in the primary sector (Nepe 1991; Gonzalez 2001; McIntosh 2005). This is not to say she is immune to the type of social pressure from siblings and Tongan cousins of her generation which exacerbates her multi ethnic and cross cultural 'difference' (Grewal and Kaplan 1994). In conversation with family of her generation, social pressure has been enacted through the insinuation that there is a surmounting 'social need' for her to acquire language fluency because she lives with her Tongan grandparents.

Ani-Kāterina's interest in Tongan language acquisition is, as I see it, sculpted explicitly by cultural politicisation learned from Māori immersion education and her Father's professional influence as a **Kaiako Māori** [Māori language teacher] (Gee 1991; Nepe 1991; Neizen 2003). Familial expectations derived from Tongan social life

invoke a subtler affect on pressuring her into the kind of social awareness in which language retention is equated with the *survival* of culture and power (Greene 1995). If anything, familial ties to a Tongan origin echo an understated nuance on the meaning of indigeneity in language in New Zealand (Obeyesekere 1990): Māori indigeneity and its relationship to *Te Reo Māori* [the Māori language] in *Aotearoa being* the compelling social and political discourse enacted through public institutions (Awatere 1982, 1984; Walker 1984, 1985, 1989, 2005). In my view, Ani-Kāterina's position on language sustainability *may* not be clearly sourced to the "increasing support for Pacific language medium" engineered by an imagined Pacific Peoples social movement taking place in New Zealand (Macpherson 2004, p. 148).

In light of this discourse of cross-fertilisation on language politicisation in contemporary New Zealand, I have constructed a position in-between my parents and my children. Although language acquisition is useful in respect to broadening one's knowledge and power base through fluency and confidence with a host of context-dependent ideas and meanings, it is not, as I see it, the single most important factor that determines social memory and history in a family of stories. It is, quite possibly, the most overstated and obvious social practice that distinguishes individuals and groups, especially in New Zealand cultural politics where ethnicity has become an embellished feature of social life due to its power to define and confine newness and difference.

However, I have not interpreted language as the grand finale in 'becoming' ethnic or 'being' cultural *unless* power is purposefully invested in this discourse as the most valuable way to *becoming* and *being* more, rather than deteriorating over time into less. The power of 'culture' in sustaining minority languages in the twenty-first century is rationalised by two interrelated reasons. Firstly, language represents diminishing social capital and dwindling human resource; the argument is minority languages belonging to local cultures need to be retained to preclude global hegemony from homogenising the world's diversity and difference (Awatere 1984; Smith 1999). Secondly, language signifies epistemological value as the carrier and disseminator of minority knowledge; the logic is that minority languages convey connections to the 'past' in ways of knowing that express the world's diversity and difference (Walker 1989, 2005; Bishop 1997, 2005).

Anxiety activated by the sociological imagination (Mills 1970) which sees inter-generation ethnicity and culture as increasingly bounded to global and decreasingly stationed in local reinvents a homogenising discourse that worlds what appears to be a *shrinking world* in dichotomising identity language of more or less. The irony for Pacific Peoples research in New Zealand on subject positioning 'difference'

is that an “increasingly homogenising social world” (Macpherson 2004, p. 153) in the era of globalisation *may* not have, if anything, generated the kind of newness in research questions and methods which permit ‘difference’ to exist outside of measuring ethnicity and culture through ideas on more or less (Richardson 1990).

Theoretical intersection between Māori and Pacific research in New Zealand performs an understandable crossover in situating ‘difference’ within the historical discourse of ‘nation and narration’ (Bhabha 1990). In narrating the nation, such discourses of ‘difference’ – contemporary Māori and Pacific Peoples in New Zealand – are lodged in-between two discursive places. First, the desire to de-centre the centre’s positionality – its hegemony in relation to constructing and constricting the margins (Gramsci 1971); and second, the practical reality that homogenising fragmentation by reinventing fracture as social movement and ethnic mobilisation presents an effective analysis in which to speak of culture and power.

To contextualise my theory on the overlapping relationship between Māori and Pacific Peoples discourse, I have cited Macpherson’s (2004, pp. 142-143) thoughts on Pacific inter-generation difference in imagining the “gaps” in culture and power. For comparison, I have cited Hazlehurst’s (1995, p. 105) discussion on Māori inter-generation difference as politicked by Māori academic versions of culture as the prerequisite for empowerment.

The circumstances of the New Zealand-borns’ socialisation and education were, for many, very different from those of their parents, and this caused varying degrees of inter-generational tension in families (Utumapu 1992). The process in which they reconciled these differences, and found an identity which captured this reality, has been described by Anae as an ‘identity journey.’ The process, and associated tension, continues apace and has been captured in research on the causes of these inter-generational, ‘cross cultural’ conflicts by Tiatia (1998), and on the resultant stresses by Samu (2003). The increasing use of the English language by New Zealand-born children, and the associated decline in fluency in Pacific languages (Hunkin-Tuiletufuga 2001), further impeded the ability of families to bridge growing cultural gaps between many island-born parents, grandparents and their New Zealand-born children and grandchildren. (Macpherson 2004, pp. 142-143).

In the analysis of Walker and other liberal Maori thinkers, these youths were the heirs of the worst effects of assimilationist policy. Cultural identity had been denied to them by both societies. Instead of integrating the Maori and European races, it was claimed, the policy succeeded in throwing the younger Maori generation into a state of confusion which could only be remedied by renewed cultural pride and economic security. (Hazlehurst 1995, p. 105).

In terms of situational analysis it is ‘the urban context’ of social change which sketches the contours of Māori and Pacific discourses on inter-generation difference

(Rogers and Vertovec 1995). The overarching theory which links the two ethnic and cultural aggregates in New Zealand history is that mass migration and urbanisation have re-socialised the new generations by a set of social and political experiences that differ considerably to the origins and primary socialisation of migrant forebears (Smith 1984; Harvey 1989; Howe 1990). Although this human feature may be the comprehensible point of entry for minority discourses seeking movement away from the fringe so they may closely challenge the centre's position, it is 'the urban context' constructed as homogenising social fact of which I am ideologically sceptical of making a lifetime investment in (Polkinghorne 1988).

What I am alluding to is the theoretical relationship between generality and specificity in an ethnography of 'the urban context' and its influence on social change among inter-generation minorities (van Velson 1967; Rogers and Vertovec 1995). As a general lens that examines movement amidst a critical mass of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand, Macpherson's (2004) analysis offers a valuable research agenda to consider; that is, how will the Pacific shape up and shift on among New Zealand-born generations? However, the contextual specificity that locates and dislocates New Zealand-born Pacific Peoples in 'the urban context' is unclear (Macpherson 2004).

The content and context of 'the urban' squats in a hazy half-light. The limit of the discourse I find my 'Self,' as the reader, negotiating entry with lies in asking who are these nameless faceless people the author describes and where do they live. Such questioning uncovers power differentials absorbed by my own anxiety that there looms a strong possibility 'They' – Pacific Peoples in New Zealand – *may* not include Tongans in Auckland related to 'me' (Rogers and Vertovec 1995). An ethnography that strategically unravels the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand discourse to find its 'Self,' its specific position amid the mist of an industry-driven critical mass, can see the 'Self' dislocated and disjunctive from the political agenda's organising principle. Here, the homogenising strategy I am speaking of is to sweepingly theorise 'difference' by making the discourse accentuate an invented social fact; that is, 'sameness' exists in, emerges through, and is expressed by, ideas of ethnic and cultural association.

For 'me,' it is the "general politics of truth" (Foucault 1991a, p. 73), the structures and mechanisms of 'association,' which need specific unfolding in respect to questioning *how* and by *what* measures are 'We' related to the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand discourse. Rogers and Vertovec (1995, pp. 7-8) analyse the cultural politics of 'the urban context' when theorising general viewing in relation to the specific audience.

He [Mitchell 1987] goes on to argue that there is no universal set of contextual parameters, which are apposite to every situation, but that they must be re-specified on each occasion. What then constitutes the urban context relevant to situational analysis? It is generally accepted that there can be no universal definition of the urban across all cultures and economies such as those postulated by Wirth and the modernist theorists. This does not mean, however, that there is no value in identifying specifically urban conditions as part of a set of contextual parameters. Even size, density and heterogeneity may be appropriate to the context, although they are highly unlikely to exhaust it. Other content definitions of the urban may also be relevant, such as collective consumption, local-level political processes and spatial proximity (Pickvance 1985).

To reiterate my theoretical position in respect to Rogers and Vertovec's (1995, pp. 7-8) analysis, the massification of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand sidesteps specificity grounded in the field. By this, I mean the will of the discourse appeals to generalising theories of social change as a totalising phenomenon triggered by inter-generation re-socialisation in 'the urban context.' However, what constitutes the urban and its "conditions [and] contextual parameters" (Rogers and Vertovec 1995, pp. 7-8) falls short of a situational analysis. By situational analysis, I mean that my research agenda attempts to disentangle the Pacific as a swelling aggregate, a critical mass, to reflect on and resemble fragmented social realities and ethnic and culture specific processes employed to negotiate fracture through lives in change. As Rogers and Vertovec (1995, p. 7) have insightfully revealed, the urban context provides an inexhaustible range of possibility for situational analysis and interpretive content.

This section of chapter five has been named 'Meet the [Grand] Parents' for specific reasons. It was intended as the stage setter for the conversation entries of my parents Patricia Brown and Semi Pulu or Tricia and Semi, Mum and Dad, Grandma and Granddad, depending on who and which circumstance performs the ritual of naming. This section has positioned specific stage props in certain places to signpost that my parents' entries in chapter five of part two were purposefully constructed by their daughter and granddaughter, largely for non-familial readership.

My analysis of Ani-Kāterina's position on sustaining culture and power through language acquisition was a set-up for politicking inter-generation 'difference' in opinion. Subsequent to this, uncovering variation in my family of stories from the dominant strand of Pacific Peoples discourse framed a deliberate counter-position. Such a theoretical reading intended to expose the public appeal of converting social fragmentation into critical mass in a New Zealand ethnoscape (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33): the ideological magnetism thus draws in public and academic familiarity with this type of discourse from acquaintance with popular theory on contemporary urban Māori (Hazlehurst 1995; Brown Pulu 2002).

‘Meet the [Grand] Parents,’ a subtitle I adapted from an American motion picture and adjusted for my analysis (Roach 2000), creates the tone of anxiety and mood of pending tension that engaging in conversation with the parents of the only daughter evokes and echoes. It performs a play on words. My Mother and Father double-up in their feature act as parents [slash] grandparents.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, an ethnographic stage set up by a family of stories makes their appearance seem ‘grand’ in the sense that memories of them thus far in my thesis were grown and harvested by their daughter and three grandchildren intertwined. At this place in the overarching narrative, their conversation storytelling will be read, by some measure, in relation to reconstructed memories and stories retold of them. At the same time, their stories analyse, contest or reinvent ethnographic detail and family drama woven in and out of the script for a general viewing audience. I suppose, in many ways, cultural aggrandisement – the will to reorder the priority of culture in a context-dependent situation – is critically related to power. In this subtext, culture and power involves the modes and methods in which we re-assess what we can say in respect to what needs to be censored, tapered or toned down in public discourse.

In the following section, ‘Mum in Translation,’ my Mother’s dialogue presents the first act. My Father’s discussion crafts the second act named, ‘Dad in the Village.’ As a front door to opening their selected performances, I have inserted some of Ani-Kāterina’s critical insights on features in social memory and history that she, as their granddaughter who lives with them, negotiates an organically shifting relationship with. In and out of changing circumstances that sculpt ‘the urban context’ (Rogers and Vertovec 1995), my daughter’s movement through her situated identity is influenced by her positionality as third generation inheritor of Tongan origin in New Zealand, an ethnic and cultural derivation that weaves among her Māori experiences. I have inserted my own conversation sign posts to act as a dialogical road map. Thus, heading Mum, Dad and Ani-Kāterina’s storytelling snippets are parenthesised entries by ‘me’ which may provide directions on the three conversations’ routes [slash] roots.<sup>18</sup> Cross-reading a family of stories co-constructed among Tongan generations in New Zealand will, theoretically speaking, afford the reader *some* measure of understanding on the specific content informing cultural politics in inter-generation social life. By this, I suggest that culture and power *becomes* political in family relationships through its everyday interplay thus generating boundless selection for interpretive meanings emerging from ‘the urban context’ (Rogers and Vertovec 1995).

### **Power to the People**

As a foreword to my ‘Mum in Translation’ I will spin a short story on the photograph that fronts chapter five. Across the road from my maternal homestead

stands a *falekoloa* [small shop]. My Mother's family home is located on Taufā'ahau Road in Havelu'loto 'i Tongatapu. Havelu'loto is the village in the *Tofi'a* [estate] of *Fie'lakepa Nopele* [Noble Fie'lakepa] who held former offices as the Governor of Ha'apai and the Minister of Lands and is currently Lord Chamberlain: his Mother, Tuna Fielakepa, is a first cousin to my Mother. Auntie Tuna's Mother was Tupou Taulupe who was a younger sister to 'Anaseini Kaho, my Mother's Mother. 'Anaseini and Tupou Taulupe were daughters of Manase Kaho. They had a sister in between them named Meletonga and a brother positioned number four in a family of five siblings named Kuliha'apai.<sup>19</sup>

During the 2005 civil servants strike in Tonga, a bout of protest graffiti by different slogan writers appeared on various *falekoloa* in villages of *some* Noble's Estates as well as the Nuku'alofa area. Black spray paint was the widespread choice of protest tool and the popular site of resistance, *falekoloa* – *not* government buildings. Sighting the photograph's message, 'Fight the Power – Power to the People' provoked three different responses from my Mother, my Father and my middle child and second daughter, Ani-Kāterina. Mum laughed, Dad frowned and Ani-Kāterina asked inquisitively, "Will the people get democracy soon?"

Ani-Kāterina's question was not explicitly commented on at the time of its asking. In the following fieldwork conversations of chapters five and six, however, I have included snippets of social change discourse that critically process the impact of reorganising Tonga's political structure in the twenty-first century (see pp. 199-202, 223-227). There surfaced a multitude of positions, propositions and plays on how Tonga's governance and governmentality (Foucault 1980, 1991a) may shape up and ship out the 'ideal' in culture and power to achieve relationship success, specifically for the knowledge consumption and reproduction of Tongans living in global diaspora.<sup>20</sup> Thus, I have selected, edited and re-represented a smorgasbord of stories. My action signifies a Mother's hope that her daughter may recreate an interpretive picture which suffices *some* provisional insight into how her question sits shakily within a family of stories.

Will the people get democracy soon?

Ani-Kāterina Amoamo<sup>21</sup>

## **Mum in Translation**

Act 1: Scene 1

[Ani-Kāterina on being a Tongan girl in Auckland]

I didn't grow up in a very Tongan environment, if you want to call it that. I've only started to get to, you know, I only moved in with Grandma and Granddad a couple of years ago. I've only been living with them for a short time. In that time, I've started to get to mix with our family, our Tongan family, a lot more. I'm learning quite a bit. Like I'm learning how to speak Tongan. I'm learning customs, like what to do when you go to a funeral for example, or a birthday, or whatever. They tell you how to dress and they tell you how to act. Like you have to act in a certain manner.

For me, being a Tongan in Auckland, a Tongan girl, I don't know much about Tongan culture and all that but I'm very proud to be Tongan. And I want to learn more about Tongan stuff and yeah, I'm just very proud to be Tongan.<sup>22</sup>

Act 1: Scene 2

[Mum on grandparents and grandchildren]

Yes, Tongan grandparents they spoil them. A lot of parents they give their child to the grandparents to look after, especially their first child, bring them up. And they spoil them and discipline them quite a bit, but mostly spoil. Just like ordinary people. I mean Europeans do that, Samoans do that, all sorts of people, so it's just the same. But normally their first child they give it to the Father's side to bring up. It's sort of a custom. But the second one and the rest they can name it after the Father or give it to the Mother's side to look after. But the first-born always goes to the paternal side.

The relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren is much easier. But nowadays when they do it in Tonga, like you have the parents living in New Zealand and the grandparents living in Tonga, they can send them to the grandparents in Tonga to bring them up. But as soon as they get up to school age they send them over to New Zealand to go to school. And it's quite sad because of the different way of bringing up kids. They really find it hard to adjust to the parents and be part of the family rather than being the spoilt brat. After awhile they get used to it but they still sort of feel as if they're

not part of the family because they've been brought up by the grandparents since they were a little baby.

And also the kids look at him as not really, seeing he hasn't been brought up together, at first they sort of look at him as an outsider for a time. Like Stanley in our case, Charlotte's Stanley, he was brought up by Tina. When he came here he found it really hard to adjust and he still feels as if he's not, you know, he knows he's part of the family but there's still that stigma that he carries with him. Yeah, he's sort of a loner on his own and feels as if he's not part of a, it is a stigma.

[Patrilineal '*eiki*]

In that sense, '*eiki*' means superior. In the sense that they're superior to, like the Father is superior to the children and the Father's sister is superior to the Father and their children, things like that. But that's what '*eiki*' means in that sense, in that context. The Father, normally what the Father says that's what they do; he makes the decisions. And the sister can overrule the Father if it's a family thing that involves the nucleus, the whole, the sisters and brothers of the Father; she can overrule him. Yeah but what it means is what the Father says goes. And the Mother is normally the mediator between the children and the Father. What he says goes to her and then she goes and tells the children what the Father wants. That's why he's considered an '*eiki*'.

