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<i>ADDITIONAL NOTES</i>	

Oral Traditions, Cultural Significance of Storytelling, and Samoan Understandings of Place or Fanua

Abstract

Oral tradition is at the heart of Indigenous cultures. Despite being central to Indigenous histories, oral sources and ancient stories have not been fully incorporated into scholarly understandings of land and “place,” which remain couched in economic terms and treated as abstractions in dominant theoretical conceptualizations. The rich oral tradition of Samoan storytelling, as heard in the *tala le vavau* (ancient stories, often translated as myths and legends) of Metotagivale and Alo, highlights the core cultural values that underscore fa'a-Samoa (Samoan culture and ways of knowing) of fanua or place. I argue that Samoan Indigenous ways of understanding place can be synthesized with the phenomenology approach to contribute to a broader academic understanding of place and physical resources. In addition to the memories, emotions, and values that make places significant according to humanist and phenomenological perspectives, the language, proverbs, names, and place-names in Samoan oral traditions demonstrate Samoan relationships with place and ecological knowledge. The *tala le vavau* theoretically transmit and reinforce conservation ethics and ecological perspectives. The core of Indigenous Samoan ecological knowledge is the achievement of balance and the recognition of equivalence and complementarity of *vā*/social relations and *tapu*. Respect is key to maintaining balance, and we can achieve redemptive change by promoting storytelling in place-based curricula.

A CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE ON LAND starts with the proposition that there is no objective natural world for human beings; it is impossible for humans to think aculturally (Andrade 2008; Murton 1979; Struthers and McAlpine 2005). Terms such as “land” and “land tenure” are culturally defined and can only be understood within specific cultural contexts. Dominant Western discourses treat land and place as abstract concepts, so most geographical inquiries have been couched in empirical and positivist epistemological assumptions, and scholarly attention continues to be directed primarily at

the economic (particularly capitalist) aspects of land usage and tenure. Such approaches are too limited for understanding Indigenous peoples' perspectives and relationships with their surroundings. For Indigenous people, the equally important (though often hidden from academic view) dimension of culture must be included in scholarly research.

The difficulties that arise in interactions between people who have very different conceptualizations of land and land tenure are probably nowhere better illustrated than in scholarship of the Pacific or Oceanic region. For example, humanistic cultural geographies focusing on the experience and meaning of "place" in Oceania emphasized the Western concept of "sense of place" to explain attachment to ancestral lands while ignoring features peculiar to Indigenous interpretations of land and space (Brookfield 1973; Fox and Cumberland 1962). Unfortunately, Western scientific methodologies that emphasize rationality and mechanistic design are not a good fit with Pacific epistemologies and nonmechanistic worldviews that privilege intuition, dialogue with ancestors, and kinship ties among all living things. In pursuing scientific rigor, social scientists have assigned island peoples' stories, values, and spiritual connections to nature to the academic periphery.¹ Some Western scholars have depersonalized Indigenous views of land and resources, space, and territories (De Blij and Muller 2000; Haggett 1979). Meanwhile, Māori, Hawaiian, and Samoan ideas about the interconnectedness and sacredness of all things have been neglected, and their ecological viewpoints and the conservation ethic implicit in Indigenous land use have often been overlooked. Accepting that sociocultural meanings of human—environment interactions drive and sustain Indigenous understandings of place and environment behooves us to employ culturally appropriate methods for conducting research on these topics.

The *tala le vavau* of Metotagivale and Alo demonstrates the importance of storytelling in informing Samoan ways of knowing about land and place. The stories of love, respect, passion, betrayal, adventure, and tragedy that constitute this narrative are the legacy of those who came and inhabited the Samoan islands hundreds of years ago. The tale's use of language, especially personal and place-names and proverbs, exemplifies the fundamentally phenomenological sense of place in Samoa. Intertwined with memories, emotions, and individual and collective identities, the telling of this and other ancient stories reveals a tangible experience of place. The *fanua*/land we walk on and the *tulagavae*/footprints we leave in the soil of our birth link us to the *tupu'aga*/ancestors whose bones are interred in there, just as their spirits remain grounded in the place-names and proverbs of our *tala le vavau*.² Telling old stories continually reinforces the primacy of place in Samoan and other cultural identities of Pacific people.

Storytelling “wherein personal, experiential geographies are conveyed in narrative form” (Cameron 2012, 575) is particularly useful for incorporating the cultural perspective into research on Indigenous understandings of land and place. My desire to work on storytelling originated from something that I felt was missing from other scholarly attempts to comprehend Pacific Islanders’ concepts of place, or *fanua* in Samoan.³ Growing up in the village of Salelologa, I took for granted that telling stories was and is a means of learning and transmitting knowledge about Samoan history and relationships with the environment, other people, and the rest of the world.⁴ Samoan oral traditions encompass many genres, including *alaga’upu/proverbs*, *fagogo/fables*, *faleaitu/comedies*, *pese/songs*, *solo/chants*, *tauloto/poems*, and *tala le vavau*. *Tala le vavau* is frequently translated as myths and legends, but a better translation would be oral stories, ancient stories, or stories of old, because the English terms “myths and legends . . . [implies] they are not true stories” (Hereniko 2000, 81). While old stories and chants are at the heart of Indigenous cultures (Poupart et al. 2001) and storytelling has been the usual mechanism for relaying and passing on information in Indigenous societies since time immemorial, they have historically been silenced because of prevailing tendencies toward viewing such oral traditions as “hearsay and inferior to the written texts that recorded a superior intelligence” (Louis 2007, 130).⁵ Oral traditions continue to be transmitted in Samoa, but they are learned as an informal addendum to formal schooling that follows a metropolitan and specifically New Zealand curriculum.⁶ As a Samoan familiar with both pedagogical systems, I realized that *tala le vavau* and other oral genres shaped the collective Samoan reverence for *fanua* and would therefore be key to a deeper scholarly understanding of the links between identity and geography. Integrating storytelling as in *tala le vavau* is necessary to continuing efforts to make space for Oceanic ways of knowing about island environments.

