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E Mamae Le Tava'e I Lona Fulu

**A study of the impact of the
Congregational Christian Church of Samoa
on Vaigaga's social structure.**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work in the School of
Social Policy and Social Work at Massey University.**

TULI FEPULEAI SAMUELU

1999

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the impact of the Congregational Christian Church on the social structure of Vaigaga. It includes the stories of seven Vaigaga residents who occupy different positions in Vaigaga's social and political structure. They represent different generations so that their information describes different intergenerational experiences which reflect on historical and contemporary Vaigaga.

The focus on the impact of the church is in part a response to the current cultural situation Vaigaga is experiencing. It is argued in this thesis that the dominant power of the church contributes to the erosion of traditional Samoan social structures and values in Vaigaga. This study brings out the main issues that have surfaced as a result of this relationship by providing relevant research material for consideration.

The participants' stories are presented as oral transmissions in their own words but in English translations. They are a contribution to the body of literature on the continuing debate between the church and the culture in Samoa, a body of literature which, although currently disappointingly small, is quite significant.

A primary feature of the study is that Samoan people are central and essential in defining their own research problems, becoming research participants, and being in control in what is being researched. Having a Samoan as the research assistant further validates this. The research is based upon Samoan cultural principles and protocols as outlined in the Methodology chapter of this thesis.

This study seeks to highlight the issues that will contribute to the restoring of a Samoan cultural environment in Vaigaga to promote the celebration of Samoan cultural values that define the uniqueness of being a Samoan.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to two wonderful people:

My father, FEPULEAI SAMUELU MATAIA ETEUATI

and

My Mother, FAAEFALEUPOLU F.S.M. ETEUATI

UPU TOMUA

Ua nunu le toaau o ufi, ua afu lelea le tausaga. O le aso foi ma le filiga o le aso ma le mata'igatila. Ua patipati foi lima o le tamaloa Faleata, ae popo le tamaloa Vaimauga. Aisea? Ua talitonu le faamoemoe, e ao ina tatou ave le faamua i le Atua Paia, o le Tufuga ma le Mataisau, aua o lana pule faasoaso ma lona alofa tulenoa ua mafai ai ona tatou sagisagi fiafia i le faaiuga o lenei sailiiliga. Aua e ioe le taofi, o se tofa paia i Aiga ma se utaga oo ia Pule ma Tumua, Ituau ma Alataua, Aiga-i le-Tai ma le Vaa o Fonoti, ma faleupolu tofia o Samoa, ae o se vaa tu taumua i le vasa o faigata, sou i lagi o peau lagavale ao lenei ua tatou aleaga i Fagalele, ua tatou oaoa ai nei i Faleseu ma ua tatou saa i maaomalie i le agalelei ma le alofa o le Tapaau i le lagi.

Ao lei sagai atu lenei itu e faailo faiva o le tai i se sailiiliga vaivai poo se taumafaiga le tua, ou te ioe ma ou mautinoa, e faleoo manatu iinei ae faletele iina sona atoatoaga.

I le faaaloalo ou te faafetai atu ai i le paia o ou Tama i Aiga i lau tofa marnao faapea ma le mamalu i Pona-oo i lau tou faautautaga loloto ma le fesoasoani. Ou te faafetai atu foi ia Vaigaga, le nuu e pele, i ou tama ma tina, uso ma tuagane aemaise o le fanau iti, i lo outou amanaia o lou tautevateva i le sailiiliga o lenei mataupu. Tau ina ia fai se aoga o lenei sailiiliga mo lo tatou agai i luma aemaise o le manumanuga i la tatou aganuu.

Avea ia lenei avanoa, ou te faatoese faaaloalo atu ai i le paia i Aiga ma a latou Tama, o Tama foi ma o latou Aiga e fia, faapea le mamalu ia Tumua ma Pule, Ituau ma Alataua, Aiga-i le-Tai ma le Vaa o Fonoti, ma le aoao o Samoa aua o le atunuu mamala. Faamolemole, faamagalo mai lo outou afafine i se upu ua le tonu i au suesuega i lenei pepa.

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