[The Mother as the mediator]

Not really. She can say when she's with the Father on their own, she can bring up the subject and say in a polite way, "I don't agree with it because of this, that." But normally he wins, what he says goes, yeah in the Tongan. But the more educated parents, like you have parents now in Tonga who's quite educated, they mediate. But in the real Tongan way where you, just the parents don't have much education and that, it's mainly the Father that says the say. But the educated parents, the Father still has the last say. Yeah, cos' he's the head of the family.

And it's mainly the Mother's the mediator between the Father and the children. The Mother gives the hidings, everything. Normally if the Father says give her a hiding, she'll have to give her a hiding, she'll have to give the hiding. And if you get a hiding from your Father, that is so bad. Yeah, it really hurts emotionally. Maybe not painfully but emotionally.

[The Father and his sister]<sup>23</sup>

Yes, the Father is very very respectful of their sister. And whatever, they can, she can override and say things for the children, what the children should do if she thinks so, if she thinks it's appropriate, she can do that, yeah. But sisters and brothers are very respectful of each other. They got a close bond. And he is always very respectful of each other. They got a close bond. And he is always very respectful of his sister irrespective of his wife or anyone else. He'll always speak up for his sister. And the sister is loyal to the Father too. They're both loyal to each other.

[The sister-in-law]

You get a lot of sister-in-laws that, we've got, like you know James's sister-in-law, what's his name, his younger brother, I can't remember what her name is. But she's always slinging off at James's side, their Mother or their Father, everything. But she never says it in front of them. She'll always slings off when the family's not around. But as soon as the Father's there and all the family is there she does the opposite. She greases round them and talks nicely and that. But behind their back they say what they feel, but never let them know. The husband probably has an idea what she's like. But he's never evidenced it in front of him cos' she'll get a hiding, a black eye.

[Criticism]

That's the Tongan way. If you're too direct or too critical or they think you're a *Palangi*. Yeah, they think that you're rude. They'll shy away from you and don't want to be around you; as soon as they see you coming they'll take off.

But the Tongan way is you beat about the bush. If you're telling them to do something you go round in a circle and eventually get to it and then they get the hint. But you don't tell them direct. But some families, like we're known to be direct, the Kaho family. I think they, if they know we're from the Kaho family we're excused cos' we've got a reputation of being like that. So they just take us as, "Yep, ok, that's a Kahol!" Oh no, it's a family trait: it's generic, it's all over unfortunately! Tongans think it's outrageous!<sup>24</sup>

Act 1: Scene 3

[Ani-Kāterina on Tongan language retention]

To me it is because I mean, our generation they don't speak proper Tongan right and so they probably can't relate to the older generation. The older generation can understand them. But they can't really speak, like the younger generation, they don't really speak like the older ones and ones back in the islands. If that continues then they're gonna' teach their kids to speak Tongan, like you know, how they do. There's a big Tongan population in New Zealand like if it continues I guess they won't learn to speak. Tongan language will be lost, I guess.

Yeah absolutely, it becomes very, I guess Tongan culture is quite colonised. But, you know, it'll become more *Pakeha-fied* [Westernised]. You know, the language breaks down and becomes, you know, *pidgin-ised* [broken Tongan merged with English]. You know cos' without language there's no culture. And if your language is all bungled up then so your culture's gonna' be as well.

[Sustaining ties to Tonga]

I reckon there's not enough people going back to Tonga. Because like if you go to Tonga, even it's just for a short time, you get to see how people, how real Tongans live, how they speak and just everyday practices. Cos' people in New Zealand, a lot of them have never been back to Tonga and they don't know much about it. They think, "I'm Tongan and I know this and I know that," but really, they don't.

[Colonisation and culture]

Tongan culture, they have been colonised by the *Palangi*; they are very *Palangi-fied* [Westernised] with church and all that. Like tattooing, how that was banned. It's very *Palangi-fied*. A lot of the practices that they did back in the olden days they don't do anymore because missionaries came in and banned that stuff. So they've lost a lot of their heritage and stuff.<sup>25</sup>

Act 1: Scene 4

[Mum on divorce]

And not only that if you do get divorced and you're a Tongan, you get hell from the family, you know, the husband's family. If you appear anywhere without, and they'll just watch you, watch what you do and you can't even turn your head without them watching you and really critical of you all the time if you're divorced from your husband or you leave your husband. You're like a black sheep.

The Mother normally takes care of the children but they still have contact, a lot of contact with their Father's family. Like the Father's sisters will go and get them out for the weekend, spend money on their birthdays. Every time they have a family gathering they always go and bring them along just to maintain the tie; you don't want to lose that tie.

[Knowing your family]

Yeah, very much so, they do. I think they're proud of their culture as well. That's probably why the Tongans think they're better than their Polynesian relatives cos' they've got a very strong culture. They're proud of their culture and yeah, proud to be Tongans.

Very important for Tongan families to know your relatives because they always think, you know, what if you don't know, your children don't know their cousins and that, they might end up marrying each other. And that's very embarrassing for the family, for the Tongans to marry your third cousin or

something like that. And they, people can rumour you for that too, they can mock you on that, a weapon against your family. So that's very important for them to know their extended relatives, yeah.

Like if your parents or your relations take you to a gathering where there's lots of people there and they introduce you, they always introduce you to your family and tell you that's so and so's wife or husband, daughter or son or whatever, and they try and relate back to Tonga and say where you're from, how you're connected to them.

[Sustaining ties to Tonga]

I think it's very important because for their roots, they need to know. And also, the parents in the islands they tell everything they know to their kids. Like what happened, like the history of the Tongans and the history of their family background and what they did and everything so their kids know when they die they know, they can carry it on. And know where they're from and their background and everything.

I think the only time I know that they send their kids back is when they play up. They reckon they can, you know, they just don't know what to do with them. So they send them to the islands hoping their relations can put them into place. But I don't know; I don't think so. I mean I don't think Tongans here are sending their kids back so they can learn their family history.

But I think the kids themselves will want to go to Tonga when they grow up because they want to know where their ancestors come from. And I'm sure they'll be, the children of the future will be wanting to learn more about the Tongans than what the Tongans at present here are doing. The parents from Tonga they sort of think, "Oh, that's all right. We know our background and we want them to have a better education and that's more important."

But I think they're not stressing that point with them, you know, "You get to know your family, go to Tonga and see where I come from," and all this. It's the kids of the future that will be doing that. They'll go back to the islands.<sup>26</sup>

## Dad in the Village

### Act 2: Scene 1

[Ani-Kāterina on living in Tonga]

Yeah, not during my school years I wouldn't live there. I'd go there for holidays but probably after school. Fourth form or third form would've been a good time to go to school there because those are just cruisy years. But fifth to seventh form are where you've gotta' put in all the hard work; so maybe after school.

My Granddad knows lots of people. I might find work. You know, at the airport or working in the Harbour. I might drive shuttles to the airport or I might do fishing or something. Or just run my Grandma's plantation, just help her out; Grandma Siu, yeah, my Granddad's Mother. And I'd also go and visit Auntie Nina cos' I haven't seen her in a long time and she's cool.

Granddad's Mum, she doesn't like me. Well, she likes me but she favours Toa better. I think it's because I was Grandma's little pet when I was little. But I think I could get to like her if I tried. We could learn to live with each other. I don't think I'd live with her for a long time but I'd probably stay with her for awhile but I wouldn't actually live with her. I'd go visit her often in the village, in Kolonga.<sup>27</sup>

### Act 2: Scene 2

[Dad's view on sustaining ties to Tonga]

It's a good idea, very important. I was telling Ani, coincidentally, I was telling Ani yesterday, you know when we, Ani and I were talking about it yesterday and I told her because one day we're going to be dead. You know, you've got to face it. But whatever we tell our kids or grandkids, you know, they're the ones that are going to live on.

The way to raise kids in Tonga they tell them all about the bad one in the family and all the good one in the family. That's right. You know, they tell them which one is the good one in the family and which one to trust, which one to trust and whatever they says must be right. It's probably why Tongan people

don't write things down, you know. Tonga are, well they only go through history by telling, you know, how their life and everything else happened. But they never actually write things down. That's what Ani and I talk about yesterday.

I don't think so. I don't think the people here send their kids to Tonga to meet the family. I mean the way they see it if you have a strong tie with your own family here there's no need to send them to Tonga, there's no need. That's how most Tongans do it here. But it's a good idea to send them to meet the other family in Tonga cos' some of them can't come.

[Social and political change in Tonga]

You know they *e* [eh], how can I put it? Just like a tree, ok. If the tree is dying, what do you do to a tree? You can not go and uproot the tree, even so you love that tree, you want it to be alive. What you do, you chop off all the dead leaf first and try to give them as healthy things you can get. But you don't just go and uproot the tree. It's been there for a hundred years, thousands of years. You go out and try to just treat them, all the dead leaves. Tonga's like that.

You know because Tonga, we know there is a need for change. Everyone knows that. But the way they try to change them, that's where it goes wrong. That's what people don't realise. They got to hang on to it as long as they can. Once that gone, you got nothing. And when you go beyond that, tell me other countries where you go overseas and live overseas and you don't even pay for your own land. But in Tonga you don't pay for it.

Oh, *tukuhau* [land rates] or whatever. But I mean. Yes, yes, it's like a dollar or something. I mean, if I own a property here, even if you go and live in England, anywhere else, I still have to pay the rate here, pay the rate and everything else. If I don't look after that, my property will be disappear, will be gone. Tonga is the only place that we all come and live here, we still go back to Tonga and you pay nothing. You own everything else; you just go in, it's yours. And they try to take that away from us as well. Are you happy to lose all that? Are you happy to be fighting with, selling it to someone else to come in and set

up? And not only that but what I was telling you before, they'll put a like a rate on it. If you can not afford to pay the rate, you lose it, automatic lost it.

I mean, that's what pro-democracy do. People don't look beyond what they, you know, how lucky they are to get with those privilege. That's the privilege, what your friend are talking about, you know. It's a privilege it's been going on for so many hundreds and thousands of years. That's a example of explaining, really.

[Protest at *Atalanga*]

It's not as many supporter as what people think because, you know, when they put it in paper it's only a very minority, it's only a few. And people, Tongan people are very *fie' ilo* [nosey]. Some of them turn up just to see what is going on and they keep counting them as one of their supporter things. But they're only a observer. Like the protest at *Atalanga* [Government of Tonga House in Remuera suburb of Auckland City]. I was there. I went passed to have a look at what was going on and I know exactly what was happening. I did not go in there. I only went to do my work.

There was a lot of observer[s]. But only a minority of them try to think, to say what's happening, what it is all about. You know, this is only my way I look at it. They wanted a change, you know, a total change in the way Tonga's been, like democracy or change of the King. They wanted all the democracy system. You know, they try to push, the way they brought it, they want to push it, use the other, the civil servants strike you know for their own beneficial. Yes, and when I saw it I thought to myself for me you know, it's only a few. You always look in the paper and it's always the same people popping up. It's only a minority. It's not the majority.

Teena, you want my short answer for that? It's all the *faikava* [kava club] people, *faikava* people and the unemployed. They are the *faikava* people Teena because you and I don't have time to go and *faikava*. We stay home and look after our own family. I mean, when they go to *faikava* that's all they talk

about. And if you don't work, if you unemployed, you *faikava* more often. So you listen more, listen to Laki Niu.<sup>28</sup>

### **Bringing it Home<sup>29</sup>**

Even then, it's still a struggle for power between various groups within ethnic groups about what's being said and who's saying what, who's representing who? What is a community anyway? What is a black community? What is a Latino community? I have trouble thinking of all these things as monolithic fixed categories (Renee Green cited in Bhabha 1994, p. 3).

Homi K. Bhabha cited the social thought of African-American artist Renee Green in 'The Location of Culture.' Green spoke candidly of the complexity involved in negotiating *place* and *belonging* in a specific system of culture and power for generations of identity bearers themselves. Internal variance within an identified community is shifted, sorted and sifted in respect to the subject positioning of a history of cultural 'difference.' The position of a culture's difference is therefore mediated and moved amidst the social landscape in which its difference is historically traced, tracked and transmitted. Green's insight reverberates throughout this work: "I have trouble thinking of all these things as monolithic fixed categories."<sup>30</sup>

To refine a point I made in chapter four, no homogeneous 'difference' exists and persists in Tongan social life in contemporary New Zealand. Cultural difference is unstable and mobile, expressed in an assortment of performances that detail modes and meanings of experience and expectation. The meandering trails of social memory and history narrated by my middle child Ani-Kāterina and her maternal grandparents – my parents, Patricia Brown and Semi Pulu – oozed the inter-generation difference of family relationships which negotiate connectedness to ancestral, ethnic and cultural ties. Inter-generation cultural politics and the politics of difference are, in many ways, conceptually interchangeable. By this, I mean the inter-generation relationships of culture and power that transpire between, and socially transform, my daughter and my parents as subject positions in a Tongan family, are woven into their interpretations of cultural difference. That is, their inter-generation and gender 'difference' from each other, their 'difference' as cultural subjects categorised as an ethnic minority in New Zealand and their [dis]location 'difference' of living in the Auckland Region compared to life in Tonga. Although signposts of 'difference' are tidily catalogued under ethnicity, culture, gender, generation and location – the content which composes their 'difference' lends to

storytelling conversations that select, edit and emit a mosaic of interpretations of culture and power.

Judith Butler's (1998) identity analysis depicted its staging as 'performative,' an interrelated series of representation in which expressions of selfhood are arranged in social engagements defined *in* the context that calls for their performance. The performative stories reproduced by my second daughter and my parents illustrated the flexibility and mutability of 'identity' played out through familial relationships to culture and power. The crossroads of narrative described Tongan ethnographies in which ideology and practice is contextualised and mediated among families. At once, unfolding tales converge and diverge between speakers. Storytelling volatility shows that memory is reinvented according to the speaker's interpretation of the past and its relevance to the 'Self' *in* the moment of its telling. Therefore, *how* speakers read each other's tastes, interests and preferences may not necessarily coincide with *how* the 'subject' performs the role of one's 'Self' on a fieldwork stage. This constitutes the point of entry for convergent acts of speech. The unpredictability of conversation ruptures the stability of culture and power in the sense that the ethnographer's familial position – as mother and daughter – did not confine identity performances to frequently travelled routes of 'tradition.' This indicates the transition point for divergent acts of speech.

To explain, in chapter one's tale of 'me' in my family I interlaced my memory with Ani-Kāterina's. Here in chapter five, we co-acted in an unedited play of the origin story. Our dialogical exchange reconstructed memory of ancestral ties to a shared Tongan past in the present through the social lives and family histories of my parents – my daughter's maternal grandparents. My Mother's composition, experience and expression of Tongan identity was reinterpreted as *more* culturally hybrid than my Father's performance of the 'Tongan Granddad' – a contemporary re-enactment of patriarchy and respect paid to Tonga as the origin 'homeland' and Kolonga as the village of primary socialisation alongside the relaxing of social constraints influenced by a long-term New Zealand lifestyle. In an intricate twist of unwinding conversations, my Mother's dialogue featured in this chapter repositioned the 'Self' as a firmly rooted 'inside' authority on culture and power. By comparison, my Father played the role of 'deference,' *faka'apa'apa* [respect] to the Kingdom's social and political structure, by criticising pro-democracy supporters for their reluctance to analyse how the democratisation of Tonga may change customary land tenure, especially for *api* [homestead] and *uta* [bush/tax] allotments belonging to Tongans living in New Zealand.

The travelling theory of culture and power recounted in my Mother and Father's identity duet *bereft* of Ani-Kāterina's thoughts and my sub-headings rearranged in-between their lines would re-represent a 'different' reading of social memory and history among Tongan generations in New Zealand. A stand alone performance by my parents would, understandably, lend the impression that our social engagements with negotiating a Tongan past in the contemporary present is less messy – tidier in terms of familial hierarchy and structural definition, and *more* constrained – less organic in creating and practicing cultural hybridities of everyday reality grounded in lived and living experience. My point is that familial relationships may fleetingly adjust to new social circumstance in the case of conducting fieldwork conversations. The temporality of *being* resituated in the field, an anthropological study of social memory and history among Tongan generations in New Zealand, engendered 'different' relationship meanings for my parents in contrast to my second daughter.

My Mother and Father's divergence from their granddaughter's speech and behaviour in the transitory borders of the 'field' illustrated their interpretation of a 'formal' relationship at work between culture and power – speaker and inquirer. Understandably, their dialogical journeying through social memory and history took on the role and responsibility of 'formal' discourse, an authoritative act of expressing the 'Self' to 'Others' of likeness and dissimilarity through academic media. Hence, recalling 'tradition' as the founding history of cultural difference surfaced in stories that surveyed and conveyed the meaning of memory among a Tongan family of stories [dis]located in contemporary New Zealand. Ani-Kāterina's engagement with a research process of *being* moved into the transience of a fieldwork conversation was a display of culture and power that sought to subtly subvert the familial hierarchy of generation. [Dis]located in this context, her performative identity skilfully enacted a series of 'weapons of the weak' (Scott 1985). At once, her dialogue was relational – it desired to reconnect her Mother's memory to a shared past evoked through her own social life of living with my parents in the present. Cleverly, her stories were intertwined in acts of political insurgence – an upheaval of memory's 'comfort zones' and polite Mother and daughter chatter by resituating our 'Selves' as critical subjects and presumed suspects of reinventing culture and power.