Research Context and Geography of Samoan Storytelling

The Samoa Islands archipelago constitutes one of many island groups in the Pacific (see Figure 1). Intensive interactions among the people of all the island groups characterized everyday life long before first contact with Europeans. Samoan oral histories describe these social and cultural interactions in detail. They tell of power struggles and marriage alliances between Tuimanu’ā (paramount chief of Manu’ā, a group of islands in what is now known as American Samoa), Tuitoga (paramount chief of Tonga), Tuifiti (paramount chief of Fiji), and Tuia’ana and Tuiatua (paramount chiefs from

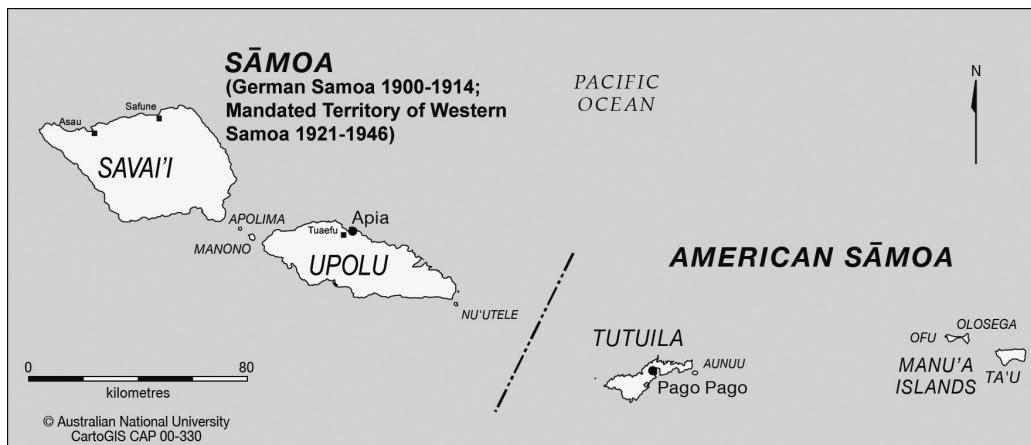


FIGURE 1. Map of Samoa and American Samoa. Produced by CartoGIS Services, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University, 2003.

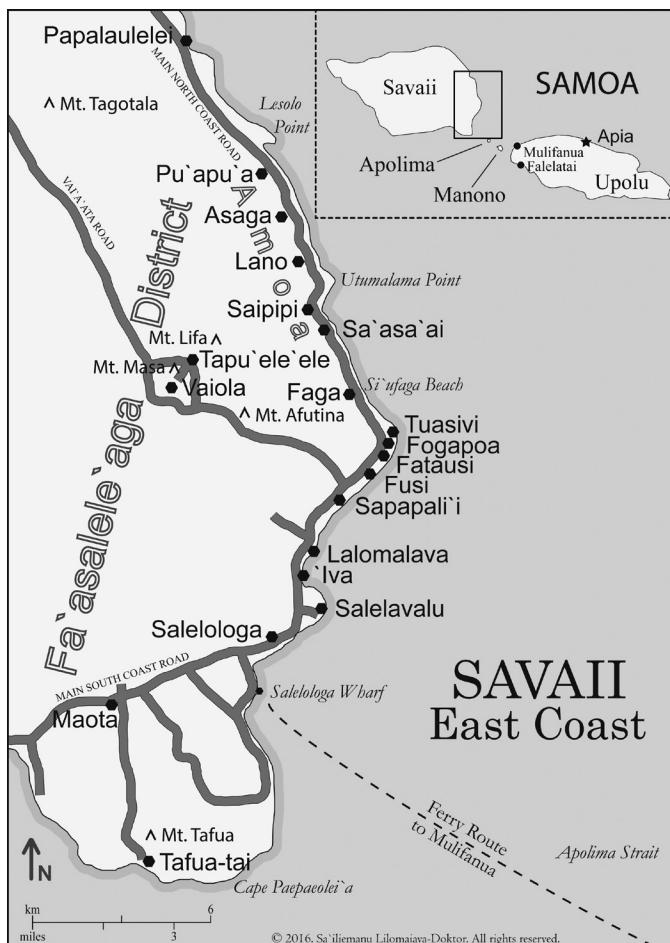


FIGURE 2. Map of the Amoa district and villages. Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiaava-Doktor, 2016.

A'ana and Atua, two of the three political districts on Upolu island) (Lambie and Henry 1958; Sunia 2000).

The Independent State of Samoa includes two large islands, Upolu and Savaii, and two smaller islands, Manono and Apolima. I conducted research throughout Samoa between 1998 and 2002, then concentrated every summer of 2009, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2015 on the villages of Salelologa, Lano, and Pu'apu'a in the Amoa district, part of the larger Fa'asalele'aga administrative district on Savaii (Figure 2). I garnered the Metotagivale and Alo legend from interviews with various matai (orators and chiefs) from Pu'apu'a and Lano. I also interviewed Aumua Mata'itisi Simanu, a ninety-seven-year-old elder and emeritus professor of Samoan Language and Culture at the University of Hawai'i, and consulted her book *O si Manu a Alii* (2002).

The story of Metotagivale and Alo is a central spiritual, cultural, and secular focus of village identity; there are several versions of the legend, and some portions of it have been published (Anae 1998; Hanlon 2003; Louis 2011; Wendt 1976). I tell the version from Amoa, because that is where the legend originated (Figure 2). Since it has never previously been published in full, I relate the entire tale before analyzing its elements and drawing connections among the places, genealogies, and environmental features of the area.

I begin with the complete story of Metotagivale and Alo of Amoa, after which I analyze associated place-names and proverbs to demonstrate Samoan experiential and relational understandings of place. An ethic of caring for the environment is also rooted in this tale. I underscore the idea that storytelling, specifically, the language, metaphors, place-names, and proverbs bundled in tala le vavau / ancient stories, provides a means of understanding place and the world. Storytelling highlights a deeper sense of the phenomenological context for which Samoan "understanding of place" informs and deepens Samoan community knowledge, thereby allowing Samoan epistemologies feed into the academic discourse of phenomenology and diversify its lexis and its practical applicability. I then explore the significance of storytelling more deeply. I discuss theoretical approaches that can be integrated into research on Samoan and other Indigenous concepts of place and outline storytelling as an approach to understanding the world and environmental knowledge.

Metotagivale and Alo of Amoa

The story goes there was a taupou / village maiden in the village of Pu'apu'a; her name was Metotagivale. Meto is a nickname, and tagivale means a cry-baby; she was called Metotagivale because she was spoiled and wanted only

the best, chiefly things. Meto's body was not very smooth; she had a rash all over her skin and so lived alone in a cave in Pu'apu'a.⁷

Alo was beloved by every taupou in Samoa; even ravished-skinned Meto pined for his love. Alo was a handsome, famous manaia / son of a chief. Alo originated from two sisters named Tāla'i and Sināfatuimoa, who came from Fiji. They were traveling through Savaii when they got tired and stopped at a pool in Pu'apu'a to quench their thirst. Once settled, Tāla'i said to Sināfatuimoa, "Wait here, I will go get water for us." However, Sināfatuimoa did not listen and followed Tāla'i. At the pool she saw for the first time that her body was human but that her face was like a mouse. She was shocked. She cried and told her sister, "Why didn't you tell me, sister, that my face is like a mouse?" This is how the pool got its name, Vai Tilofia / Waterpool Where I Saw My Reflection. She was so devastated that she jumped in the pool and lived there. One day, Chief Punaoālo went to bathe in the pool, and he left his pulu ta'ele / washcloth made of laufao / plant fiber in the pool. Sināfatuimoa, who now lived in the pool, ate the pulu ta'ele / washcloth. Every day, Chief Punaoālo went to take his bath and left his pulu ta'ele / washcloth there. This lady kept eating it, and she got pregnant with a girl she named Sina. She did the same thing a second time around, and she got pregnant with a son and named him Alo. The children grew big, and Sināfatuimoa's sister, Tāla'i, took care of them; they went with Tāla'i to live in nearby Sa'asa'a'i village in Amoa.

Alo grew to be a handsome young man. Then he asked his mother, "I never saw my father since I was born! Who is my father?" His mother said, "Your father is chief of the village called Pu'apu'a. His name is Punaoālo. If you go there, there will be a village meeting, and you will know him: he is the one who sits on the atigi pūpū / empty shell of a large coconut." Alo went and found his father; he was received warmly, and they were both very happy.

Alo was very adept at games, too. In ancient Samoa, chiefs played many games, such as seugālupe / luring pigeons, lafo / throwing discs, taugā moa / fighting like chickens, and taga ti'a / throwing sticks like javelins. Alo won most of these games. One day they had taga ti'a games. Two proverbs originated from this sport: "O le ti'a e lē seuā / The javelin once released cannot stop" refers to inexorable things such as death and the will of God; and "O le ti'a ua sulu i ulu papaga / The arrow hits its target directly" refers to mutually beneficial negotiations. At the taga ti'a, Alo threw the ti'a, and it went right to Metotagivale's cave. When Alo went looking for his ti'a, he realized it had gone inside the cave, and he was afraid to go in. He called out, and somebody answered, "Yes?" [Then] he shouted, "Could somebody bring my ti'a?" Metotagivale replied, "Whoever you are, come get your own ti'a." When Alo went inside to get his ti'a, he was trapped, because as soon as he was in,

Metotagivale closed the opening to the cave. So Alo and Metotagivale lived together.

One day Alo wanted to visit his family, but Metotagivale refused. Metotagivale finally agreed, but before Alo could leave, Metotagivale said, "Okay, I will let you go, but only if you build a house for me. I want you to build me a beautiful house: the roof must be covered with 'ula/thatch made from the red garlands of the tava'e bird, its posts made from toa/teak, its lashings made from 'afa o le aoa / roots of the banyan tree, and its foundation and floor made from ma'alei / smooth corals." A proverb originated from this story: "O le fale nai Amoa 'e lau 'i 'ula 'ae pou 'i toa / The house in Amoa covered with beautiful red garlands and posts made of teak." Despite the difficulty of [accomplishing] Metotagivale's wishes, Alo agreed to build her house. He went to his village and brought [back] carpenters, who were 'iole/mice. Alo's carpenters, the mice, went about building Metotagivale's house. The carpenters had one request: they pleaded with Alo not to pull up the blinds of the house until it was completely done. But Alo could not contain his excitement, and he pulled up the blinds [before the house was finished]. All the mice disappeared, leaving the pepe / corner edge of the roof unfinished.

Smooth coral stones are found in Falelatai. Alo went to Metotagivale's 'āiga in Falelatai village, to the Tau A'ana and Tuimaleali'ifano families / chiefly families on Upolu island, [to ask] for ma'alei /smooth corals (Figure 2, inset map). Alo had a special garland [made from] the 'ulāfala / ripe pandanus fruit; it was bright crimson red and had a beautiful fragrance.⁸ His 'ulāfala was called Tinumasālasāla. Alo was well known for this special garland. In Falelatai, there was a village maiden named Faufau. When Alo arrived in Falelatai, there were many po ula and aumoega / marriage betrothals going on. Mānaia / sons of chiefs wanting Faufau's hand in marriage were [gathered] in the village. So Alo stayed on one side of the village to wait it out. One of the mānaia in Falelatai was Tinilau.⁹ When he heard Alo was in town, he went and asked him if he could borrow his 'ulāfala, and Alo lent it to him. Tinilau went to see Faufau, and she got excited, thinking it was Alo, because Tinilau was wearing the 'ulāfala [called] Tinumasālasāla. When the ladies of the village asked Faufau how it went, Faufau said she had a great time with Alo. The ladies of the village told her it was Tinilau and not Alo. Faufau was mad and got really sad and became sick; she threw up so much that she almost died. So her family and ladies went to Alo and asked him to come to their aid. As soon as Alo arrived, Faufau stopped vomiting; she was so ecstatic that she got better. Hence the proverb, "Ua sau Alo ma le vai fōfō / Alo brings the cure" or "Alo comes with the medicine."

The next morning, Alo and Faufau filled their canoe with ma'alei / smooth corals for Metotagivale's house, and they paddled to Savaii. As they

approached Savaii, nearing Pu'apu'a, Metotagivale could see that Alo was in sight but that he had a lady with him. She got angry and cursed Alo and turned him into stone, and the ma'alei spilled into the reef.¹⁰ The lei rocks are called lei fanau, which means they can regenerate and multiply; thereafter, [they grew into] the bountiful reefs of Amoa or Alofi o Amoa. The proverb "Tatou asia le laulelei o Amoa po'o le Alofi o Amoa / Let us enjoy and dwell in the beauty of Amoa" is a metaphoric reference to the pristine, rich marine coastline of Amoa, and alofi is the polite word for the 'ava / kava drink offered when hosts and visitors meet during welcome and farewell ceremonies and is a reference to a good 'ava or meeting.

The story of Metotagivale and Alo and the beautiful Amoa district and beaches reached Tui Manu'a, the paramount chief of Manu'a island, which is in the eastern island group now known as American Samoa (Figure 1).¹¹ One day Tui Manu'a went to visit Amoa. [All the villages in] the district combined to host the chief and his entourage. Tui Manu'a enjoyed the beautiful weather, especially its soothing, alluring waters and pristine environment. There were lavish feasts, dancing, and singing. The hosts' hospitality and generosity of spirit were so obvious that Tui Manu'a was moved with joy. Before he left, he made a farewell speech to Amoa, saying, "I am replete with your kindness and hospitality. I wish to give you a gift as remembrance of our fellowship. When you see big clouds on the horizon they will bring showers of blessings and remind you of Tui Manu'a. They symbolize my tears of joy." Hence the proverb, "O le ua e afua mai Manu'a / The rain that originates or comes from Manu'a."