In between the to and fro, the ebb and flow of social memory and history recited in a family of stories, pauses silences and spaces of forgetting pepper the landscaped picture of 'here' and 'there' – Auckland and Tonga – melded and moulded by the will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991) that Tongan families reproduce cohesion, continuity and connection. Even when inter-generation memory names

discordant relationships among family the overarching project seeks to mediate ‘safe’ passage through social fracture and familial conflict. Consciously and unconsciously it accentuates “[p]olitical empowerment, and the enlargement of the multiculturalist cause, [that] come from posing questions of solidarity and community from the interstitial perspective” (Bhabha 1994, p. 3). Here, I have adapted Bhabha’s intended meaning of “multiculturalist cause” to emphasise that ‘different’ versions of culture and power are retold in a family of stories. The “interstitial perspective” that Bhabha speaks of is intertwined with Pandey’s “‘fragmentary’ point of view.”<sup>31</sup> Bhabha notes that “the interstices – [are] the overlap and displacement of difference.”<sup>32</sup>

My spin suggests that subjectivity and identity is contextualised in the experience and expression of the ‘Self’ in relation to the relocation and dislocation of culture and power among Tongan generations in New Zealand. With urgency, a Tongan family of stories may exercise “political empowerment” by overstating an identity stake that seeks appreciation and understanding on its own terms of cultural difference.<sup>33</sup> The conditions of difference, however, are by no means unvarying and uniform. Thus, “posing questions of solidarity and community from the interstitial perspective” as Bhabha has commented, exposes social fracture and familial conflict alongside desires to accentuate “solidarity and community.”<sup>34</sup>

Conflict traced to identity trouble in Auckland New Zealand whether this culminates into hostility transacted between those “‘in the minority’ ... singular or communal” or disquiet experienced within and between Tongan generations, is, I believe, worked through in the imagery of ‘home’ as the metaphor for belonging.<sup>35</sup> Reconciliation in this context does not take place through a ‘formal’ settlement process regulated by institutional bureaucracy, nor does it call for the type of ‘official’ pardon facilitated by state machinery in cases of granting ‘forgiveness’ for injury, suffering and pain consciously and unconsciously inflicted. Conflict resolution is enacted organically through ‘the stories we live by’ (McAdams 1993). In this sense, describing the social terrain that cultivates ‘fertile tension’ (Spivak 1990) and ‘situating the Self’ amidst its border permits the speaker to represent how those “‘in the minority’” *become* ‘subjects’ of identity politics not necessarily of their own making or desire.<sup>36</sup> Thus, social memory and history – *in part* – is remembered and reinvented according to ‘different’ sets of expectations and experiences sculpted by the varying contexts in which the speaker’s relationship to, and engagement with, culture and power is selected, edited and performed.

‘Home’ is a metaphor for belonging in a family of stories retold by Tongan generations [dis]located in the Auckland Region of New Zealand. Neither here nor there, the transnational tracks of remembering ‘home’ are played out in dialogical

exchanges that compare social lives in Auckland and Tonga – over here and over there – and subsequently merge both places in memory as a metaphor for belonging, for recalling the relevance and meaning of ‘Our’ past in “the political *conditions* of the present” (Gupta and Ferguson 2002).<sup>37</sup> The power of memory inspires ‘Us’ to *imagine* ourselves beyond the border’s limits, the circumstances of everyday life, and envision the ‘Self’ in relation to kin and affine by language that speaks sustainability and ideas that reinvent “solidarity and community” – cohesion, continuity and connection in the face of social change and historical transformation (Hall 1986a, 1990, 1991a).<sup>38</sup>

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> McCourt, F. 1999. *Tis: A Memoir*. New York: Touchstone.

<sup>2</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Hamilton.

<sup>3</sup> Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>4</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>5</sup> I visited Tonga during the summer break of my first-year at university from December 1987 - January 1988, staying with Auntie Tina Brown (Mum's older sister) at our maternal homestead in Havelu'loto. Auntie Tina died in 1989 and this holiday was to be the last that I spent with her in Tonga, indulged by her unwavering attention and stimulating storytelling company. During that 1987-1988 summer break I changed my return flight to Auckland to a later January date so that I could stay longer in Tonga with my Aunt. When I called Mum and Dad in New Zealand a second time to say that I intended to change my Auckland flight again to February as I wanted to stay for the entire summer, my Father gave a definite "No, come home. You need to get a job over the holidays. You start back at varsity in March so you'll only have February to earn some money." I was disappointed at receiving Dad's order to return to Auckland in late January, which was the opposite viewpoint to what my Mother indicated in telephone conversation. Dad said "Come home," whereas Mum was delighted that I wanted to stay with her sister (not Dad's family) and remarked, "Oh how lovely."

The one lingering memory I have stored in my body's hard-drive is leaving Fu'amotu Airport in January 1988. My Aunt walked me to the departure lounge entry for passengers and asked her female cousin (related to our 'Kaho' family) who worked in Duty Free to escort me to the tarmac. Before walking into the departure lounge I looked back at Auntie Tina, wanting to remember her how she was to a nineteen year old niece who had just completed her first year at university and was shifting, somewhat awkwardly, into an adult-type lifestyle. She waved and called to me with tear-filled eyes, 'Ofa atu, Teena e.' I would not see her alive again in Tonga, only in my memory.

<sup>6</sup> Foucault, M. 1980. *Power / Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972 – 1977*. New York: Pantheon.

[Discourses are a] complex group of relations ... established between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioural patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization. [Discourses are] practices [that] systematically form the objects of which they speak. (Foucault 1980, p. 82).

Foucault's notion of how 'discourses' are constituted through a "complex group of relations" (1980, p. 82) has been cited here to illuminate the speaker's interactive performance in redefining the 'order of the discourse' (Foucault 1971) on their terms of engagement and understanding in a specific social circumstance.

<sup>7</sup> 'Relocation [slash] dislocation' has been used here to note that in the midst of storytelling my discussion is subject to *how* it fits and falls out of popular histories of Pacific migration and resettlement in New Zealand as well as its position within a hierarchy of family stories constructed about 'Ourselves.'

<sup>8</sup> See endnote 7 for an explanation of the use of 'relocation [slash] dislocation.'

<sup>9</sup> See endnote 7 for an explanation of the use of 'relocation [slash] dislocation.'

<sup>10</sup> Brown Pulu, T. J. 2004. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.

<sup>11</sup> Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.

<sup>12</sup> See Macpherson 2004, p. 153.

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- 13 See Macpherson 2004, p. 143.
- 14 *ibid.*
- 15 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2003. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.
- 16 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2004. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.
- 17 'Parents [slash] grandparents' has been used here to highlight that my parents' discussion is re-interpreted by their child ('me') and grandchildren (my three children) as representative of 'Their' generation, that is, the first generation of Tongan migrants to New Zealand.
- 18 'Routes [slash] roots' has been used here to highlight that the three conversations contributed by my second daughter and my parents *may* claim an origin history in Tonga *but* in the course of their telling unfolds their 'difference' from each other.
- 19 Kaho Family Reunion, Children of Manase Kahomovailahi, 19-22 June 2003, Nukunuku Tonga.
- 15 Concepts and practices of 'governance' in the Pacific have been analysed extensively by Pacific and non-Pacific writers. My take on governance in Tonga is that this term, although *not* popularly coined in English by Tongans living in Tonga and its Auckland diaspora, is closely related to the historical idea of 'modern Tonga' or a post-1875 Tonga in which the Constitution and the *Tupou* Monarchy ruled and/or governed Tonga. My use of 'governmentality' to describe culture and power in present-day Tonga suggests that a global diaspora of Tongans living overseas has influenced the modes and means in which governance, perhaps post-modern governance, is imagined and envisioned. Thus, *governance* in Tonga represents a history of ideas that shape *how* we understand the relationship between the ruling class and the ruled-over in respect to the 1875 Constitution. Whereas *governmentality* in present-day Tonga alludes to the shifting national and transnational landscape of cultural values which shape *how* we understand *change* can 'best' take place without rupturing the continuity of *how* Tonga is imagined into social memory and history.
- 21 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.
- 22 Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.
- 18 See Rogers, G. 1977. 'The Father's Sister is Black: A Consideration of Female Rank and Power in Tonga. *The Journal of Polynesian Society* 68: 93-114.
- 24 Brown, P. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 2, 19 March, Auckland.
- 25 Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.
- 26 Brown, P. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 2, 19 March, Auckland.
- 27 Amoamo, A. K. 2006a. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.
- 28 Pulu, S. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 2, 19 March, Auckland.
- 29 Grossberg, L. 1994. Introduction: Bringin' it all Back Home – Pedagogy and Cultural Studies. In *Between Borders: Pedagogy and the Politics of Cultural Studies*, edited by H. Giroux and P. McLaren. New York: Routledge.
- 30 See Renee Green cited in Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 31 See Pandey 1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993.
- 32 See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 33 *ibid.*
- 34 *ibid.*
- 35 See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 36 *ibid.*
- 37 See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 38 *ibid.*

# PART TWO

# Dialogue

## *Setting Three*

# CHAPTER SIX

## DEE-I-WHY

Doing

Identity

Yacker

One learns culture – but how? Which elements and events of everyday life transmit values, beliefs, techniques, strategies? While anthropology's answer in the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century was to study public institutions and ritual practice, today's answer highlights new sites and contexts of transmission. Much of the information passed between generations is practiced away from public view, in intimate rituals that few discuss, but everyone knows. To acknowledge such transmission sites, we must reframe our questions, exploring different voices and different conditions of existence through knowledge and memory (Crumley 2002, p. 39).



*Some of our **makapuna** from matrilateral generations three and four*

*Rewi, Dylan, Travis and Angelina  
Papatoetoe, Auckland  
New Year's Day 2006*

## **Kolonga Girl, Vava'u Girl**

Mum's brother Uncle Cliff inspected the groomed backyard of his Papatoetoe home. "Typical Tongans! Give them a lawn and they'll play volleyball. Give it to the Samoans, they'll play cricket." Mum's family get-together for New Years Day. The kids, generations three and four living in **Nu'u Sila**, were treading tidy suburban grass in Christmas gift clothes, absorbed in a volley ball game. Sensory overload of noisy banter, teasing and name calling. "Geez Siaosi, **puaka lahi!** [fat pig!]" "Shut up girl's body!" Siaosi reaping the bigger laugh for insulting his brother's adolescent shape. "I'd rather hear them **laupisi** [talk rubbish] on the lawn than watch them sit here texting on their phones." Uncle Cliff's sermon on teenagers and texting appealed to the first generation's conversation.

"Remember when we used to be out there. The adults over here where we are now," my cousin Nina perused childhood memory in-between an overburdened plate of **puaka tunu** [pig-on-a-spit] and a can of Victoria Bitter. "Teena was the boss. Yes Teena, we'll do what you say. Teena and Jason competing for leadership. Remember Tanya?" Cousin Tanya grinned sheepishly aware that I was poised for a comeback. "Hey, it's New Zealand. Different rules apply. Doesn't matter if I'm from a younger sister and your parents are older. It's who has the skills is the boss." I couldn't let Nina's recollection slip onto the barbeque table unnoticed.

Ani-Kāterina swooped over our table looking for a drink. Her eyes bypassed the Sprite and Coca Cola. "Can I have a beer?" Uncle Cliff was on to her, "You drink beer? Tanya wasn't allowed to drink until she was twenty one!" Tanya rolled her eyes in my direction, strategically pointed away from her Father. Nina intercepted a geared up to go lecture. "Ani, your Mother and I used to play volleyball with the cuzzies when we were your age." "Er, back in the day of Cindy Lauper and big hair. DRY!" Ani's cheeky remark pleaded she evacuate the adult's table, back to the lawn, generation three and four's turf.

"Ani's playing rugby?" asked Uncle Cliff. "Yep, she's playing for the girls first fifteen. Playing number one, the Tongan prop the coach called her. Dad told her, "You're too small to be a prop, you should play second five." Dad's thinking Tongan size, not regular size." Laughter erupted. I was pleased to shift the conversation along to generation three, a pleasant deterrent to my cousins pulling out childhood stories of generation two and the self-appointed boss – 'me.'

"Jonah Lomu is regular size for a Tongan. Even Tongan girls are big now. I see them at the fleamarket, hear them talking. Big girls. Like 'Alisi, I wouldn't recognise her," remarked Uncle Cliff. "Ani had one tough game against a Tongan front row. Tongan and Samoan girls in the scrum. Their parents were out in

support. We spoke to a Tongan family on the sideline, eh Dad?” Dad uttered, “Mmm, they were Vava’u people.” “Yeah I could tell by their Tongan. Sentences end like a question; they go up at the end, that’s what Auntie Nina says.” “They sing their words like Samoans,” Mum added. I continued my spiel. “Anyway, their girl was fronting Ani in the scrum and they had a bit of a scuffle.” I paused, the barbeque table quietened anticipating a good story.

“The Vava’u girl was getting a hard time from supporters for Ani’s team, mostly school kids.” “She was having a hard time keeping up on the field,” added Dad. More laughter. “The Vava’u girl asked Ani, *“Ha’u mei fe ‘i Tonga?”* [where are you from in Tonga?]. Ani said, *“Ko au ta’ahine Kolonga!”* [I’m a Kolonga girl!]. Ani reckoned she smirked and said, *“Uta ko e!”* [you’re bush!]. Next scrum they went to engage, Ani told her, *“Mohe uli namuku!”* [you stink like shit!]. The Vava’u girl uppercut Ani in the scrum and was sent off crying. She was pretty upset, *kapekape* [swearing] to the *ref* [referee] and the cursing, *“alu kai kui!”* [go eat your grandma!]. I could read from the adults’ amused faces and hear in the bubbling laughter that it was a New Year’s story to remember (Feldman 1981; Feinberg 1990).

“I felt sorry for her though because the kids were teasing her and laughing.” Dad’s compassion quelled the story’s entertainment. “I felt sorry for her parents too. They didn’t know how to calm her.”

“Oh ok Dad. Is that why you went over to talk to them?”<sup>1</sup>

### **Interpretative Interlude Three**

The annual get-together on New Year’s Day has emerged as the *famili* of tradition for my matrilineal clan – that is, my Mother’s siblings living in the Auckland Region and their children, grandchildren and of late, great-grandchildren. Christmas Day has fragmented into smaller family units of individual siblings, their children, grandchildren and for some, great-grandchildren, held at respective grandparents’ homes with the New Year’s feast accommodating the wider kin gathering.

Uncle Cliff, my Mother’s older brother, who is now the eldest living brother resident in Manukau City, has played conductor of proceedings for the yearly event and family ‘boss’ (or ‘The General’ as my two daughters have nicknamed him). His highly organised style as the director of family affairs whose portfolio specialises in food, hospitality and delivering instructions to generations living in *‘Okalani* plus the bordering outlier, a reference to Brandon, our kids and I from the North Waikato District, sets him apart in social memory as the reliable, responsible and regimental Uncle.

This co-constructed family memory is traced to historical circumstance and its socialisation impact. Uncle Cliff served in the New Zealand Armed Forces Whiskey Company as a corporal in the Vietnam War, seeing ‘action’ in the field on two tours. There is an understated awareness among generation two born and raised in *Nu’u Sila* that my Mother’s older brother does not reminisce aloud among family of his time spent on the ‘frontline’ of military combat as a scout. The second generation of first cousins have learnt, however, two significant rituals of encounter which evoke his former life as a soldier in an epoch of New Zealand history that we have no direct memory of. Firstly, surviving veterans from his company refer to him as ‘Tonga’ *not* Cliff. One Māori veteran remarking in his speech at Uncle Cliff’s fiftieth birthday that he was unaware “Tonga’s name was Cliff.” Secondly, every 25 April, New Zealand’s national day to commemorate **ANZAC** [Australia and New Zealand Armed Corps] Uncle Cliff *religiously* participates in **Dawn Service** [commemorative ceremony of World War I and World War II], marches with Vietnam Veterans through Otahuhu township and reminisces aloud with fellow soldiers over a drink at the Papatoetoe Returned Servicemen’s Association.

The story of ‘Kolonga Girl, Vava’u Girl’ re-represents the backyard noise and barbeque table tales exchanged at a once a year get-together of four generations of *famili Tonga ‘i ‘Okalani* [Tongan family in Auckland]. It is a snapshot of four generations born among a family of stories busy in the movement of everyday life, rekindling their connectedness to social memory and history in the transience of an afternoon. Chronicling the lived experience of Mum’s older brother, host and compere, tapers threads of memory coiled around the account’s retelling and meaning to the storyteller. It is a method of recording a ‘Self’ perpetuating story that I live by (McAdams 1993). That is, a place to remember the historical context in which generation two, my first cousins and I, have reconstructed part of an Uncle’s life story in our own lives in New Zealand.

### ***Fonua Vale and the Politics of Name Calling***

#### Dad’s Short History of Kolonga

Some of them do respect Nuku, *most* of them do, but some of them it doesn’t matter who you are, they always be people against you. But they don’t realise this guy here’s done more than all the other Nuku before him done for Kolonga people except Nuku Pulu. So it’s many, many haircuts before that guy come out to do something good for his own people. And that’s what people don’t realise. If you look at his record, at this guy here, there’s no other person took

anybody from Kolonga and send them overseas. Even though they overstay, but nobody can do it except for this fella. That's including 'Anau and Liliha. They went to the US and he said, "Find your own life." But this guy here's done them all. I mean, people always moan about anything but this fella here, he's done a lot of good for Kolonga people himself. If you look at his record, since he's been Minister of Police, look at how many Kolonga people is going in the Police Force. That's how you judge it. I mean he's trying to help their own people but it's up to themselves to help themselves. And look, his driver is a Kolonga guy. He'll probably never ever drive for another Minister until he died. His secretary is a Kolonga guy. I mean, he does not have to do it but he's trying to help his own people. Not only that but he's more or less, he's trusting his own people is going to be loyal to him, which most of them are and he's not silly. He'll pick people that's going to be loyal to him.