Place-Names and Proverbs in Samoa's Storied Places

Storytelling has great significance, as demonstrated in the place-names and proverbs in Metotagivale and Alo's story. These names and proverbs are indicative of the Indigenous epistemology of place for Samoans, particularly in the villages of Amoa (Figure 2). Most tala le vavau and their associated place-names and proverbs are shared at the local level. Many place-names are only understood in the context of the historical account that accompanies them and usually only by those within genealogical proximity of the account. The story of Metotagivale and Alo told in Amoa is unusually well known among orators throughout Samoa, however. They continually use the proverbs that originated from this legend. Amoa has thus become a "storied place" (what Hawaiians called wahi pana) and not just a place with a single (Amoa district) subjectivity. Amoa has become intersubjective through Samoans drawing moral lessons from this place to make points about their sociocultural and human-environmental interactions. The lessons of such

storied places speak through the telling (Louis 2017; Kanahele 2011; Andrade 2014). As people retell the village histories embedded in tala le vavau, their sense of place is affirmed, and the meanings they give to their connections to fanua persist.

Place-Names

Analysis of place-names and proverbs in the story of Metotagivale and Alo and other legends fundamentally shapes Samoan identification with place. As mnemonic devices, place-names enhance various senses of place and illustrate the rich relations people have with the land. Naming places not only indicates specific locations, it creates meaning about the places and establishes experiences of belonging to them.¹² For Yanyuwa Aborigines of southeast Darwin, “naming place is a declaration of ownership, it expresses the inalienable right to know and call into being the places that define Yanyuwa identity in the world today” (Kearney and Bradley 2009, 81). For Hawaiians, “place names are a way of seeing through the eyes of the ancestors. Naming is claiming, so it can be used by colonial powers to ‘neutralize otherness’ or by indigenous peoples to reassert their identities” (Andrade 2008, 3).

The places named or described in the ancient story of Metotagivale and Alo of Amoa retain significance for Samoans today. Punaoālo is still a place in Pu’apu’ā named after the chief in the story, where it serves as a reminder of the power of naming as ancestry (Fuchs 2015). Vai Tilofia, where I saw my reflection, has not been abandoned; it is still used by villagers for bathing and doing laundry because the modern water system is unreliable (see Figure 3). The largest and most sheltered reef, created when Alo’s canoe capsized and the ma’alei/coral he had collected fell out, continues to provide a panoramic frame for the sea surrounding the villages of Amoa (see Figure 4). The widespread telling of the story of Amoa not only made its “alluring waters and pristine environment” famous among Samoans, it became a popular tourist site due to steady trade winds and the longest stretch of white sand beaches on Savaii (see Figure 5). Samoans continue to turn to the legend to create names for places or houses today. For example, drawing from part of the proverb “O le fale nai Amoa e lau i’ula ae pou i toa / The house in Amoa covered with beautiful red garlands and posts made of teak,” which is often recited at public gatherings in Samoa and overseas to personify and celebrate a beautiful and successful event, Lauvao Kalolo, a resident orator I interviewed about the story of Metotagivale and Alo of Pu’apu’ā, and members of his extended family named their beach fale/huts Lau’ula (see Figure 6). Giving their house this name signified their common ancestry and connection to Samoan events and memorialized the sense of place

that accompanies their village history. In addition to Punaoālo, names like Metotagivale, Alo, and Fulu'i'ole / Mouse-Like Body, which have their origins in the story, are reminders of the power of naming as ancestry (Fuchs 2015). In short, when people talk about Lano, Pu'apu'a, or Asaga villages in these histories, they are not just talking about different places as entities, they are relating notions of place as identity (Figure 2). Place is personified, and people are “placified.” A village is not a formal abstraction; it is a structure of genealogies and honors/fa'alupega, past and present.

Telling ancient stories that include place-names simultaneously makes aesthetic statements about an area and enriches the depth of history about place. The story of Metotagivale and Alo reveals phenomenological and embodied sensory relationships to fanua, the land that informs the Samoan sense of place.

Proverbs of Place and Metaphors

Analysis of Indigenous places (in this case, Samoan fanua), knowledge and experience of places, and knowledge of the stories behind them are the foundations for the development and interpretation of individual and collective



FIGURE 3. Vai Tilofia, the freshwater pool. Photo by the author, 2009.



FIGURE 4. A panoramic Amoa coastal reef. Photo by the author, 2009.



FIGURE 5. Lano and Asaga beaches. Photo by the author, 2012.



FIGURE 6. Laui'ula beach fale/huts. Photo by the author, 2012.

knowing and experience of place. The way landscape and place are treated in the language of the Metotagivale and Alo story offers a broad sense of place that accounts for its role in collective memories (Donohoe 2014). The families that reside in the villages that constitute the district of Amoa (Faga, Sa'asa'ai, Saipipi, Asaga, Lano, and Pu'apu'a) find special spiritual and emotional significance in connecting to Amoa through this story (see Figure 2). They receive the blessings of a bountiful marine environment they have inherited as descendants of Alo and Metotagivale. The ma'alei / smooth corals are viewed as reincarnations of Alo, who continues to serve the people of Amoa even after having been turned to stone. When villagers use ma'alei to cover the floor of their house, they are not just using ma'alei as rocks but incorporating history and moral meaning into their homes. One of the moral foundations of fa'a-Samoa / Samoan way of life/culture is tautua/service. Blessings accrue through serving others. Using ma'alei is a communion simultaneously with the Samoan environment and with our ancestors.

As proverbs from ancient stories become embedded in Samoan public discourses, they enable us to comprehend our relationships with places in

the past, present, and future, and they carry moral messages. For example, the proverb “O le fale nai Amoa ‘e lau ‘i ‘ula ‘ae pou ‘i toa / The house in Amoa covered with beautiful red garlands and posts made of teak” tells us that hard work and perseverance bring about beautiful results (see Figure 4). Another line from the story, “Tatou asia le laulelei o Amoa / Let us enjoy dwelling in the beauty of Amoa” refers to the positive results of persistent effort. Despite Alo’s foibles, he attempts to acquire everything Metotagivale wants; the result is the beautiful Amoa environment enjoyed today (see Figure 5).

Another proverb from the legend, “O le ua na afua mai Manu’ā / The rain that comes from Manu’ā,” similarly refers to more than climatic phenomena. The fact that the rain comes from the east (from what is now American Samoa) imbues the story with the mythological roots of Amoa villagers’ ancestry and bonds with other islands in the archipelago (see Figure 1). The clouds, wind, and rain sent by Manu’ā soothe the villagers’ skins, quench their thirst, and water their food crops. The rain from Manu’ā has mana, the power to heal and provide sustenance. Here, the power of place in the Pacific can be recognized in the interrelationship between the well-being of places and the well-being of people. As Mary Frances Oneha (2000) suggests in her Hawaiian study, place is constituted by a mana / energy field that integrates all the elements in the environment. In Hawaii, all the elements of place are considered alive—rocks, plants, rain, wind, land, and even past, present, and future times—and all these elements can be imbued with mana, depending on how well they are respected, cared for, and used. For Oceanic people, this “integrality is called place” (136).

Proverbs about natural phenomena such as rain invoke spiritual realities, and places named after the gods allude to tangible treasures that continue to nourish our identity as a people. These elements of ancient stories thus document the character of our fanua and reinforce multiple senses of place. As discussed next, Samoan proverbs also have implications for an environmental ethic.

Storytelling and an Ethic of Care

Oceanic relationships are conceived in terms of caring for the “space between,” called *vā* in Samoan. Albert Wendt explains that *vā* is not empty space or space that separates people but rather a “space that relates” (1999, 402). He maintains that *vā* is crucial to communal cultures, where each person is perceived in terms of *vā*, here meaning relationships.¹³ The same applies to Samoan relationships to their surroundings or environment. Cultural protocols and *tapu*/taboo intended to ensure regrowth and

sustainable practices have long been central to Indigenous Samoan relationships to fanua. Processing copra and cocoa for subsistence living and export purposes was a major economic activity in Samoa throughout the German and New Zealand colonial administrations and up to the present. Regulations and periodic tapu on collecting coconuts were stipulated by village councils to ensure a continuous supply of sufficiently mature coconuts, which are used to make dried copra. Coinciding with the rhythmic cycle of the moon, tapu on harvesting sea animals such as akule/mackerel and sea cucumbers was also implemented to ensure a steady supply of fish and shellfish throughout the year. Ensuring harmony in our relationships to our environment by not over exploiting resources results in *vā fealoa'i* / equivalence. This balanced relationship is usurped when conservation practices are not observed. A shortage of coconuts from overcollecting or a shortage of fish from overfishing results in *vā tapuia* / disharmony in the relations with our environment. The proverb from the Amoa story, *tala le vavau*, “*O le ti'a ua sulu i ulu papaga* / The javelin hits its target directly,” is about decisions that are mutually beneficial to everyone, as in conservation for sustaining sources of food and the like. Another proverb, “*Ua sau Alo ma le vai fōfō* / Alo brings the cure or solution to a problem,” can be about an individual or collective contribution to solving critical issues regarding the welfare of families and villages.

Tala le vavau and other oral traditions are not only meant to entertain Samoans, they are intended to teach us to be vigilant and considerate of our *vā*, that is, our social relations with each other, outsiders, other sentient beings, our environment, and the Almighty. These ancient stories renew our spiritual selves by transmitting a culture of caring for the *vā* between humans, animals, plants, cosmological phenomena, and gods.¹⁴ The process of telling them may also awaken our ecological selves (Johnson and Larsen 2013; Louis 2017; Thornton 2008). Telling stories, especially well-known *tala le vavau*, thus theoretically transmits and reinforces conservation ethics and ecological perspectives. Stories attached to features of the Samoan landscape present patterns for appropriate behavior and preserve fa'a-Samoan values and perspectives. Stories about the stones, mountains, streams, and other aspects of island land and seascapes assert the values of patience, perseverance, sharing, and respect while reminding each generation about the negative consequences of greed, arrogance, and laziness. Ancient stories and their associated place-names and proverbs provide a philosophy and theology that continue to structure Samoan ways of knowing and making choices about their environment, that is, fanua.

Whether recited in formal oratory or used in everyday communications, Samoan proverbs continue to commemorate the sacred significance of this

relationship between humans and their environment; they also demonstrate proper bonds of respect for plants and animals with whom we share the fanua (Schultz 1953; Lambie and Henry 1958; Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi 2009a). For example, the alaga'upu "A momona le vao ua tapisa le gataifale / When the forest is abundant, the coastline is noisy" speaks to the congruence between the maturation of fruiting trees and the maturation of marine resources (Percival 2012). Samoans seek hints of what the hunting season is going to be like in the fragrant abundant flowering and freshness of the moso'oi and laga'ali trees in the forests. An abundance of fruit berries and nuts invites pe'a / fruit bats, manutagi / fruit doves, and lupe/pigeons to feed on them. The convergence of birds and mammals in the trees generates a melodic, playful, and sometimes mournful sound. When this phenomenon coincides with the full moon, it is time to hunt these animals. Simultaneously, these are signs that the 'ina or vana / sea urchins are ripe and juicy and the sea cucumbers are bountiful and ready for harvesting. Women and men go fishing and bring back baskets full of sea urchins and seashells. Elders remain on land to make fagu'u / body oil from coconut cream and the fragrant blossoms of the moso'oi and laga'ali.¹⁵ The core of Indigenous Samoan ecological knowledge is the achievement of balance and the recognition of equivalence and complementarity of vā and tapu, that is, taboo social relationship with each other and our surroundings. These proverbs and those from the Amoa story provide lessons about respect and caring in the Samoan phenomenological understanding of fanua and place and our ecological boundaries. They tell of the importance of vā and tapu, equivalence and affinity to overcoming greed and arrogance.

The story of Metotagivale and Alo of Amoa also reminds Samoans that while people desire progress and a good life, how we go about achieving these ends must be considered if we are to remain in balance with our surroundings and retain our sense of place. The legend teaches us that all people, animals, trees, and rocks should be treated with respect no matter how they appear, since they are all imbued with mana.¹⁶ For example, mice are mothers capable of being impregnated by a chief and builders of beautiful houses. The legend therefore "demands an awareness whereby animals, trees and humans are treated as co-inhabitants of the planet and actors in a common culture, where their desires and destinies are intertwined" (Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Tai'si Efi 2009b, 2). If we treat each other and the environment with good intentions, mana or life force will flow freely to enhance our sense of well-being in our place.

Bringing Storytelling into the Methodological Fold

Incorporating storytelling into the social-scientific toolbox is no longer up for debate, as evident in the scholarship established in previous generations (Banks-Wallace 2002; Deloria and Wildcat 2001; Hauofa 1993; Kovach 2010; Maunakea 2016; Smith 2012; Wendt 1976). Academics in many fields recognize that Native groups have long constructed, encoded, and theorized Indigenous epistemologies and passed them on to the next generation through telling stories (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo 2001). Since “the scientific notion of ‘objectivity’ as classically defined in [logical] positivism does not exist in” all Indigenous epistemologies (62), one of the potential benefits of storytelling as a research tool is to explain “alternative subjectivities that challenge dominant discourses and enact social change” (Johnson and Larsen 2013, 14).¹⁷ Rooted in the oral tradition, narratives and stories fill the cultural, social, and physical environments within which Indigenous peoples live (Banks-Wallace 2002). Roxanne Struthers and Cynthia McAlpine confirm that “indigenous people live through narratives and stories . . . [and] storytelling gives a unique expression to our experiences” (2005, 1270). Utilizing classic methods of participant observation and interviewing, as well as drawing on written and performed stories and legends, David Gegeo and Karen Watson-Gegeo laid down a methodological path for studying varieties of Indigenous knowledge transmission. Many Indigenous scholars have expanded on their methods and offered alternative perspectives to conducting research that take into account the inextricable connections between people and land (e.g., Andrade 2008; Basham 2014; Beamer 2014; Fermantez 2007; ho’omanawanui 2015; Louis 2017; Oliveira 2014; Smith 2012).