Nuku Pulu, he's always like his people, done a lot for his own people. He was the only person that start up Kolonga to be well known on the agriculture. You know, work on their own land. He was the only guy that do it. He was the only Nuku that do it and Kolonga was well known for that. If you want any *ufi*, yams, you want yams any time of the year you go to Kolonga, that's when Nuku Pulu was there. And not only that, he was Speaker of the House for thirty-seven years. I can't remember the date but I'm pretty sure we can find it out. But he was speaker for thirty-seven years. There's no one ever that's going to be as long as him, even so he couldn't even write his own name. But he was very strong and he wanted his people to work on the land. They gave them eight acres per person, you work on it. And Kolonga those days was one of the wealthiest village in Tonga because they were renowned for that. They got copra and banana and the produce board. They were very, very rich. And that's why Kolonga people are well known for *fonua vale*, uneducated village, because who want to go to school if their own parents are well enough to look after them and they were well known for that. Because their family are well off, why do you

want to go to school for? Your parents can look after you. They were so rich in many other things. That's Nuku Pulu's time.

I'm talking about way back but they were well known for that. Very hard workers on his day. They used to have the *kautaha* [company], you know people go and work, he start them all up to make sure they all work as a team. He was a very team person but he never had anything for himself. If you look at his record, he never take any piece of land from anybody. That's what he was like. You work hard, you make sure you keep everything for yourself. He was a very, very moderate person, very, very well respected in Tonga, the whole of Tonga. And also in Kolonga, he was well respected.

He only have to say one word and everybody jump. He does not say much but when he says something, it's closed. And the people who he was trust, including Mailau, and they were very bully themself in their own right, they were very bully on their own nature. That's why he did not say much but he use other people. That's how clever he was, use other people to bully everybody else, get the work done. So what he says something goes, if you don't do it, he'll get the mafia boys to come and do it for him. That's another way of saying it. But he didn't say much but there's other people that he was influencing them, they knows was he was really like.

Mailau is a *matapule* [orator/talking chief] but they respect what Nuku was trying to get. He won't tell them to do anything bad but the others virtually carry it on for him. That's what he was well respected. If you don't do it, you better look out - you'll be going somewhere else.

Kolonga, they don't listen to other villages or what other people are doing. They virtually do things for themself. If the other countries are fighting, the other part of the Tonga are fighting, they don't even go and help them. They just sit back and let them fight. But if the other people come and interfere with their own welfare, that's when you look out. That's when they are really come in to it. For example, if other village are in-fighting themself, Kolonga won't even help, they just stand back. But if the other village come and try to

take over any what Kolonga welfare, you better look out because they not only come and take you over, they'll take everything else over. That's what they well known for.

And all this carry on about the pro-democracy, you'll see they always aware what Kolonga people are doing to see how they either with them or they not because if they not, they in trouble.

The *Kotongo* [Catholic quarter of Kolonga village] people, they come out when the missionary came in. They very easy persuasion people, Grandma Siu's people, they only come in to Kolonga. But the real Kolonga people, they are not like that. They are very, very hard to persuade themselves. What I said before, they don't interfere with any other village or any other Noble's welfare but once you come in and start to interfere with their own welfare, you better look out because that's what they're like. And when you look back in history, you never see Kolonga or Nuku people go and have war with anybody else because they used to have to look after their own village. If anybody come through outside, they'll eat you. That's what they did! They'll have their *umu* twenty-four hours. If anybody come from other village, bang, you're in the *umu*. They'll said, "Good *kai* [food] today." Then they'll say, "Where did they come from?" That's what they did and that's what they're well known for. If you look at the history of war, all the war in Tonga was always about the *Hihifo* area or come as far as *Mu'a*. But they never ever come as far as Kolonga or in around there because they had their own people.

And when we talk about history in Tonga, in those days, maybe about only five thousand people. We're not talking about a hundred thousand, you only talk about five thousand. So when you talk about an army, you may only talk about say twenty or thirty people but very, very strong people. So those thirty people can't go and look after *Mu'a* or anybody else. They look after their own village. When you look at Tonga, when you sub-divide the whole *kelekele* [territory] or land, piece of land, you just ask yourself why Kolonga got the most land in Tonga. Why they got the biggest estate? And if you look around the whole estate, in-

between all the estate it's either Government or the King. There's nobody else come anywhere near on that area. We're thinking about twenty-first century now, why it's like that? Because people are scared to come in because they'll eat them! I'm about too harsh but that's the reality!

People talk about warriors, they think it's a whole army but there maybe only about twenty or thirty of them. And everyone look after themselves. As I said, when Tonga was really in the war there was only about five thousand, that's including kids and women and the warrior themselves, about five thousand, not anymore than that. Everyone busy go and fighting other island or whatever. Kolonga is just stay in their own. And if you look at the last history, who come out and finish the whole war? I guarantee Kolonga was part of it. When Vahai call for help, Nuku and his people just come out and bang, bang, bang, it was finish, no more war.

The first Nuku was put out there to control the people in Kolonga. They know if they put anybody else out there, they would not be able to listen to them or look up to them. They'll probably eat them as well. So, they have to put someone very respectable. That's why people don't realise why the King at that time send his brother all the way out there. Because they don't want any second best, "Either we have the King or have the next one down, if not, you go away, we won't listen to you!" The King choose to stay in his own area and send the next person. That's what people don't realise. People think that he was only there by accident. He didn't, he was not there by accident. You don't need a BA or Masters to think about that. Even me, I can work that out why they send Nuku, because they don't want any second best.<sup>2</sup>

I have chosen to entitle this section, '**Fonua Vale** [the uneducated village] and the Politics of Name Calling' to announce my Father's solo act on his family history of cultural 'difference' (Bhabha 1994, p. 2). Chapter one briefly outlined my political interest in uncovering *how* inscriptions of difference which culminate into social inequality in Tonga are reproduced in stories of 'here' and 'there' – Auckland in respect to Tonga (see pp. 17-19). This point of analysis is returned to in chapter eight's section, 'Tales and Trails of 'Me' in my Family' (see pp. 258-263). However, at

this place in memory, this page in thesis travelling, the ‘difference’ inscribed in my Father’s reconstruction of Kolonga sets his Tongan village of primary affiliation apart from the ‘Others’ (Said 1978) in two overlapping areas of *counter* memory and history.

My Father’s storytelling purposefully resituates Kolonga in the historical era of the ***Ha’a Kanokupolu*** removal of the ***Tu’i Tonga*** as an ‘independent’ territory, not immediately involved in, or central to, the politics of civil war but, none the less indispensable to securing ***Kanokupolu*** victory by contributing military expertise. In addition to this, his memory flirts around the border of *pre Kanokupolu* history, an area of the past popularly forgotten among Tongan generations, by suggesting the appointment of Nuku to Kolonga was a strategic tactic deployed by the incoming ***Kanokupolu*** rule that sought to recognise Kolonga’s stronghold as an ‘independent’ territory and subdue any potential discord (Alberto 1995; Billig 1995).

The notion of ‘independence’ seduces a powerful memory intricately tied to a history of cultural difference which reinvents a past Kolonga in present lives. Dad’s story began by unravelling the significance of the ***Nuku Nopele*** [Noble Nuku] leadership.<sup>3</sup> The current Nuku was thus compared to, but did not surpass, the social organisation and leadership skills of Nuku Pulu from whom my Father is descended. The ground for comparison lay in ‘doing identity work’ or the measurability of performing one’s identity role recorded and remembered by social acts of ‘doing work’ for one’s own people, the “Nuku people” as Dad noted (see p. 215).

From my Father’s subject positioning within and throughout an ‘independent’ Kolonga discourse, it is possible to glimpse the logic that informs his doubt towards advocates of Tonga’s full parliamentary democratisation. ***Fonua vale*** as an identity site enacted by ‘name calling’ hints at the marker of belonging – ***fonua*** – land and the logic by which the social relationship to a territory is put into words. Dad actively subverted ***fonua vale*** as a name calling routine by *counter* arguing Kolonga had no immediate ‘social need’ for education because families were capably provided for by their parents’ ability to generate household economies from cultivating produce for sales. This defiant *counteract* suggested that ***fonua vale*** is made redundant by the social reality that Kolonga *in the past* was a wealthy, self-sufficient village of families who made their living from ‘working’ on the land.

It is this discourse of ***fonua*** – land as home and belonging – coupled with its making of the past and the past’s relevance to present identity which is the barometer that tells ‘Us’ and ‘Others’ (Said 1978) who ‘We’ are in respect to the people and place at stake. Understandably, Dad’s reluctance to extensively theorise full parliamentary democratisation in Tonga is embedded in deep seated anxiety over *how* such political

reorganisation may affect customary land tenure, specifically his own *api* [homestead] and *uta* [bush/tax] allotments located in the estate of *Nuku Nopele mei Kolonga* [Noble Nuku from Kolonga].

This chapter seeks to glimpse beyond the ethnographic parameters of a family of stories to reveal veiled desire. It cites excerpts from dialogue contributed by three generations of my matrilineal and patrilineal Tongan families within sub-headings that signal to, and sound out, the politics of ‘doing identity’ in the Auckland Region. The interwoven ideology and practice of ‘doing identity’ hinges on word play, the complex images of ‘me’ in my family that transpire in fleeting conversation, linger in social memory and lurk on the borderlines of history in the making (McAdams, Tarrow and Tilly 2001; Tarrow 2005).

Two points are rearranged in sequences and sound bites of storytelling which I analyse in chapter seven’s section titled, ‘Ethnographies of Here and There.’ Firstly, Tongan family participants borrow and adapt memories and stories from across generations to refit the political conditions they engage with in present situations of everyday life. Thus, conscious and unconscious adjustment and variation of cross-generation memory *becomes* a strategy for validating family discourses on sustaining strength, stability and security which subsequently, reproduces reasons on *why* ‘culture counts’ (Bishop and Glynn 1999). Secondly, the processes of relationship and environment change are analysed in the language used to describe culture and power (Swindler 1995). Thus, words that expound ‘doing identity’ release sites of memory and meaning to explain *how* ‘We’ see our ‘Selves’ in inter-generation and transnational relationships and in respect to “associated surroundings” (Mason 2006, p. 18) that impact on our living environments in the Auckland Region.

This chapter unfolds a colourful straddling mosaic of Tongan ethnographies that border cross to Tonga and re-enter Auckland in layers of memorable tales and trails of ‘me’ in the world co-constructed by family and our connection to community, society and ‘nation[s] of narration’ (Bhabha 1990). Rewriting word imagery does *not* seek to capture or freeze family and their shifting relationships to places in memory on white pages of black print. It desires to stimulate the movement and energy of social change in the ‘making up’ (for the camera shot) of a family of stories.

The next section entitled, ‘Short Play on Words that Say and Do Identity Work,’ is a glossary of vocabulary which names social characteristics and behaviours by describing their ‘doing’ and ‘meaning.’ The section that follows is dubbed, ‘Four Short Stories on the ‘Truth’ about Tonga.’ It presents a brief performance by four actors. The stories depict in the moment reflections on the historical and political conditions of Tonga’s present predicament. Subsequent to this, a section called ‘Here

in '*Okalani Nu'u Sila*' portrays a buffet of ideas, images and invocations that call up social life in Auckland. The last section named, 'Role Play on Life In-between Auckland and Tonga,' is a double act recital of my parents' lines, positions, ranks and defences that stage their lives in New Zealand and relationships to Tonga.

### **Short Play on Words that Say and Do Identity Work**

Ani-Kāterina

*FOB* means fresh off the boat. It's like someone who doesn't necessarily have to be of Island descent but they're not accustomed to New Zealand ways. Like they don't know how to speak proper English. They don't know how to socialise with ordinary New Zealand people. Their mentality, it's quite like you know, they think they're still in the islands. Like they think it's ok to beat up your kids and stuff, where you know it's illegal but they think that's discipline. It's pretty much my definition of a *FOB*. Yeah, *FOB* culture they're very family oriented. Like they're very much into their cultural stuff like church, their language and their heritage, like *kava* clubs and performing [arts].<sup>4</sup>

Dad

*Fie' kai mu'a* is you always try to run in the front or you think you know them all with unpolite way of saying things. You don't really know what you're doing at the end because to put it in another way, see if you live in Tonga, brought up in Tonga, and people live and brought up in there, they don't really respect what the reality is. See they try to say things but they don't really know what's the reality of how they been brought up a few thousand years ago. Just how you respect your elder, it doesn't matter if they right or wrong but you still got to respect them.

*Kai mu'a* is more or less like a sarcastic Tongan way of putting to you that you don't really know what you're talking about. You might waffling along what you think you know what you're doing and Tongan people say, "*Fie' kai mu'a*," you don't really know what you're talking about. It's a polite way of telling you that you are wrong without telling you, "Get the hell out of here, you don't know what you're talking about!"

*Fie' kai mu'a* is a polite way of telling you that you don't know what you're talking about. It's a polite way of telling you. So when people tell you that, it's a matter of shut-up, walk away, rethink! Shut-up, go away, rethink it.<sup>5</sup>

#### Generation 2f

You say, *kai mu'a*, yeah, that's how he [Semi Pulu] explains it. You usually say it as a slang, as a slang word, "Don't think you're brainy or something!" The kids nowadays they say, "Eat front!" or "Don't eat front!" That's how they say it. They translate it into English, yeah.

#### Generation 1e

Eat front? Is that what they say? That's rude, that's very rude. You shouldn't say that. It sounds rude. It sounds like you talking about sex. *Kai mu'a* is what you say. It means you always run in the front. You like to run in the front when really you are running backwards like a retarded person, one of those, what are they? Mongol.

#### Mum

*Fula*, it means that if you eat the *tapu* food, that was *tapu* food to you two, if you eat it, there's something wrong with your body. You'd either grow a big lump on your throat or something; your body will be disfigured as a result of that. That's what *fula* means; *fula* means that it's *tapu* [socially sanctioned] food, you can't eat it. Like even if she, the *mehakitanga* [the father's sister] has, eats a meal and there's leftover and she doesn't want it, you can't go and even eat her leftover food cos' it's *tapu* to you. You might get *fula*.

But they can say you can do it. They can allow you. That's part of the culture, very strong culture too. Yeah, if the kids don't know the parents will soon tell them. Well, I hope they'll keep it up cos' it's a good custom. *'Eiki* [superior social status], the Father being *'eiki* to the children and *mehakitanga*, the Father's sister, that's part of it too, that's part of *fula*.<sup>6</sup>

## Toakase

Oh yeah, I know that one. *Fula*, it's like that time Granddad was saying that those cakes are *tapu* cos' Auntie Pipi made them and we can't eat his sister's food or you'll get sick, something bad will happen to you. *Mehakitanga*, Granddad's sister, is our Auntie. It's a *tapu* to Tongans. But Rewi ate them, Mr greedy grimes, and Granddad said that's ok cos' it'd go to waste.<sup>7</sup>

## Generation 1f

*Fakapo'uli e?! It means that you just lose control. Even if you're right they'd probably go away thinking, "What a rude person!" Even if you were on the right, you won't be able to prove, you know, you won't get people's sympathy because you're rude.*

## Generation 2g

*Fakapo'uli can mean dark natured or dark tempered. A biblical reference to the dark days before Christianity. The Samoan word is fa'apouliuli. I've been called fakapo'uli for talking straight. I'm probably weird but it's a compliment, although it's an insult to me and my family. I don't mind being fakapo'uli cos' it shows I don't kiss ass and I'm not a liar! The kind of Tongan that says nice things to your face but stabs you in the ass as soon as your back's turned, which is nearly everyone cos' that's the way they've been brought up. That's what I'd call fakapo'uli. Backstabbing is rude. Better to get it out there in the open so we know what we're dealing with. I'd rather be a fakapo'uli than kafi.*

## Generation 2h

*You're dying to give them a hiding or something but you can always say it in a nicer way. Fakapo'uli, well it happens. I think it depends on the individual. But it's something that if say, if some person would do that, it means they have no control over themselves. Yeah, I think so, they could be called fakapo'uli.*

*But it's not a custom; I don't think it's a custom that you can't criticise or tell someone what you really think of them or their ideas. It's just very rude to*

do that. I haven't been to any family meetings that that happens, or the person speaking tells somebody off. I'm not too sure about that if it's a Tongan custom cos' if it's a family meeting then everyone has a right to say something.

#### Generation 2i

*Kafi* means you're sneaky. *Tu'i kafi e?!* Saying to someone they're the King or Queen of being two-faced. If someone says you're a *kafi kaakaa* then that's like saying you're a cheat that goes sneaking around behind people's backs to get what you want. Tongan men are the best example of *kafi*, especially if they want you. They'll never let on in public because they're embarrassed of being teased or maybe you'll kick their ass to the curb, you know, reject them in front of their friends and hurt their pride. But they'll try everything to put the moves on you; they're just very sneaky about it.

#### Dad

*Fie' 'ilo* means you want to know what is going on. Like an observer, you just turn up and observe but you get counted as a supporter. And people, Tongan people are very *fie' 'ilo*. Some of them turn up just to see what is going on and they keep counting them as one of their supporter things. But they're only an observer. Like the protest at *Atalanga*. I was there. I went passed to have a look at what was going on and I know exactly what was happening.<sup>8</sup>

#### Generation 2k

*Fie' vale loi* is when you know stuff is going down, serious crap is going on around you. Like two people hate each other and there's a war going on, but you act dumb, you play dumb like you don't know anything about it. And you just go and talk nice to these two people that want to kill each other like you don't know it, you never knew anything that they're enemies. But you so obvious. People know you know what's going on and just act dumb over it. And when someone goes, "Did you know so and so is having a fight with them?" You just say, "No, I didn't know anything." Tongans are the Ninja Master of *fie' vale loi*. It's like

you have to have a PhD in *fie' vale loi* before they'll let you join the club, yeah, life member.

Rewi

*Sikotata* is baby poos. When a baby poos its pants it's *sikotata*. You can say it to your friends. When they are mean to you, you can say, *sikotata!* That makes them into baby poos. Yeah, you can say, *"teipilo!"* That's fart. But only when they're mean to you, you can say that.<sup>9</sup>

Generation 3d

*Ulu pala vale kua!* My Nana says that. It's like telling someone they have big sores on their head and they're a dumb shit. We just say *ulu pala* for short. Like if someone's got a short haircut we'll say it's *ulu pala*, they had to cut their hair because they had too many *palas*.

Generation 3e

*Fie' poto 'aupito!* Everyone knows this - *fie' pots* - think you know everything, eh?! You say it to someone who thinks they know it all *but* they don't know jack shit. Like they're dicking it out, trying to show off their skills and you say, *"Io, fie' poto 'aupito!"* And then they die because it's shameful, you're dumber than dog shit for saying that and you didn't even know it. That's the dumbest bit that you didn't even know you're a dick - someone had to tell you, shame!

## **Four Short Stories on the 'Truth' about Tonga**

### Short Story 1

The younger generation we know the truth. We know the truth about Tonga. We support the people; we see their struggle. They want change because life is difficult if you're not the elite. But not my Father, you can see he's loyal to the King's family because the Queen is his first cousin.

Maybe change will come with the new generation of *Hou'eiki* because some of them are university educated, educated overseas; maybe they'll change things. We support the people but we don't say it in public because we respect our parents, our family. We don't want to be outcasts. You see in Tonga, it's about family, loyalty to family. That's what the Monarchy and Nobility comes down to, family loyalties.

Foreigners talk about Tonga like it's a big place, the Monarchy rules everything. But really, it comes down to families and their loyalties. It's a small place, less than a hundred thousand people, so one family or Noble can have a lot of power over people if they have the support of their family, their people.<sup>10</sup>

### Short Story 2

Tonga will never go forward until the system change. We can see that from here. But when you over there, it's different again. Life is simple. You just go on your way and do what your parents do, what everyone else is doing. Yeah, it's right to say that the overseas people are bringing in change. A lot of Tongan people go to school and university overseas. There's many people in Tonga with degrees now. It never use to be like that even 20 years ago.

The funny thing is the King push for education and look what happen. We are very educated but can't find good paying jobs, not in Tonga anyway. So the system has to change, ok? Yeah, I think so. The young generation coming up will push even harder for change. Maybe the new Nobles - the kids coming up - will give them a hand. They all went to school in New Zealand. Or maybe they won't - they might just go back to their parents' thinking.

The Monarchy, it needs to go. Not throw it away altogether, but no Royals in government. Get rid of them and the Nobles. King's kids are rich enough with the power, the phone and the what is it? Duty free and the, *ko e haa me'a?* [what the hell is it?]. Yes, satellite. Nobles have the *tofia* [estate], that's plenty. They lease land to the squash growers, collect the rent. They don't need to mess the country up altogether mucking around in parliament. It's not like they being thrown in the poorhouse. They still the *Hou'eiki*

[monarchy/nobility]. They still have their money, privilege, the status they use to. But just keep them out of government. Let the clever people with education do that. And let the people of Tonga vote them in there. That's what I think anyway. But your Dad is right. Tonga land has to stay with Tonga people. You can't sell it to foreigners - like the passport. I hope the democracy people won't do that. Otherwise, *e!* [eh!]. We right back in the shit!<sup>11</sup>

### Short Story 3

What would you do? You do the same. Yes you would. If you were a Noble you do the same and I tell you why. The Constitution is for the King and his men, the Nobles. That's what it says. It's their land and they share it out to the people. They do that. That's why they run the *fono* [village meeting] like that.

You see, these people don't know what a *fono* is. It's for the *Nopele* [Noble] to give orders to the people of the village. The *Matapule* [orators] do the speaking for him. The people don't speak back to the *Nopele*. You never do that especially at a *fono* - you never talk direct to the *Nopele* like that. The people listen. They do the work that has to be done for the village or whatever it is - the work. I'm telling you if the Noble told him to, "roll up his mat and piss off if he doesn't like it" - he can say that. It's his land, his village.

It says that in the Constitution. You should learn the Constitution so you understand what's going on. I don't know who tell you rubbish. *Taimi, e?! [The Tonga Times, eh?!]*. The Constitution, you can't change that. So you better learn it. We had to when we were at school. *Mahino?* [do you understand?].<sup>12</sup>

### Short Story 4

Young people, Tongans here in Auckland go to Tonga to work, change the system. That's what they say. But they fail. They come back here complaining about the place saying it's all corrupt and this and that. Tonga's way behind New Zealand. *Hello!* This is Tonga *not* New Zealand. You can't compare them. It's

like me saying, "I don't know why South Auckland is not as good as Remuera." You just don't put them together.

People from American and New Zealand, Australia, they all go to Tonga to set up business, make money from the place. How many business are there? It's people from here selling cars, building material, stuff for the market. Or they farming, selling fish and *manioke* [cassava] to New Zealand, squash for the Japanese. You see there's people here saying, "Oh, we go to Tonga to work so we can save that place from falling apart." And there's people saying, "We go there and make money selling this and that." They all want to get something out of poor Tonga. But what good are they doing for the people?

You ask me what I think about democracy people. Who are they? There's people saying, "I'm for democracy." But it's all broken up. The Churches, they all want people for the *misinale* [missionary donation] to build more churches, I think. Don't you? I don't know if they real democracy. They pay the *Hou'eiki* [monarchy] to be the patron - *Tokaikolo* [Tokaikolo Mamafo'ou Church] they do that. Democracy, who's in there? There's about three people saying they the leader of the democracy and I don't know which party they belong to.

People here say Tonga's all corrupt. But they don't live there. How do they know what's the truth? They moved here. Look at your kids here! Try to help them at school. Keep them off the benefit for goodness sake. We came here for school and work *not lakalaka* [type of Tongan dance]. They try to live like it's still in Tonga. But what help are they giving Tonga complaining about a country they don't even live? They don't even know what's the truth! They get their stuff from the *Taimi - lau!* [The Tonga Times - gossip!].

If they keep sending money to Tonga, and most of them don't, they lie about how much they send, well that's their choice. The government not forcing them to do it. So shut-up about it. If you don't want to send money, then don't. But go around complaining to the newspaper. Showing off, trying to make a big

name like you the great Tonga person. It's true! How embarrassing for your family.<sup>13</sup>

### **Here in 'Okalani Nu'u Sila**

#### Generation 3f

It's better here in Auckland because it's not poor like Tonga. Not everyone's poor in Tonga but most people are. Well they look it, they look poor eh? Their houses and stuff, they look poor as. School is better here too. Like, we have better facilities for sports and stuff, better classrooms. The teachers, they're better qualified and modern, not like so strict you can't even ask a question like, "What does that mean?" It's like you'll get a hiding just for asking. That's kind of dumb to me. Go to school to learn and you're too scared to ask the teacher a question because if you do, you'll get the bash.

Education here is better. If you go to *uni* [university] or *tech* [polytechnic], you don't go live overseas. Like in Tonga, you go overseas to do that. My cousin, she went to *USP* [The University of the South Pacific] in Tonga *but* it was so poor, like they didn't have teachers or good stuff. They watched their lectures on the TV from Fiji. But they were late as, like at night because they came from Fiji. My Grandma says it, what's the word? Yeah, it conflicts with Tongan culture, education, schools and stuff here. Yeah, it does. But it's still heaps better than what they've got in the islands.

#### Generation 2j

The big thing that must be fixed up in New Zealand is stopping Tongans, Samoans and everyone else from being forced into being Pacific Islanders for government business. Policy is the worst. We're all heaped together, Pacific Islanders. Tongans *must* be Tongans in New Zealand *not* forced into being Pacific Islanders by the government. South Auckland schools, it's fighting, *hard core* [extreme] violence, ethnic groups fighting each other and fighting Māori. Being forced in there - Pacific Islander - being forced in there and having to give up your ethnic identity, your culture, language, to be a Pacific Islander,

second class citizen with Māori. What bullshit! Who gets paid to feed us the dirt?

What really happens is one group, like the Samoans, they make out they're the boss of everyone. In New Zealand, here in Auckland, because this is where most Tongans and Samoans live in the world, it's the *Saas* [Samoans] who are Pacific Islanders on all the government advisory panels for community consultation or Pacific working groups. It's *not* all the Pacific Islanders in New Zealand at all. It's driven by the Samoans. You see, the kind of unfair treatment comes down to people on the ground, communities and kids living on the ground. And in a town like the *South A.K.* [South Auckland] there's distrust and fighting. No one likes to be stood over by another ethnic group and told that these people are going to represent you and you had better get with their programme and make like them because they've been made the boss of everybody by their numbers and personality. They're aggressive, push in to the front of the line.

One guy told me, he said, "Samoans are homicidal maniacs and they want to kill all the other ethnic groups. Once they've killed everyone else they'll turn on each other. They'll start killing each other. They will end up destroying their own people." He was so serious. I thought, shit, if that's what he thinks then we're not doing all the 'relationship building' crap that management is always shitting on.

Like how we were talking, it's all about power eh? Power and how people get power and hold on to it and get very greedy about it. Here in Auckland, this is where you're talking about in New Zealand if it's Tongans, here in Auckland it's all about power. No different for the poor, they're after some of it too and who blames them? But it's how people do it. Because everyone's tricky see? No one's a hundred per cent honest that yes, this is my agenda, I want some power to get this and that. No. hide behind culture and say, "We're here today to humbly represent the needs of the Pacific Island community and *fa'afetai lava* [many thanks] for this opportunity." You know, all that greasing up to the

*Palangi* [Whites] to get what they want which they're never going to say straight up what it is. Samoan culture paints over what's really going on and no one stands up to ask what is it doing to the people on the ground? The Tongan families, kids I've worked with, they hate it! Tongans hate being forced to be Pacific Islanders because they know you've got nothing, no self-respect, lost your identity to the Pacific Islanders - the *Saas*. What *true* Tongan with Tongan pride is going to give up culture, language, identity, their heritage, everything to the Samoans? No Tongan! A *true* Tongan would rather die! That's the reality on the ground. That's how our Tongan people *really* feel about all of this.

#### Generation 3g

I'm not sure. Tonga can be pretty cool and Auckland is too. *Otahu* [Otahuhu] is because that's our hood, *lol* [laugh out loud]. That's hard to say really. I like them both. Why? Probably because I'm Tongan. My Ma and Pa's from Tonga, my Nana and Grandpa too. Auckland's where I was born and grew up in *Otahu*, and it's a cool place. Some of *Otahu* it's like a Tongan village, around McAuley, my school, there's heaps of Tongan houses. And people are nice, you know, friendly and fun to kick it with. We hang down at the park, at the netball courts, *kolo* [town] - in town there's heaps of Tongans buying food, talking, catching up. We have a market too, did you know that? It's going to take over Mangere and Otara markets and be the *bomb-est* [the best] one down South. At my school it's all peace. It's peace between Tongans, Samoans and Māori. It's good. That's why it's the best school. We don't have any trouble so it's a good education we're getting.

#### Generation 2k

*'Okalani*, yep definitely this is the best place to live. TV, the news, they make up South Auckland is like the *Uli uli* [Blacks] in America, Brooklyn NYC, Compton LA. It's all *loi* [lies]. I've been to the States, stayed with my Mum's family in LA, Dad's family in San Mateo, Palo Alto Frisco. They live completely

different from us, the opposite, so I don't get where the TV gets the stories from. They make up, they must, "Let's make out they're like Blacks in America so it's a good story for the TV."

In America, Tongans in America they're very materialistic, right. They're shallow, *fi'e' haa*, show off. They way they do Tongan culture in America it's bullshit, just made up, very materialistic, they love to show off money. They look down on Tonga and us. We are the poor cousins in *Nu'u Sila*. Yeah, we're down there with Tonga. That's what they say. "Oh, life in *Nu'u Sila* is so slow it's just like being back home. Oh, there's so many Tongans in South Auckland it's just like a village." The American lifestyle is all bullshit. Really, they are poorer than Tongans here! But out of the Americans, the Aussies and us over here, we're *uta* - the bush. It's the truth. *Tuku kata, e?! [stop laughing, eh?!]*. That's what they really think of us.

#### Generation 1k

I went to the *PolyFest* [Auckland Region's Secondary Schools Performing Arts Festival]. First, I went to the Niueans, then I went to the Maoris, then the Tongans. Then it was food. I saw my friend there selling *lu* [taro leaves, corned beef and coconut cream] pie. You make the *lu* and then you put it in a pastry. I've made them at home. No, the grandkids they only eat sausages.

It was alright the Tongan kids. But they don't teach them the proper *faiva* [Tongan dance]. That school wasn't doing a *kai lau* [a Tongan stick dance]. They weren't spinning their sticks eh? It was a made up dance, a New Zealand dance more like a Māori *haka* [war dance] or the Samoans. No, I don't think you can do that, teach the kids in Tongan. There's Samoans in there and *Pakeha*, so you can't teach them in Tongan because it's not just Tongans.

I suppose *Otahu* [Otahuhu College] was alright. But it's a *meke* [a fan dance] - like a Fiji *meke* with the *ii* - the fan. You meant to move the fan like this. I don't know if they been taught the true meaning. But that goes for all the kids. The *soke* [a stick dance] was alright. But the kids in Tonga, you see they been taught properly, eh. Kolonga, they do the *soke*, they good for that.

They hit the sticks like this. It's a war dance. Not like here, they just playing with it, skip around, do a little tap here. Not hitting the sticks like the Kolonga *soke*.

Lapaha people are good for the ancient dance. They *Tu'i Tonga* people see. That's why they have good *punake* [poets/composers]. A lot of the tutors in South Auckland schools are from Lapaha - *Otahu*, De La Salle, McAuley, Southern Cross, Wesley. There's two Lapaha brothers that tutor in the schools - you can see their influence in the dancing, the *lakalaka* hand movements. That's why these schools always win. But it's different with the kids here. They harder to teach because it's not Tonga.

#### Generation 11

You can't have one system for this one and one system for another one. It has to be all the one system at school. I look at the kids and I don't know if they moving forwards or back. I don't know if they coming or going. Are they coming from Tonga or going back there? I don't know. You tell me.

Yes, your Dad is right. It is good to teach Tongan language at school for the kids to learn here. But it's not everything. There's other things you have to learn at school. Not just go to school to eat lunch, *lau* [gossip] with your friends, do Tongan language and Tongan dance. What will you do when school finished? You can't go back to Tonga and dance your life away.

You must get something behind you. When you leave school, you only have your education behind you. Not just one *School C* [school certificate] pass in Tongan language and that's it, that's all you do for five years at high school. Tonga dance and all that won't get you to *uni* [university]. Kids at home do better than that and they all want the chance to get here, a chance to go to school, *teach* [polytechnic], *uni* is still the best one they want to get to. That's what I'm saying. Tongans have changed since they been in Auckland. They not looking ahead to the future. They looking back to Tonga. That's why I said I'm not sure if they coming or going.

## **Role Play on Life In-between Auckland and Tonga**

Education and a false ...

And a better life.

Yeah, which is false really because a lot of them are better off in the islands than here. They don't have to pay so much taxes. They don't all cramp up in a house with so many people. They don't eat rubbish food everyday. In Tonga, you may not have much but there's always food, eh Semi? Fish, heaps of fish, heaps of fruits, go to [the] village, the plantation.

You know, everyone moves here with an idea they're going to have a better life, better education for their kids if they get married or whatever.

If they get jobs.

But once they get here they all seems to get involved in a different environment, you know, it's a different environment how they live here and how they live in Tonga. And it's like what your Mum says, like out here everything is money, you know. If you walk down the road you have to buy something with your own money. In Tonga if you're hungry just go and see your neighbour.

Or even just with pass the road, not only that if you walk past other people's places and they're eating, they're having their lunch or tea or whatever, they always invite you to come. Even if you're a stranger they don't even know who you are, they'll always invite you to come. Even if they haven't got nice food.

They come here with a different environment and their mind is start, you know, put it this, they don't used to this environment. And when they go to work, you know, they can't, just like in Tonga I mean people don't have jobs. You know to like, when you grow up here you always say, you know, like good work and

save money cos' they're never used to that environment. When you get your pay you got to put money away for the board, cos' they never been brought up like that, put money away for board, put money away for rent, put money away for future, put money away for bills, pay all whatever your debts. That's why they got into trouble.

They just live from day to day cos' they haven't, they not, no one's helping them with the budget. They don't even know what budget is.

The environment's totally different. They get into a environment's totally different to from what they been used to.

You've made your point, Semi. But when they're in Tonga, people here go and say, "Oh, come to New Zealand. We can get work and you can get heaps of money. Your children will go to school. You have a home. You buy a home." But when they get here it's totally different to what they perceive it to be and coming over here they have a false perception of life in New Zealand until they get here and then they get into that environment where they make friends. They just live in probably worse standard than they did in Tonga but they're caught up in a web, sort of. And they don't want to go to Tonga. I don't know why. And because being here and things are very cheap and friends will give them things.