Yi-Fu Tuan (1991) has argued that the act of naming places and the “named places” together illustrate the unity of language and place. Samoans remember the significance of places and personages by including matai / chiefly titles, place-names, house sites, proverbs, and metaphors in their oral traditions. Such knowledge is primarily transmitted in the forms of oratorical speeches, songs, chants, and proverbs that make extensive use of personification and metaphor (Basso 1996; Cajete 2000; Jett 2011; Kahn 2011; Louis 2017; Oliveira 2014).¹⁸ Place-based toponyms are particularly useful for analyzing regional origins, cultural ties to place, and similar geographic topics, while personal names and titles mark complex relationships with different people, localities, and events (and only secondarily define discrete individuals). Many proverbs and names commemorate the sacred significance of these relationships and continue to bond Samoans to their environment in deeply spiritual ways.

The histories of our ancestors and social institutions as told in tala le vavau and other genres also emphasize a close relationship with the physical

environment. Samoan legends about the origin of the niu/coconut and ava plants, for example, are morality tales. Drawing on Samoan values and activities, stories were designed to captivate the imaginations of the young and teach them about the probable good and bad consequences of living life in certain ways (Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi 2011).

Neither place-based traditions nor the places they memorialize are stable and unchanging.¹⁹ Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo argue that the oral tradition remains “a source from which new knowledge can be created through expansion or deletion, because it is received knowledge that has been tested through everyday life, or trial and error experimentation and is capable of further improvement” (2001, 64). Place stories such as the tale of Metotagivale and Alo of Amoa remain quite dynamic. Titles and personal and place-names may be added, adapted, or even disappear for a while from these stories, only to emerge again in later generations, but their meanings are never completely wiped out. They remain etched in the memories of our ‘āiga/families and neighbors through storytelling and continue to express Indigenous experiences of place and space.

Phenomenological Stepping-Stones to Understanding Land and Place

Indigenous ways of knowing the world can be synthesized with some Western theoretical approaches to contribute to a broader academic understanding of place and physical resources. I hope to add to the ongoing decolonization of conventional methods and theories pertaining to Oceanic research (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo 2001; Kovach 2010; Louis 2017; Meyer 2002; Oliveira 2014; Smith 2012; Thaman 2003). Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, for example, describes Vanua research framing as “an indigenous approach embedded in Fijian world views, knowledge systems, lived experience, cultures and values” (2008, 143). A Vanua frame demonstrates the interconnected relationships of people with land, culture, beliefs, knowledge systems, values, and spirits and deities. The Samoan cultural philosophy of fanua, cognate of vanua, integrates similar factors in embodied sensory or what might be termed phenomenological ways.²⁰

I am not the first to recognize some compatibility between phenomenology and Indigenous storytelling practices. In writing about Māori land issues and epistemologies, Brian Murton (2011) noted that a number of Native American scholars have identified phenomenological approaches as being aligned with Indigenous thinking (e.g., Cajete 2000; Deloria and Wildcat 2001; Little Bear 2000; Momaday 1974; YoungBear-Tibbets 1995). In their research on Indigenous peoples’ health in Canada and North America,

Struthers and McAlpine also found the phenomenological approach useful for capturing oral histories in holistic and culturally acceptable ways. They argue that “narrative communication and understanding is the cornerstone of phenomenological research” (Struthers and McAlpine 2005, 126).

Phenomenological approaches to place imply that place may be better thought of as the reciprocal relationship between humans and that part of the earth upon which they dwell.²¹ Places can be interpreted as directly experienced phenomena of the lived world, full of meanings, real objects, and ongoing activities. In the 1990s, Ed Casey (1993, 311) introduced “phenomenological topoanalysis” for retheorizing place. Casey recognized that people are always in place through the lived body, and thus body and place are mutually constitutive. Second, place gathers not just things but also histories, experiences, and languages, all of which also become constitutive of place. Third, place is more an event than a thing, since place happens and is always open-ended and in the making. Fourth, experiencing place is a universal feature of the human condition. Later, Casey (1998) contrasted “place” as mediating the relationship between people and land with the notion of “landscape,” which tends to reflect a more Western epistemological view of the world (Kearney and Bradley 2009). Barbara Bender (1993) had described landscape as a product of “the Western gaze,” a historical way of viewing the world defined by a separation between nature (the object) and culture (the people). Many anthropologists and geographers have analyzed landscape as a way in which people attribute symbolic meaning to their social worlds. In their analyses, “places within landscapes become divorced from human interactions and are treated as manifestations of the symbolic or structured relationship between people and their landscapes” (Kearney and Bradley 2009, 78). For Casey and other theorists, place is only fully realized in the interrelationships of human beings and their practices (Basso 1996; Casey 1993; Fermantez 2007; Tilley 1994; Thornton 2008; Tuwere 2002; Withers 2009).

While Casey advanced a relatively nuanced understanding of place, his approach was largely based on the individual experience and remained virtually silent on the collective. Most Pacific people, however, including Samoans, cannot separate the individual from the group experience of place. Ever since the 1980s, Indigenous Oceanic scholars have focused on ancestral and interactive relationships among land, people, and place and discussed the sense of belonging that comes with collective memories and engagements with particular places (e.g., Ai’ono 1986; Kanahele 2011; Kavaliku 1994; Ravuvu 1983). Modified by human interactions, our stories, memories, and traditions constitute the identities of our places.²² This dwelling accords with place theorist Jeff Malpas’s (2006) argument that the relationship of individuals and

communities to the places wherein they dwell is central to phenomenology. The dwelling approach takes in the whole experience of a person in place; in this way, the “phenomenological roots of place (sense of place, memory, tradition, names, place names) can be holistic, dialectic and generative” (Seamon 2014, 11). The dwelling perspective resonates with a Pacific experience of a world where to know oneself is to know one’s tupu’aga/genealogy, constituted of ancestral history, values, land, and everything animate and inanimate. For Samoans, dwelling in place means dwelling in fa'a-Samoa, which Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi describes as a “worldview that privileges not just the perspective of humans, but of other living beings: of trees, animals, birds, oceans, and stars. It is a worldview or life principle that demands humility, sacrifice and respect for our sacred origins” (2009b, 2).

I introduce some of the interconnected cultural metaphors of land, home, and kinship central to fa'a-Samoa and other Oceanic worldviews and discuss the relationships that govern people's interactions with their environment.²³ I also examined these human-environmental interactions through a close reading of Metotagivale and Alo's story.