But one of the important thing people are missing out, Tongan people are very proud people.

That's another thing.

You know, they don't want to ask someone in case they can look bad. They think, "Oh gee, I look stupid." Ask people for help, you know, they want to sort things out between themselves and say, "Look, I can't look after my wages this

week. You know, what have you done when you been here all this time?" You know, they copy cat things, see someone and then copy what they do, just follow.

But the thing is they're very obliging people. If somebody knows that you're working they say, "Oh-oh, she's got some money. I'll ask her for a loan," and things like that. And they can never say no. That's why they get into the shit too because they're too obliging and too proud to say no to anyone. And also, if you say no then the family will think, the extended family will think, "Oh, she's a mean person." You know, "She's a *fie' Palangi*" [wanna' be White], and all this, "Don't even want to help the family." So that's another issue that we have to put up with. And most Tongans can't say no, that's why they always get in the shit.

That's why the churches get lots of money from them. They, the churches, they, you know, they demand money from these people. And they have to save face. Tongans have to save face. Like if they say, "Oh, you contribute a thousand dollars for a *misinale*" [missionary donation], by hook or by crook they'll do it, yeah. They'll do it even if they have to go without paying their bills for the next month or just scrapping by with poor food to eat for a whole month. They'll do that; will go and putting money into the church.

Some Tongans get here and they're lucky enough to get a job and they're quite sensible. You know, they focus on trying to better themselves. The majority of Tongans don't because as soon as you're working, they know you're working, they know you're got money and those people who haven't, who are not working will always bludge on you because that's the way they live in the islands. With the extended family, you're always helping your family. And if you have a house, every Tom, Dick and Harry comes in that you know, comes to New Zealand, they always come and ask if I can stay. That's why they always got too many people in one house.

But we felt good because we were helping our people. But I think if we were mean and your Father and I were mean and all we wanted was money,

money, money and materialistic, save for lots of things, we would be rich. We'd have heaps of money as we are now but it's only because we, like he can never say no to his family. If there's a funeral, if there's weddings, if there's birthdays, we always have to give them something.

I never see it. I can't see it. It's a nuance, a standard thing to say.

But now as you grow older you've got to prioritise yourself.

Not only that but you know, also believing in Christian, Christianity, you always say, think to yourself if you give then you get back. That's part of Tongan people, that's how they've been brought up.

If you give away, you'll get something back.

The more you give the more you get.

If you help others, others will help you.

Sometimes it does, eh?

Most of the time it is, not money wise, but other things. You know, I mean, you know like when you do things, if you do things your other family will see you doing things and come and help you.

You know, a good example is Minolu, one of your Father's friends. He was desperate for help so your Father helped him through a hard time and he's never forgotten it. Every time he goes and sees him he gives him sacks of *manioke* [cassava]. At first he used to bring yams, everything that you could give, always remembers Semi. And he still remembers Semi, eh, after all these years. And he's turned out to be a good friend of your Father's, even though they didn't know each other at first.

And also, when you go to Tonga that's when they, people in Tonga show you their appreciation. Like you know very well whenever we all go they always, people every day there's food brought to the house.

If people don't appreciate or they don't think much of you that's when no one turn up. You start to think, "Christ, what have I done wrong?"

No one comes and sees you.

But see, every time we go to Tonga, you know, there's always people turning up. You know, I mean Nina, you know that Nina sometimes just gets sick of it. But I mean you can't say no to people.

That's how they show their appreciation.

It is a privilege. You're born into it. You don't get it; you can get it by very hard, a lot of work, very hard hard work.

But in Tonga they always got a saying, "It is not who you are it's who you know." And you don't get that far by just be someone without working hard at it. So you parents, your grandparents, your grandfather, everybody else, cos' all their work hard for you to make sure you got that privilege. So you just not born into it.

For example, like ...

My parents.

Like her parents.

My Father worked hard over, for a lot of years. And he was well known in Tonga. Everybody in Tonga knew him, even in the outer islands. And through him we get the privilege because whenever we go to Tonga, people in Tonga know us, especially in the government and people in high ranking in Tonga. Because my

parents used to socialise with those people, socialise with their parents - their peers.

Not just the high ranking people but also the people right at the bottom of the heap, or whatever you call it.

They knew them too because my Mum was a very kind person, helped a lot of people. They didn't even have to have a title for her to help. She'd just help anybody. Like this lady, I met her in Tonga at a funeral. And she said to me that she's related to James cos' this is at Deanne's funeral. And she said to me that she can never, she always remembers my Mum. And I said, "Why?" And she said, "Cos' she's such a kind person." She's related to the Queen and her husband died, her kids were still young. And she was desperate to get a job cos' she didn't have any other way of getting it. So she went to the Palace and sat there and asked the Queen if she could find a job for her. After a time and that, she said, "Yeah, I'll try." And they talked for a while and the Queen went away. And then, she came and she was sitting there from in the morning. And the Queen came down again, it was in the late afternoon and she was still sitting there. And the Queen was quite surprised she was still sitting there. But you see she was waiting for her to say, "Yeah, I'll try my best to get you a job." But she never did.

Anyway, she was desperate so she went straight to my Mum in Havelu [Havelu'loto] where my parents lived. And just sat on the doorstep and begged my Mother, "Please help me cos' my husband," my Mother didn't even know who she was. So she went and asked my Dad if he could possibly put her in one of the factories at the thing cos' her husband just died and she's got young kids. And she managed to get her a job and she was really grateful to my Mother. And she's an old lady now but she still remembers that.

Privilege, you don't get it overnight. It goes through your grandfather or your great grandparents they all still; that's why it's very like Tonga, like when

you, that's why it's very important is your own circle cos' when you go to Tonga, when you go a long way, I'm telling you.

And also, you know, like that story of mine just goes to show that people in the low income group in the islands knew my parents as well as people in the high income group because they used to socialise with them as well. But some people in the islands they only, they're quite stuck up. Not everybody's like that. Some Nobles and that, they only want to know you if they can get something out of you.

If they can get anything out of you.

Yeah.

But not all of them.

Most of them.

It's always been the same, corruption, small poor islands.

But all, every poor country always have corruption. Regardless, but some poor islands got the more corruption than the others.

I think the, the King used to be really good to the people. He used to work hard when he was Prime Minister. He worked hard and he made a lot of deals for Tonga. And they had income, a reasonable income.

He set up a lot of things for Tonga.

But when my Father got to be at that stage where he was getting older and that, the new generation come in, you know, they're always jealous. So they wanted to ooze him out of the where he held his position, which they did successfully. And what they did they sold all the assets that they had built, the King had built.

Changed the whole lot.<sup>14</sup>

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## Endnotes

- 1 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.
- 2 Pulu, S. 2005. Fieldwork Interview 1, 13 December, Auckland.
- 3 See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 4 Amoamo, A. K. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 31 January, Te Kauwhata.
- 5 Pulu, S. 2006. Fieldwork Interview 2, 19 March, Auckland.
- 6 Brown, P. 2006. Fieldwork Interview 2, 19 March, Auckland.
- 7 Amoamo, T. K. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.
- 8 Pulu, S. 2006. Fieldwork Interview 2, 19 March, Auckland.
- 9 Amoamo, R. M. 2006. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 3, 19 February, Te Kauwhata.
- 10 Generation 1g. 2005. Fieldwork Conversation 1, 9 January, Auckland.
- 11 Generation 1h. 2005. Fieldwork Conversation 1, 21 May, Auckland.
- 12 Generation 1i. 2005. Fieldwork Conversation 1, 18 November, Auckland.
- 13 Generation 1j. 2006. Fieldwork Conversation 1, 2 February, Auckland.
- 14 Brown, P. and Pulu, S. 2006. Group Interview 1, 18 March, Auckland.

# PART TWO

# Dialogue

## *Setting Four*

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## EMENEM

Memory

And

Meaning

After death, the deceased no longer provides a mirror in which the mourners view their own reflections and realize themselves as social beings (Warner 1959). For survivors to continue to see themselves still living and related to the other, they must reconstruct the image of the deceased and, in doing so, rethink their own identity. The choice of stone and wording on the memorial allows the living to rework the deceased's identity, possibly appropriating attributes of the departed for themselves. Traditionally, the grave is the material expression of rights and obligations between generations (Kenna 1976: 21) (Francis, Kellaheer and Neophytou 2002, p. 96).



*'Will Always Be Remembered By Those Who Loved Him'*

*Rewi, Ani-Kāterina and Toakase at Uncle Stanley's gravesite  
Papatoetoe, Auckland  
New Year's Day 2006*

## Uncle Stanley and Family Resemblances

Do you know who Ani reminds me of Teena?

Who?

'Anau

Dad's sister?

Why?

Because she plays prop?

No, no

Because she's comical when she tells a story

So witty and fast with a funny line

She keeps your Father on his toes

And what about Toa?

Who does she take after?

She takes after Winnie, my sister Winnie  
 She's a sensitive girl, Toa  
 Your Father just has to talk to her and she cries  
 She has a lot of her Father in her too  
 So proud of the Maori culture  
 And she gets on with the Tongans because she's a lovely girl  
 Quiet, respectful  
 Tongans like that

What about Rewi?

Oh, he's a character that little boy  
 He reminds me of Stanley, my brother Stanley  
 You have to be careful not to spoil him like Mum did with Stanley  
 Whatever trouble Stanley got into Mum would always save him  
 He was a broken man when my parents died  
 He never got over them

Auntie Nina said Rewi was very fond of Uncle Stanley

Yes  
 He still talks about Stanley  
 I hope he remembers Stanley when he grows up

I think he will Mum  
 I think he will

### **Interpretative Interlude Four**

Mum was buried in memory, busily tracing family resemblances between hers and Dad's siblings and their grandchildren. Listening to the story's lineage unfold and arrive at Uncle Stanley and Rewi, my Mother's youngest brother and my youngest child – my only son – stirred a fresh memory.

On New Year's Day 2006 my three children and I conducted the yearly visit to Uncle Stanley's gravesite since his passing in 2003. Brandon had taken them in 2005 but this year was attending to the *umu* [earth oven] with Uncle Cliff, Mum's older brother, for the family get-together. At the cemetery, a maze of roads veered off on different tangents leading to signed areas of the growing congregation of deceased. Ani-Kāterina spied the correct marker, "Section E. There it is. Section E. I can see him from here." Leaping from the van almost before it had parked, my middle child raced across the field of graves to Uncle Stanley whom she could see.

I held my camera at the gravesite in Section E unfamiliar with the ritual that unfolded in silence among my three children. Reflectively, intuitively, they arranged themselves in positions of remembrance. Ani-Kāterina, the first to enter this place to remember, sat cross-legged in front of Uncle Stanley's gravestone. Toa carefully browsed behind his gravestone, inspecting what lay beyond the visitor's sight. And Rewi stood at attention, like a miniature soldier, eyes front on the photograph of his favourite Uncle.

Not knowing what to do or how to blend into this unspoken ceremony of memory and meaning, I clicked the camera. In that fleeting moment the epitaph came to life, "Will Always Be Remembered By Those Who Loved Him."

### **Ethnographies of Here and There**

In conversation I asked Dad for his thoughts on Morton Lee's (2003) analysis which contended an educated group fluent in Tongan language constituted the new leadership in communities [dis]located overseas. Particularly, I invited his viewpoint on whether this argument coincided with Tongans living throughout the Auckland Region.

My Tongan Father *hit the roof* [reacted heatedly], to coin a *Kiwi* colloquialism. Dad's response ruptured an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) of educated elite steering culture and power for Tongans in Auckland. His argument emphatically intended to dissuade 'me' from buying into this product of social change and consequently, disband any idealisation that the 'new educated elite' were first in line for leadership.

## Fatherly Advice

But you should not think like that. When you overseas does not mean that you educated that you are automatically a leader. There's no way. You know a leader got to be proven successful for years. You can not be a leader overnight. Does not matter how clever you are or you think you got a name behind yourself that you are going to be a leader overnight. You got to manage people and that's what it is. And that's where people are going wrong. They try to be a leader overnight after coming with a big name, whatever their name is. They got to go and teach themselves how to manage people to be a leader.

You know, it's different when you a minister. See people look up to you and expect you to be a leader. Like a Noble, you been born into it as a privilege, as a privilege, they expect you to be a leader which nobody else can take it away. And that's where people are going wrong. They go and study hard and they think they got a name behind themselves and automatically they think they got the privilege to do that. They can't do it. You got to go and manage people. You are only a beginning, only a starting to it.

Kolonga people here? No way, no, absolutely nothing. They'll respect you. They'll listen to what you are saying but it does not give you the right to be a born leader. That's what I'm trying to tell you. A lot of people are trying to do that, that's what they are trying to do now. They are trying to do it now. That's what's happening now. With their name behind them they expect to be a privilege to go and run everything else. When you come here, you live now in twenty-first century, it does not work like that. You got to earn what you made behind you to get the respect of everybody else. On the Tongan cultural it's a bit different. If you been born or a privilege to it, you got the right to do it. But anything else you got to earn anything else, especially when you come from overseas.

But hard work and prove what you been doing is right. That's virtually the bottom line. And you got to be helping people and show them what you do and do what you preach, especially set by example. What you think is right you stick to

it and you do it and you do everything what you preach. But you don't just come out with a name and try to bully yourself. Oh goodness, "Go back and have a life!"<sup>2</sup>

My Father's response is cited here to illuminate the complexity and ambiguity of social life. Sweepingly, without paying attention to profound detail, Dad's opinion makes sense by the logic that 'lived and living experience' is the teacher. Therefore, one who makes a leadership claim over a kinship group or an ethnic and cultural identity *but* possesses an unproven **track record** [history] of community experience is perhaps a **dark horse** [unfavourable candidate], to speak in **Kiwi** idiomatic language. In more intricate depths, his analysis revealed an overlapping discourse on culture and power.

Immediately, Dad's dialogue proposed that leadership for Tongan generations resident in Tonga and Auckland is interrelated. Thus, the conventional marker of leadership belonged to the **Hou'eiki** [Monarchy/Nobility], the kind of social rank and standing inherited by birthright which is fixed. Subsequently, the other leadership variety is that of the clergy. Both contexts suggested the notion of 'leadership' is underpinned by social expectation. That is, the collective understanding the cultural positioning of power is determined by social criterion that judges one's appropriateness to represent, control and head communities and their interests. Communal acceptance has therefore conferred the **Hou'eiki** and the clergy with group 'approval' that these leadership positions are suitable for, and relevant to, Tongan social structure and organisation.

By contrast, my Father viewed an educated group with ambivalence in terms of their entrance into leadership roles in Auckland Tongan communities. He did not discount the *possibility* that those who had acquired tertiary education may develop their skills, knowledge and ability to carry out management roles and responsibilities within Tongan communities. His *counter* argument rested more in the idea that an educated group did not accede to leadership through the kinds of 'privilege' denoted as *traditional* – the **Hou'eiki** – or *pastoral* – the clergy. The 'difference' is that educated Tongans living in Auckland are required to *earn* leadership responsibility by *proving* themselves as successful in their respective fields of expertise and *practicing* "what [they] preach" (see p. 245). Hence, the notions of an inherited 'right,' as in the purpose of the **Hou'eiki**, or an assumed 'role,' as in the function of the clergy, are collapsed when confronting social change induced by the personification of an 'educated class' of incoming leaders.

Compounding the politics of difference is the social reality that Auckland Region's tertiary educated Tongans in the "political *conditions* of the present" are *not* unequivocally acknowledged by their peers – Tongan university graduates – their families and the Tongan social groups and communities with whom they identify, as leaders.<sup>3</sup> This story dispels 'Self' aggrandisement through the type of myth making that connects university education with the mass production of leadership. The social life saga which implies the function of universities is to confer academic qualifications and discharge an important by-product – society's leaders – is dismissed. My Father's *counter* 'truth,' itself a product of culture and power, untwined that those who have acquired tertiary education *may* be afforded respect for their achievement and consequently, listened to at community meetings where decision making processes are conducted. This does *not*, however, mean they occupy a recognised leadership position among a community gathering.

Unpacking this section's title, 'Ethnographies of Here and There,' the meaning of my Father's viewpoint on Tongan leadership, a story intended to *counter* Morton Lee's (2003) detail, reveals the subject's position is informed by circumstances of living in-between places in social memory and history. Dad's personal ethnography of here and there – Auckland and Tonga – is as a metaphor for a family of stories that select, edit and reproduce "strategies for selfhood,"<sup>4</sup> the "stuff of me" (Archibald 2002, p. 66), which conveys relationships between people and their places of connectedness and belonging.

The significance of Tongan leadership and social change, as discourse and rhetoric (Potter 1996), is its reverberation among the stories of three Tongan generations laid out on the pages of this thesis. A theme weaves in and out of conversations intersecting at points and places in memory – *how* will social change impact on the organisational relationship of our ties to each other and the places that connect us? (Pollner 1987; Rorty 1989). It is the penetrating anxiety that activators and actors of social change, as in new leadership groups and gatherings, *may* destabilise the threads of social memory disheveling their woven tapestry of history by rearranging the structure in which 'We' *imagine* our 'Selves' (Anderson 1983) and our transnational communities – here and there – into existence (Jenkins 2002).