Samoan Cultural Meanings and Metaphors

Fanua/Land, Place

More than simply a physical place or resource, fanua expresses widespread notions of identity, group membership, and belonging. Throughout the Pacific, cognates for fanua, such as whenua (Māori), honua (Hawaiian), fenua (Ma'ohi Tahitian), fonua (Tongan), and vanua (Fijian), provide significant clues to the meanings and links between land and place. The associations Hawaiians, Māori, Tongans, and Fijians make with land resemble those Samoans have for their fanua. For example, Indigenous Fijians have a strong attachment to and veneration of place because their kinship networks are simultaneously tied to genealogical descent and to the soil or vanua (Ravuvu 1983). For Native Hawaiians, the word honua means both world and soil. Honua encompasses a larger meaning of land as the basis for life and connects to 'āina / the soil that feeds and ahupua'a / land divisions from mountain to sea. Honua thus metaphorically entails affiliations between Native Hawaiian people and their material, historical, and spiritual origins, their land and senses of place.

The Samoan word fanua carries the same implications because it not only means land or place but also is the word for placenta. Two other Samoan words, used interchangeably with fanua, provide similar connotations: 'ele'ele and palapala both mean land, soil or dirt, and blood. These terms connote the idea that people create fanua/land and become emotionally tied

to place through the sweat, tears, and especially the blood of their toil. For Samoans, these terms also point to papa / rock and 'ele'ele / earth, soil as the progenitors of human beings. Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi explains that "the linking of man and Papa and 'Ele'ele is further referenced in the ritual of burial of the pute / umbilical cord and fanua/placenta into the land or earth" (2009, 107). The placenta burial ritual is common to many Indigenous cultures in Oceania, including Māori, Hawaiians, Chamorros, Tongans, Fijians, and Rarotongans. The ritual signifies one's heritage and rights to one's natal place; it also provides evidence of the multifaceted relationships of people and land. When Samoans bury a fanua/placenta in the earth after the pute / umbilical cord of a newborn has fallen off, the soil/fanua of their i'inei/home and the shared 'ele'ele/blood of their 'āiga/relatives are mixed together both literally and metaphorically. More than merely symbolic, such rituals provide Pacific peoples with spiritual continuity and an environmental ethic embedded in the idea that the environment lives, shares pain, grows, and dies in a manner and form similar to human beings. A Samoan saying, "O le tama o le 'ele'ele / Child of this soil and earth," similarly signifies respect for and identification with one's birthplace and implies a reciprocal relationship with the fanua. Land is a source of both spiritual nourishment and political and economic power among Samoans. People take care of the land; the land nourishes its people. Belonging to the land and being able to eventually claim matai/titles and lands depends upon treating the land with care and responsibility.

I'inei/Home and 'Āiga/Kin

Land, home, and kin are closely linked, intrinsically social concepts in fa'a-Samoa. The term i'inei, often translated into English as here, place, local, or home, means the place where one originates from and hence where one belongs.²⁴ I'inei is where one's family is located, where one was born and one's placenta was buried, the place where one's people share the same basic substance. Since the scope of the social group with which one identifies alters according to context, i'inei is also used to refer to nation, region, village, or household. One's personal i'inei remains fixed, however, for it is defined socially as the place where one's lineage originates. Samoan social identity is thus firmly based in a corporate ideology of 'āiga / kin group and communal land. This is further demonstrated in the malae, which, like Māori marae, is the center of Samoan social activities. The malae is the sacred place where maota / chief house sites and laoa / orator house sites are located. Malae represent genealogical links to matai/chief and orator titles and communal lands, and maota and laoa are loci for identifying oneself with such matai/chief and orator titles and 'āiga/kin.

Everyone of Samoan descent knows the specific matai/chief and orator titles, 'āiga/kin, and fanua/land, the place with which they are genealogically connected and that together constitute their i'inei. For example, the fanua that Salelologa residents occupy today is an ancestral birthright that has been cultivated by members of the same 'āiga / kin group for generations. Although every household in the village has land that has been handed down from generation to generation, individual land plots are less important than general conceptualizations of fanua and village. Furthermore, the relationship between 'āiga / kin group and fanua is not confined to family members sharing access to specific land resources for purposes of improving their individual economic circumstances. Instead, social, spiritual, physical, and economic improvements in the developmental cycle of the 'āiga / kin group are supposed to parallel the life cycles of the individuals within the 'āiga. Despite increasing population movements and migration overseas over the past fifty years, along with consequent transformations in village life and fa'a-Samoa, Samoans continue to have respect and alofa/love and care for their fanua and 'āiga.²⁵ Even Samoans in diaspora continue nurturing their 'āiga relationships by maintaining responsibilities to people and land over time (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009a). These interconnected cultural metaphors highlight many aspects, especially the spiritual and intimate connections of Indigenous epistemologies of place, paralleled by the key cultural importance of storytelling.

Way Forward

The relationship between ancient stories and society is dialectical: legends originate from human experience, but retelling them continues to shape that experience by providing a charter for fundamental social institutions. The Metotagivale and Alo story links the central values of Samoan social life with conceptions of place. The story bridges Samoan values, histories, phenomenological experiences, and epistemologies of place and relationship. This and other oral stories frame the moral order of Samoan society, particularly with respect to land and place, home and kin.

Places do not exist without people. Without intimate attachment to place, the context and setting for life form an emotionally isomorphic, nonrelational place called "space" in Western philosophy (Fermantez 2007; Thornton 2008). In Samoa, an emotional attachment to place is enculturated through fagogo and tala le vavau. These historical morality tales continually reference familiar places, activities, and the names of Samoan heroes and villains. The sense of pride and shared history villagers enjoy when discussing these stories provides a "structure of feeling" similar to the "sense of place" one gets only by actually living in a place (Williams 1977). A village

is not a formal abstraction; it is a structure of genealogies and past and present major accomplishments and events, honors or fa'alupega.²⁶ When people talk about Lano, Pu'apu'a, and Salelologa villages in these histories, they are not just talking about different places as entities, they are relating notions of place as identity.

Telling tala le vavaau and other oral traditions produces images of the past and present to frame and structure various dimensions and values of fa'a-Samoa. The cultural meanings and metaphors distilled into the proverbs, place-names, and rituals of the Samoan oral tradition parallel some of the ideas emanating from phenomenological theories of place, especially in the holistic, dialectic, and generative perspective on dwelling. Integrating Indigenous concepts of place (as in *fanua*) into academic geography could produce what Margaret Pearce and Renee Louis (2008, 112) called the transformative value of the “shared knowledge space of the transmodern” for enacting meaningful social change.

Oceanic societies have rich oral traditions and cultures that cherish a reciprocal relationship with our surroundings. For example, guided by concepts of *vā fealoa'i* / social relations and *vā tapuia* / taboo social relations, Samoan epistemologies of place assume an affinity with all the animate and inanimate things that are part of *fanua*. Such concepts of reciprocity and unity fundamentally concern conservation ethics and ecological relationships. We must heed the lessons of our tala le vavaau as part of the process of remembering that reinvigorates our places.²⁷ Our legends highlight the interconnectedness of people and place in terms that reinforce Indigenous phenomenological understanding of place. In the process of storytelling, we continue to give life to these places through knowing them and giving voice to their names.