This questioning is motivated by a 'different' rationale than the argument that culture is becoming increasingly 'lost' among generations of Maori and Pacific youth born and raised in South Auckland (Kahn 1989; Borrell 2005, p. 203). Morton Lee's (2003, pp. 131-186) *kava bowl* [an American-Tongan website] chat room talk interspersed with views from Tongan interviewees living in Melbourne reconstructed a diasporic floorshow that spanned the globe. Identity highlights featured recurring

worry that Tongans born and raised in America – land of the free – and Australia – across the Tasman Ocean from its former British colony neighbour, New Zealand – were inauthentic, spurious strains of the ‘real’ Tongan culture nurtured and nestled in an island Kingdom. Such epidemic internet nervousness detected in the American **kava bowl** chatter, and widespread vocalised concern heard in the Australian fieldwork excerpts, does *not* flourish with similar impetus and power among Tongan generations living in the Auckland Region, specifically in South Auckland.

Intertwined social and political factors give rise to these “histories of cultural difference” whereby an American and Australian diasporic divide realigns in direct contrast to Tongan generations [dis]located in the South Auckland terrain of contemporary New Zealand.<sup>5</sup> The geo-political context of postcolonial New Zealand repositions the history of Pacific Peoples, particularly the narration of South Auckland within the nation among ‘different’ experiences and meanings to those generated from Tongan families living in American and Australian cities. Firstly, the New Zealand population and the geographic territory is notably smaller than America and Australia. Related to this, the Pacific Peoples sub-population and the Tongan proportion of this equation is larger than America and Australia to the extent that Pacific Peoples constitute the third largest ethnic mass in New Zealand next to Māori and **Pakeha** and Tongans are the third largest Pacific ethnicity following Cook Islanders and Samoans. Specifically, South Auckland suburbs which represent high density Pacific Peoples sub-populations (e.g. Otara, Mangere, Otahuhu) are the urban locations where *majority* clusters of Pacific Peoples live in New Zealand.

Extensive geo-political ‘differences’ come into play when conceptualising and practicing the social reality of place and belonging among Tongan generations living in South Auckland suburbs compared to Tongan families resident in Salt Lake City Utah or Melbourne Australia. Moreover, a two hour direct flight from Auckland International Airport in Mangere South Auckland to Fua’amotu International Airport in Tongatapu reconnects the transnational ocean freeway in-between here and there. In colloquial language, I am saying the scope for resemblance is restricted when **comparing apples and oranges** [judging two different constructs as the same].

The context-dependent factor which makes the ‘difference’ when painting the diasporic picture of “multiple communities of a dispersed population” (Morton Lee 2003, p. 6) as real life is that Tongan families [dis]located in South Auckland New Zealand constitute a numerous sub-population living in geo-political proximity to Tonga and to their *own* affiliates, ethnic and cultural communities with whom they engage with in everyday life. Also, the postcolonial advent of **Aotearoa** New Zealand as the bicultural nation transitioning into a new identity that is ‘Pacific’

oriented in regional polity reproduces a markedly ‘different’ discourse of culture and power in contrast to the national [slash] transnational<sup>6</sup> histories and identities of America and Australia on the global stage (Ihimaera 1986; Zelinsky 1988; Henderson 1990; Day 2001).

It is plausible, therefore, to suggest the ground for comparison between Tongan families living in South Auckland and those in Salt Lake City and Melbourne becomes unstable in relation to unearthing the geo-political culture of everyday life. To elaborate my point, the *Tyranny of Distance* (Blainey 1966) has impacted on how minority-ness in America and Australia is experienced. In this context, geographic *distance* and the political *newness* of public institutions in America and Australia has exacerbated nervousness on the ‘loss’ of an authentic Tongan identity romantically conceived as existing in conventional markers of place and belonging – Tonga as the ancestral homeland. This is *not* to say that reification of the origins of place and belonging does not take place among Tongan generations living in the Auckland Region.

What I am proposing is the high sub-population density of Tongan families specifically living in South Auckland suburbs means minority-ness is *not* interpreted as an *absence* of ‘Us’ and ‘Our’ culture compared to ‘Them’ and their Westernisation machine that reprogrammed the *Native* to think, speak and behave like ‘Them’ (Fairchild 1961; Said 1978; Fabian 1983; Trask 1991). In the South Auckland setting, the minority position of Tongans is perceived by generations who contributed dialogue to this thesis as strategies to shift aside the centre that thrives, so there is *more* space for ‘Us’ to advance forward. The *centre*, as I have elucidated in chapter four, is duplicitous. It sends out two named conquerors of cultural identity politics in contemporary New Zealand to overpower and control an ‘independent’ Tongan challenge to state hegemony (Gramsci 1971) in collusion with sectors of society that benefit from consenting to bureaucratic interventions. The occupiers of subjugated peoples and their knowledge territory (Foucault 1980) are the mass identity constructs of *Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples* and *Māori and Pacific Peoples*.

The discourse of Samoan-centred Pacific Peoples in New Zealand sweepingly conflates ethnic and cultural groups of indigenous Pacific affiliation into one ethnic mass named ‘Pacific Peoples.’ Here, the Samoan majority constitutes the *centre*, the cultural priority that reconfigures the culture and power relations, and ideologies and practices, which represent ‘Pacific Peoples’ in New Zealand institutions of public life. Comparatively, the discourse of Māori and Pacific Peoples in New Zealand massifies two distinctive groupings. ***Tangata Whenua*** [people of the land], Māori who are indigenous to Aotearoa and ***Tangata Pasifika*** [people of the Pacific ocean], Pacific

Peoples who are *not* indigenous to **Aotearoa** but rekindle indigenous ties to the Pacific Islands, are seized and restrained in the “borderlines of ethnic deprivation.”<sup>7</sup>

“Ethnic deprivation” is a top-down bureaucratic ideology and practice that replicates itself at *ground* level among competing communities [dis]located “in the minority” by restricting multiple ethnicities from moving beyond the limits of the border control, ‘Pacific Peoples.’<sup>8</sup> In addition, “ethnic deprivation” takes on the form and function of ‘epistemic violence’ (Spivak 1990).<sup>9</sup> It is the political manoeuvre of knowledge violence committed against those forged together “in the minority,” the *meta* minority mass of Māori and Pacific Peoples.<sup>10</sup> Deprivation and deficit theories regurgitate ideas that bind ethnicity to social-economic disadvantage through a system of culture and power which controls, manages and monitors the minority squatting on the nation’s fringe – that is, Māori and Pacific Peoples. Such rampant ideological conversation takes over public discourse and popular opinion through its will to ‘normalise’ and standardise its own social commentary on ‘Them’ (Said 1978) and “their conflicts and struggles.”<sup>11</sup> The impinging social reality is that historically, representation of “their conflicts and struggles”<sup>12</sup> is a process signposted by ‘intervention’ strategies authorised and executed by the state on behalf of ‘Them’ (Said 1978). The critical enquiry is therefore ‘can the subaltern speak’ (Spivak 1988) for themselves? Can individuals and groups [dis]located “in the minority” stake out *independent* identity claims on ownership and representation of their ethnic and culture-specific “strategies for selfhood.”<sup>13</sup>

Amidst the shifting in-between of here and there, that is, the social memory of Tonga and its history of movement among Tongan generations living in the Auckland Region of New Zealand, lays the culture and power challenge. To restate my position, theorising social change in a South Auckland setting, whether family participants are living in South Auckland or the sprawling Auckland metropolis that borders its terrain, enables *different* foresight and vision in contrast to the “histories of cultural difference” ascribed to Tongan families resident in America and Australia.<sup>14</sup> A discourse of ‘Tongans Overseas’ (Morton 2003) has wilfully sought to invent a homogeneous population of Tongans circulated and relocated across the Pacific Rim in an ‘imagined’ global village of transnational relationships (Anderson 1983; Mahler 1998).

I am not suggesting transnational ties do not exist and persist. I am, however, questioning the ethnographic authority of inventing a dispersed ‘Tongan population’ as a monolithic social institution of globalisation (Kearney 1995). My point is to empower stories of diversity and difference in relation to their shaping of social memory, their sculpting of history, relies *not* on the reinvention of diffused

‘sameness’ at work in the vast and varied cities of the globe. But rather, it is the valuing of difference, the departure from socialised norms of culture and power created to ingrain discourses which public and academic media *know* as subjectively *true* to their disciplinary and political interests that release newness, “strategies for selfhood” context-dependent to heterogeneous communities engaged in change.<sup>15</sup>

For Tongan contributors to my thesis, it is *not* loss of culture but the impact of social change on culture and power which is worrisome, at times burdensome, and *most* times replayed among generations as different verses to a family anthem. The political present is experimental. Its consequences on the future are unknown to ‘Us’ experientially *but* reconfigured in social memory as stories from the past, ideologies and practices that made ‘Our’ history of who ‘We’ are and what ‘We’ mean *in* the now (Adam 1996; Beck-Gernsheim 1998). Sites of memory and meaning sort, amend, contextualise and connect generational and transnational relationships according to their cultural priority, usefulness and relevance to making history, revising the ‘past in the [*presence* of the] present’ (Heidegger 1971; Keesing 1982). Envisioning the outcome of navigating through untested territory or the newness of social life inexperienced in past lives, unsurprisingly leads to reifying the strength, security and stability of a family of stories that are memorable, familiar and recognisable.

Herein lays the conundrum of culture and power. As noted, it is *not* the loss of culture that becomes the menacing threat to social memory and history. It is the prickly discomfort experienced in worrying that social change will adjust culture and its relationship to power with expedient urgency. The critical ache is that change may take place during one’s lifetime to the extent that *culture* becomes no longer recognisable by memories and meanings cherished by speakers (Anzaldúa 1987; Adam 1996). The politics of memory recognition exercises a distinct political agenda. In respect to culture, that is, the ‘stories we live by’ (McAdams 1993) and their intimacy with power – the *modus operandi* of memory and meaning in our lives – individuals and groups recognise social change at work among themselves in the “political *conditions* of the present”<sup>16</sup> by relating its *presence* to the past (Heidegger 1971, pp. 152-153), the stories of beyond *our time* that ‘We’ remember, edit and tell (Ball 1991; Bauman 1998). When the past is no longer recognisable in the present (Keesing 1984), social change has thus altered culture beyond memory recognition.

In my thesis, the social theatrics and dramas in family lives are performed in scenes on cultural transformation. The product of change that ‘We’ anticipate but have not yet experienced acts as the catalyst for anxiety, the precursor for social crisis in a play on culture and power. Speakers use narrative to explain how culture has *become* new and different from past lives to reinvent historical experiences as an

ancestor, an origin story from which to explain *how* change manifests in the present (Connell 1988; Collingwood 1994). However, the places in memory that appear blurred, hazy and fuzzy emerge when the speaker fleetingly realises they may *not know* the story's ending because the script has yet to be finalised, the cast has yet to be chosen for their respective roles and the critics in cahoots with the state's institutions have yet to devise a social commentary on "their conflicts and struggles."<sup>17</sup>

Unavoidably, speakers are reluctant to close the story by concluding how it wraps up and instead, rework the past so the familial relationship to social memory and history accentuates connectedness and stability *not* disruption and discontinuity. This does not imply that discontinuities in history do not surface in fieldwork conversations that travel through memories of social change (Foucault 1972). What it does indicate is that emphasising relationship ties between 'Us' in the past compared to *how* 'We' invent ourselves in the present enacts strategies of culture and power which speak to "histories of cultural difference"<sup>18</sup> by engaging with its *presencing* (Heidegger 1971, pp. 152-153) impact in, and through, our lives.

This section's title 'Ethnographies of Here and There' therefore signifies two interrelated social and political factors at play among the identity stories of three Tongan generations living in the Auckland Region of contemporary New Zealand. Here and there is a metaphor for social memory and history that travels in-between Auckland and Tonga in storytelling conversation. Concomitant to this, imagining here and there performs the discursive relationship of connecting the past to the "political *conditions* of the present," particularly when projecting one's 'Self' and the relationship to 'Others' of kin and affine into an *unknown*, and yet to exist and be experienced, future.<sup>19</sup>

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## Endnotes

- 1        Brown Pulu, T. J. 2006. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Auckland.
- 2        Pulu, S. 2005. Interview 1, 13 December, Auckland.
- 3        See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 4        *ibid.*
- 5        *ibid.*
- 6        'National [slash] transnational' has been used here to signify that the social memory and history of Tongan generations living in **Aotearoa** New Zealand is contextualised in both national and transnational experiences and interpretations of 'the world' as we live it.
- 7        See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 8        *ibid.*

- 
- 9        *ibid.*
- 10       *ibid.*
- 11       *ibid.*
- 12       *ibid.*
- 13       *ibid.*
- 14       *ibid.*
- 15       *ibid.*
- 16       See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 17       See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 18       *ibid.*
- 19       See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.

# PART THREE

# Epilogue

*An Ending for a new Entry*

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## OH-TEE-TEE

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Out of all this, I have dreamed myself, shaped my identity, established my values, and marked out my place in the world. Many of my memories are shared. ... Those memories do not just define a *me*, they also define an *us*. ... When the past is not shared, when it lacks people or accessible places that confirm it, the past is less meaningful. If the past is entirely mediated by professionals and cannot be personally confirmed, it loses credibility. My experience in thirty years of work on behalf of the public's history convinces me that the history that matters to people is the past they remember and have validated through emotional experience. The past is knowable but not through words on printed pages so much as through emotional resonance, stimulated by places and objects of memory and the stories our whole community tells (Archibald 2002, p. 80).



*Kolonga Water Pump*

*Kolonga, Tongatapu  
December 2005*

## Making Holy Water

What's happening with the water?

We're making holy water that's what's happening with the water

Not making holy water just making water

So the water's good?

It would be

If we could get the town officer on side with the water committee

If we could get the water committee on side with the village

If we could get the village on side with the planning department

If we could get the planning department on *our* side to process the Japan **AID**

[Agency for International Development] grant

If we could get Japan **AID** on side with a field officer

A field officer who doesn't fall out with the village

... And get **snapped** [caught out]

By planning

And then **sacked** [fired]

So Kolonga will get water when?

We here to put the grant in now  
 It will go in by Friday  
 They process the grant  
 We got the plan approved  
 The work should start when the grant is approved  
 The work is in three stages  
 It should take a few months to get through  
 Maybe even shorter if we can get the full amount  
 Otherwise we have to raise some funds  
 But that won't be a problem  
 The Auckland families they know what is going on  
 We had a *fono* [village meeting] with Kolonga  
 They know what's going on

Yeah, but Dad ...

Your Dad is right  
 It will go through this time  
 The people are informed  
 They are going to work together this time  
 We met with planning  
 We just waiting on the grant

That sounds good

But we could be back here again next year  
 Telling the same water story

Please eat your lunch  
 And relax  
 This is Tonga  
 Tongans don't understand stress

## Interpretative Interlude Five

My cousin Paul Johansson's café called 'Friends' resembles a Ponsonby coffee shop with the polished wooden floor, historical photographs lining the walls, lattes and homemade slices in a main street setting of downtown Nuku'alofa. Relieved to hear Nuku signal that he, Dad and I would stop by Paul's café for lunch, I hurried to the car grateful for an opportunity to eat familiar food – *Kiwi* coffee bar cuisine in the sweltering heat of a December day in Tonga.

Convened at our table we ordered pre-lunch drinks. *Export Gold* [a brand of New Zealand beer] for Nuku, Dad on the local lager named after the national rugby team, *Ikale Tahī* [Sea Eagle/s], and 'me' up for a house wine, medium white – contrary to how I felt from the overdose of tropical sun, coarse brown. I waved to Paul who rolled up to our table. Respectfully he kissed Nuku and Dad and threw me a smile accompanied by an inquisitive flow of dialogue on upgrading Kolonga's water supply. "What's happening with the water?" His opening line was enough to offload a surge of three-way chatter from Nuku, Dad and I steered towards Paul's question but in the storytelling moment, directed at each other's tales [tails], strategically pointed in a game of checkmate.

Nuku won the board game. His triumphant comeback deflated my uptight and edgy performance of textbook rules on village development. Giggling at my own shortcoming in *not* understanding 'what's so funny about that' (Feinberg 1990), I ate my lunch, drank house wine and wound down.

### Tales and Trails of 'Me' in My Family

Stories of 'me' in my family are engaged in 'doing identity work.' The popular metaphor that describes the "political *conditions* of the present"<sup>2</sup> is globalisation (Robertson 1990, 1991; Wallerstein 1991, Kearney 1995; Lavie and Swedenburg 1996). In the global epoch of our present lives recalling the *local*, recounting "histories of cultural difference" and remaking the past into sites of memory and meaning that *counter* the meta narratives of sweeping homogeneity ascribed to those confined "in the minority" has proliferated.<sup>3</sup>

Globalisation has collapsed cultural and geographic boundaries *shrinking* the world to a *limiting* extent in contemporary New Zealand. Reconfiguring a national identity befitting of twenty first century genre, itself a product of global culture and power, has exposed *more* than controlled social life in New Zealand (Zelinsky 1988; Robertson 1990, 1991; Zizek 1995, 1999; Spoonley 1995, 2001; Zenah 2001; Zemke-White 2001, 2004). The social ingredients that constitute people and their relationship to place and belonging is heterogeneous, a "complex negotiated process"

that operates through multiple sites of community, *local* identity and micro-systems of culture and power.<sup>4</sup>

As Benedict Anderson (1983) observed two decades prior to creating this thesis, communities are imagined into existence, reality and meaning. The *meta* community is the ‘nation’ and its narration (Bhabha 1990) or the story of the nation in reference to social memory and history is co-constructed by individuals and groups whose ‘cultural priority’ is to design and implement a system of power that reproduces its ‘Self,’ its canons, tastes and preferences (Sahlins 1976; Said 1978, 1985, 1993; Jameson 1984; Lawson 1997). The culture and power schema which thrives as the regulator of norms governing the production of knowledge and language in state and society is unavoidably traced to the nation’s majority (Said 1998). Emerging in-between the will to truth (Foucault 1972, 1980, 1991a) of majoritarian logic and its rule over, and representation of, the ‘nation and its fragments’ (Chatterjee 1993) lies the “fragmentary point of view.”<sup>5</sup> That is, the fragmented remnants of memories and stories which reconstruct an origin place and its relevance in, and among, the social lives of those [dis]located “in the minority”<sup>6</sup> of the changing national ‘ethnoscape’ (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33; Laclau 1995, 1996).

The borderlands of “histories of cultural difference” confine and define New Zealand’s *minority* in contrast to the majority.<sup>7</sup> However, it is ‘here’ and ‘there,’ in-between social memory of the past and its reinvented history in the present, where social transactions that activate transformational change take place. Homi K. Bhabha interpreted the interplay of consensus and conflict is persistently in flux for those constructed by majoritarian logic as the ‘minority.’<sup>8</sup> Hence, new identity stories *become* released into the public domain by those motioning from the nation’s fringe that ‘They’ are the experts on representing their own lives (Friedman 1993, 1998). Newness carries the social burden of *not* ‘fitting’ with, or fettering, conventional markers of identity that state and society governed by majoritarian politics construct as categories that define the ‘truth’ of an individual and group’s *actuality* (i.e. New Zealand Statistics Census measuring standards identified as place of birth, citizenship status, ethnicity, employment, income level, education achievement, gender/sex, married, single, de-facto, civil union, children, religion, fluency in a language other than English) (Friedman 1981).

The borderline engagements of cultural difference may as often be consensual as conflictual; they may confound our definitions of tradition and modernity; realign the customary boundaries between the private and the public, high and low; and challenge normative expectations of development and progress. (Bhabha 1994, p. 2).

Bhabha's analysis may be theoretically adapted to examine the social circumstances and cultural politics that underline identity stories of family contributors to this work. The colonial definition of 'race' accredited to the *Native* to subordinate its 'difference' from the *European* was uttered in historical narratives that contrasted Māori against ***Pakeha***. Such outdated discourse may no longer be publicly rationalised in words and images of *racial* discrimination in postcolonial settings (i.e. brown versus white and inferior versus superior) (Said 1978). However, spectres of race produce a colonial scent in the labelling process of massifying Māori and Pacific Peoples in a *meta* class of situational 'sameness' characterized by ethnicity, culture and low socio-economic status and social deviancy compared to the 'national' averages and norms associated with the majority ***Pakeha*** population (Husband 1982; Handler 1985; Helu-Thaman 1994; Stoler 1995; Ladson-Billings 2000). The state's dissemination of policies, programmes and interventions targeted at 'closing the gaps' and 'reducing social inequality' between the nation's majority, ***Pakeha***, and its binary opposition, Māori and Pacific Peoples, has *perhaps* inadvertently echoed "histories of cultural difference"<sup>9</sup> attributed to *race* and national identity (Ausubel 1960; Hanson 1989; Cooper and Stoler 1997; Mohanram 1999; Ladson-Billings 2000; Brown Pulu 2002).

Strategically the notion of 'race' is downplayed and surpassed by ethnicity and culture, a conflated identity marker which merges ideas of socially bounded ancestral ties and its ensuing values, beliefs and practices (Linnekin 1990, 1991, 1992). In contemporary New Zealand, cultural politics or the plethora of competing ideologies that propel systems of culture and power are played out in the social life of the 'minority' as a two-fold predicament (Clifford 1988; Mackenzie 2001; Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh and Teaiwa 2005). Family participants from three generations of Tongans living predominantly in the Auckland Region, specifically in suburbs demarcated as South Auckland, have noted the double-edged quandary of inventing cultural identity in a new national 'ethnoscape' (Appadurai 1990, p. 297; Appadurai 1996, p. 33), while synonymously challenging the structural boundary imposed on those swept "in the minority" of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand.<sup>10</sup>

In chapter four's theorisation on 'Culture and Power' my middle child Ani-Kāterina described her 'Self' and 'Personhood' in relation to 'Others' of kin and affine as Maori and Tongan *not Kiwi* (see p. 114). A family participant from generation two explained that "Tongans aren't Pacific Islanders. They're Tongans" (see p. 142). Related to this *counter* argument, a family speaker from generation one expressed frustration and resentment from being prohibited to "be free to be Tongan" (see p. 145) in '***Okalani Nu'u Sila***.

Chapter four's 'stories from the field' (Te Momo 2002) outlined the structural and social constraints of mobilising identity beyond the limits of 'official' definitions that situate the 'Self' (Benhabib 1992) in respect to group association. This discourse sketched the contours and layers from which fertile tensions and conflicts alongside conciliatory resolutions transpire. The intersection of fieldwork conversations arrive, transition and travel along roots and routes of a converging discourse. That is, tales of Tongan identity in '***Okalani Nu'u Sila*** seek a measure of 'independence' from *being* conflated within, and confined by, the Pacific Peoples in New Zealand narrative and history of the nation's *minority* (Manu'atu 2000). Thus, the context in which culture and its relationship to power is conjured up as social reality prompts the evocation of *tradition*. In this setting, tradition *becomes* the interpreter of the *unknown newness* in present political conditions by its *known authority* of the past. As Homi K. Bhabha explained, for individuals and groups [dis]located "in the minority" the repositioning of conventional borders which contemporary theory considered collapsed reappear in conjunction with *counter* memories that contest the cultural authority of "development and progress" discourse.<sup>11</sup>

To join the dots and colour in Bhabha's picture of social memory recalled, and history reinvented, the boundary delineating private lives and public knowledge was played out in chapter five's narratives retold by my parents (see pp. 192-202). My Mother's identity performance bordered on *public* knowledge which she conceived *traditionally* acceptable within the institutional confines of academic media. The *private* 'Self,' the social life of 'me' in my family thus became temporarily fractured from the ethnographic description on culture and power. Comparatively, my Father's tales of Tongan social life narrated a personalised view of culture and power in the process of negotiating change when recalling the contrasting landscape of *private* memory in Tonga and '***Okalani Nu'u Sila***. Consequently, Dad's historical account of his origins, ***Kolonga 'i Tongatapu*** [Kolonga village on the island of Tongatapu] was positioned at odds from public discourse on Tonga's modern history during the ***Tupou*** monarchy.

Chapter six's smorgasbord of stories reworked by three Tongan generations in '***Okalani Nu'u Sila*** etched out the line between "high and low."<sup>12</sup> To compound and confound simplistic interpretations of higher versus lower culture, the different sides of the story varied in terms of *how* speakers defined the criteria for 'high' compared to its conceptual signifier, 'low.' Dad's story titled '***Fonua Vale*** and the Politics of Name Calling' (see pp. 212-216) repositioned his *counter* memory of Kolonga's past, a geo-political discourse, as the "strategy for selfhood"<sup>13</sup> that reconstructs 'village' identity as the organising principle for reinterpreting *how* the

‘Self’ is connected to, and features in, ancient and modern Tongan history. A quiet *subversion* of the conventional history recorded of the **Tu’i Kanokupolu** was enacted. In this subtext, ‘village’ discourse was reconfigured *higher* in memory and meaning. Comparatively, Tongan national identity read through the current rule of the **Tupou** monarchy was situated *lower* in memory recognition.

Chapter six also recorded a tale told by a family speaker from generation two (see pp. 227-229) which identified the crux of minority trouble in New Zealand as “being forced into being Pacific Islanders for government business” (see p. 227). The system of culture reinterpreted as the *higher* power was traced to ethnic-specific discourse that allowed Tongans in New Zealand to stake out an ‘independent’ identity claim distinct from the *lower* classification of Pacific Peoples. Institutional categories for individuals and groups that amassed multiple ethnicities and cultures into a *meta* minority cohort named ‘Pacific’ was viewed as a *lower* organisational structure. The brutal imposition of the state and its bureaucratic interests over the social reality of people’s identities, values and practices was thus perceived as hostility, the political trigger for the reproduction of distrust, conflict and violence transacted between ethnic groups forced against their will to exist “in the minority.”<sup>14</sup>

In chapter seven, my Father sent out a “challenge [to] normative expectations of development and progress.”<sup>15</sup> His theory on leadership (see pp. 245-246) in Tongan communities in **‘Okalani Nu’u Sila** wilfully forged links with past memory of traditional hierarchy, the immovable status of the **Hou’eiki** [monarchy/nobility] and community responsibility, the pastoral role of the clergy. Writhing beneath his analysis lay the contested territory of which an incoming leadership group, tertiary educated Tongans may, “political *conditions*” permitting, encroach.<sup>16</sup> Dad’s position ruptured the idea that universities are manufacturing sites for society’s leaders. He *counter* argued the acquisition of tertiary education does not inevitably confer one a place of leadership in Auckland Tongan communities as social norms do not recognise or accept university degree holders as the contemporary substitute for the **Hou’eiki** and the clergy.

Lastly, my own theoretical preference peers through Derrida’s (1994, p. 28) insight on one who “wants to think their time.” From the moment of this study’s inception I desired to reinvent my ‘Self’ as a thinker of my time (Mahler 1998; Malpas 2001; Marshall 1999, 2004). Such a cliché descriptor for one’s ‘Self’ was intended to create my own social imaginary of *independent* space from captivity within, and seduction by, intellectual and cultural categorisations that perform hierarchies of knowledge, language and power (Foucault 1972; Stamp 1994). I wanted to be ‘the postcolonial critic’ (Spivak 1990) who spoke to ‘me’ from Gayatri Spivak’s text on

“strategies for selfhood” (Spivak 1987, 1988, 1999; Spivak and Guha 1988; Landrey and MacLean 1995).<sup>17</sup> That is, the survival road map on navigating the contested ground of cultural identity politics without yielding to an undercurrent of **selling out** [conforming] to social theory that ‘We’ *know* to be ‘true’ to accepted convention, fashionable research and trendy politics. I *imagined* my ‘Self’ on the edge of the [dis]located minority and once a thesis draft was written saw that I was *always* the central actor in my parents’ memories, my children’s lives, my husband’s thoughts and my family of stories (Kundera 1980; Maso 2003).

To think ‘my time’ entailed carefully editing, structuring and reworking the manuscript for dissemination among public and academic media, an audience of readers largely *unknown* to ‘me’ in my family. It was not that waning confidence disallowed ‘me’ to wrench the intensity of stories saturated in stormy, touchy and stinging lyrics. But more, that I thought of ‘Them,’ my family (Lambek 1996). Thinking my time made ‘me’ realise that in the transience of my life I am not caged by time – my memory permits ‘me’ to travel in-between people and places, many that I have no direct recollection of (Hau’ofa 1993). What I am emotionally connected to, consciously and unconsciously, willingly and involuntarily, is my family and their memory in ‘me’ (Hoskins and Arvay 1999). Therefore, it makes sense to *know* I am bound to write in a thesis that which I **may get away with and live to tell the tale** [be able to talk of without getting into trouble] and have deferred from saying what is best shelved in a family of stories (Langness and Frank 1981).

These days, anyone who wants to think their time, especially if they want to talk about it too, is bound to pay heed to a public space, and therefore to a political present which is constantly changing in form and content as a result of the tele-technology of what is confusedly called news, information or communication. (Derrida 1994, p. 28).

### **My Closing Story**

My closing story goes to my Father, Seminati Pulu, who throughout this travelling thesis has adjusted his [in]sight on ‘doing identity work’ among family to correspond with the changing landscape of matrilateral and patrilateral stories that reconstruct “histories of cultural difference.”<sup>18</sup> The Father’s final word in remembrance of Tongan tradition was resituated as **‘eiki** [superior] according to my Mother’s momentary emission in the field. As a daughter of ‘difference,’ however, it is not the reinvention of **‘eiki** that clenches my interest here. More, it is the ‘cultural hybridities’ (Bhabha 1994, p. 2) uncovered in Dad’s weaving of ‘here’ and ‘there’ – Auckland and Tonga – and ‘then’ and ‘now’ – our families’ pasts and its *presencing* in

'me' that I carry and convey in the world reconstructed by social memory and history (Heidegger 1971, pp. 152-52). That is, a family of stories.

#### Our Father

You prove yourself you can sit the exam, put a big name behind you, you come out, out it in practice. And I can assure you when you come off on any degree or whatever you got, the first five years is the only time you learn. That's the time you put everything into practice, the first five years up to ten years. That's when you start fitting yourself to know exactly what you are doing. Coming from a university is rubbish. It's just like learning a trade. If you are [a] mechanic, after being learn your trade third year or five years, it's the next five years after that when you start to muck up other people's vehicles, make a lot of mistake, that's when you *really* actually learn, it's the first five years after you pass whatever exam you do - that's the *critical* part. And I'm afraid there's a lot of people they keep making the same mistake all over again. They never learn! And they are the people they never be a leader, they will *never* be a leader! Well, they *should not* be a leader anyway because they always finish up in a big drama and everything else.

It's never changed, Teena. It's just like your family history. You and I know our family was always well known for boxing or sports. You always go through in history, somewhere in the line it's someone pop up that's a good sports person. It's just like Kolonga people and just like your Grandfather, Sitani Palaone [Stanley Brown]. He was a very good leader in his own right. People listen to him and he was very clever and now it's coming through in you now. People don't realise, you never be teach things like that. You were just born to it. It's part of you. All you need to do is just apply a bit more effort to it; it will come through at the end. But you can't go out and call yourself as a privilege. That's what is wrong these days. People think it's a privilege to get a degree or get a big fancy name behind you and, "I'm a leader, I'm big, follow me!" Christ, go away!"<sup>19</sup>

The shifting position of ‘me’ in my family of stories makes *no* grand claim to authority. Authoritative texts are prescribed by the academy’s disciplinarians who are considered *true* inheritors of the power to define and confine subjects of knowledge (Foucault 1980). Nor does my identity work seek to reinvent another *meta* narrative in minority discourse for academic and public media’s rules and regulations on managing ‘the nation and its fragments’ (Chatterjee 1993). This historical legacy, I believe, is the work of social and economic hierarchies. My story is a *micro* voice that speaks back to the *centre* (Spivak 1990), where the centre is the socially constructed inertia which imagines into existence the ***level playing field*** [ideas of anti-racism and social equality]. Thus, contemporary society’s fixation on levelling the ground has historically compounded inequity and exacerbated tension by overlooking the power differentials activated within, and between, competing groups conflated “‘in the minority.’”<sup>20</sup> My thesis, therefore, is a small stage that performs ‘stories from the field’ (Te Momo 2002) on their own terms of tale telling. In turn, this family production of social memory has released expansive possibilities for the script’s ending to be written, edited and rewritten according to the actors’ desires in how they see their entries emerging in the next chapter of our moving, mobile and mutable lives ... entwined.

To pay respect to the ‘Our Father,’ my Father’s closing prayer (see pp. 235-236), the snapshot in which I see ‘me’ in my family at this passing moment in social life is revealed – *still in* training. Amen.

### **An Ending for a New Entry**

The month of May 2006 saw my Mother re-admitted to Auckland Hospital for minor surgery. An ulcerated stomach from the ***post-op*** [post-operative] medication taken after her kidney transplant along with contracting a winter virus meant three weeks in Ward 71 Renal Unit. I arrived at my parents’ home on ***The Shore*** the Sunday evening before Mum’s return to hospital to collect Toa and Rewi who had spent the semester break in Auckland with their sister Ani-Kāterina. Mum was depressed and in considerable pain but focused her attention on Dad with whom she was annoyed for worrying Rewi.

“Rewi was worried last night. The poor little boy said, “Granddad’s not going to die is he Grandma? He said he’s going to die when he’s sixty five but he’s only joking isn’t he?” I told your Father off for saying that to Rewi.”

“Mum, I told Granddad that I have a Māori ***Koro*** in Opotiki, ***Koro*** Rewi, and he’s seventy five or seventy eight or eighty,” Rewi added.

Dad sat quietly on the couch watching ***NRL*** [National Rugby League] on ***SKY Sport*** [a New Zealand cable television channel] listening without making known that

he was aware of the dialogue bordering his [guilty] silence. Rewi sidled up next to Dad who hugged him, an unspoken apology.

That evening on the drive home from North Shore City to the North Waikato District, Rewi remembered his conversation with Granddad.

“Granddad said he wants to die when he’s sixty five. He wants to go back to Tonga and die in Tonga. He’s going to be buried in Kolonga with Sioeli. Sioeli’s his Dad. But he’ll train me for rugby before he dies.”

“Mum.”

“What son?”

“I think I’ll be buried in Tonga with Granddad. Can you change my story in your thesis? Say that I’m going to Tonga to be buried with Granddad. Ok Mum?”

### **A New Entry**

“Ok Rewi. I’ll do that. I’ll change your story.”

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### **Endnotes**

- 1 Brown Pulu, T. J. 2005. Doctoral Thesis Fieldnotes, Tonga.
- 2 See Bhabha 1994, p. 3.
- 3 See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 See Pandey 1978 cited in Chatterjee 1993.
- 6 See Bhabha 1994, p. 2.
- 7 *ibid.*
- 8 *ibid.*
- 9 *ibid.*
- 10 *ibid.*
- 11 *ibid.*
- 12 *ibid.*
- 13 *ibid.*
- 14 *ibid.*
- 15 *ibid.*
- 16 *ibid.*
- 17 *ibid.*
- 18 *ibid.*
- 19 Pulu, S. 2005. Interview 1, 13 December, Auckland.
- 20 *ibid.*

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