Synthesizing Indigenous epistemologies of land and place with phenomenological theories of place can contribute to academic work on land and resources. The value of this praxis is that there is a serious effort to integrate Indigenous and Samoan concepts of environmental conservation and sustainable practices into place-based curricula in order to enact meaningful social change for Indigenous communities. Phenomenology is important in terms of creating a synthesized curricula because it captures oral tradition in a holistic and culturally acceptable way. Phenomenological approach is open-ended, circular, moving back and forth between the person and place being experienced rather than in a fragmented account given by conventional methods.

The core cultural values symbolized in these stories can become aspirational ideals. Recontextualizing the essence of these stories would have immediacy and relevance to Samoa, since they give more value to sustainable

human-environmental interactions and a conservation ethic than do pure academic directives. Efforts to teach and make the young aware of these are evident in Pu'apu'a; the education department curriculum is also being revamped to integrate these tala le vavau for the value and lessons they provide. Samoans recognize that "to be healthy humans we must be united by story and attached to place" (Archibald 1997, 8) and have therefore been making an effort over the last several years to teach the 'tala o Metotagivale ma Alo' / story of Metotagivale and Alo and other oral histories in local schools, during Sunday school, and at youth clubs. Since 2013, students have been acting out the story and identifying key concepts, values, or messages from the story in their skits. The people of Pu'apu'a have not waited for history to arrive but have been busy making history as they have always done. The importance of place-based curricula grounded in the history of place and people is now a key component of Samoa's education curriculum. Samoa's education department is also promoting the use of local stories and documenting these oral sources to be integrated into the curriculum (Avalogo Tunupopo, librarian at the National University of Samoa, personal communication, September 3, 2015). Despite the ubiquitous television and other outside influences, there is still time to insert redemptive change by promoting storytelling in place-based curricula. In short, place enriches learning, place deepens subject understanding, place provides holistic understanding as students explore the "stories of places," and place offers opportunity for social renewal.

Indigenous people have always believed that storytelling is culturally significant and of central importance in sustaining relational conceptions of place and space and embodied senses of place. Integrating all forms of oral tradition and ancestral knowledge of land into our research is not only theoretically useful, it is imperative to our well-being in the future.

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Notes

1. I learned in my scholarly journey that my research must have relevance and meaningful purpose for our communities. Being a Samoan and Pacific Islander means that my peers and I have equally important and intertwined obligations toward the worlds of academia and of community and kin. These responsibilities mean that what we produce and describe in our works should further knowledge and increase understanding of Indigenous people and societies.
2. Māori have the same concept of a place to stand and be connected to in the word turangawaewae, meaning home, soil of birth, and ancestors.
3. I do not italicize Samoan terms and place-names. Because Samoan and English are both official languages in Samoa, I use the construction Samoan/English.
4. For "oral cultures like Samoan traditional culture, myths, legends, rituals, dances, chants, songs, honorifics, genealogies and names of places were tools for recording indigenous history" (Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi 2009a, 93).
5. Samoans conceptualize history as broadly beginning with a time when people were half human and half demon, extending through biblical times to the present and even into the future, most concretely in discussing national development and villagers' roles in regional politics. Samoan history also emphasizes sociopolitical connections throughout Oceania, such as with Tonga and Fiji (for longer discussion, see Lilomaiaava-Doktor 2004).
6. Samoa (formerly Western Samoa) was a colony of Germany from 1900 to 1914. Great Britain took over the colony after Germany lost World War I but gave the mandate to New Zealand to administer in 1921 until Samoa became independent in January 1962 (the first island nation in the Pacific to win back independence).
7. I have enclosed my editorial insertions in square brackets.

8. The 'ulāfala garland is worn by Samoan chiefs to symbolize their status in village and public functions but also as a national/cultural symbol in the diaspora.

9. Alo and Tinilau are both famous in Samoan legends for charming women and having multiple connections to village maidens.

10. A version of the story from Falelatai Upolu says Chief Tau A'ana of Falelatai told Alo as his lei rocks were loaded “not to look back until they reach Amoa” because the paddlers were not human beings but spirits. Once Alo looked back, the taboo was broken, the spirits vanished, Alo turned into a rock, and all the lei rocks fell to the bottom of the sea near Amoa district. Whether the canoe capsized because Metotagivale was angry Alo had brought another woman to her island or because Alo disobeyed the chief’s instructions, the essence of the story and the values it transmits remain consistent.

11. Manu'a is an island in what is now American Samoa, following the division of the eastern and western islands of the Samoan archipelago between Germany and the United States in 1899.

12. Place-names are more than remnants of an earlier time, and reciting them denies any notion of an innocent or arbitrary history (Kearney and Bradley 2009).

13. Vā has not only social but also political, economic, and cultural aspects that are positive and/or negative depending on how individuals care for relationships between them. The concept vā is a way of thinking about space, specifically social space. In Samoan epistemology, vā is a highly complex phenomenon influencing interactions in everyday life. Vā governs and guides individual and kin behavior, inflected by factors such as gender, cultural status, age, and marital status. Vā characterizes culturally proper and improper behaviors. Thus, vā fealoa'i / mutual respect in relationships between people and environment is considered culturally appropriate. Its complementary opposite, vā tapuia / sacred spaces and taboo relationships, establishes limits and boundaries in sociopolitical and spiritual arrangements (see Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004).

14. Vā, wa, and tauhi vā (the maintenance of positive social relationships) are not new concepts but have long been integral to Indigenous Oceanic cultures. In a penetrating study of a Tongan cognate, Tevita Ka'ili asserts, “Tauhi vā is an ancient system of thinking and behaving” (2017, 5). This contributes to theories that root indigeneity in ancient times of oral traditions rather than treating it as a recent invention in Indigenous or Pacific studies. Samoan oral cultures were not defined before 1911 in the Samoan dictionary and have only been regularly recorded since the 1980s. The documentation and reemergence of oral tradition, along with its theoretical integration into academic fields today, speak to the validity and significance of these ways of knowing as Indigenous Pacific peoples negotiate their ways of life and responses to modernity and globalization in a fast-moving world.

15. Simultaneously, it is the hunting season for pigeons. In this example, the plants, the birds, and the people need one another, the blossoms of the trees provide food for the pigeons, and people eat the pigeons; meanwhile, pigeons help pollinate new moso'oi and laga'ali trees in the forest, adding vitality

and regrowth to the rainforest. Clearly, interdependent living and sharing of resources are the practices rather than independent living.

16. Mana is a power bestowed directly or indirectly from a supernatural source onto someone or something. Mana was part of the old religious belief (*kapu/tapu*) systems in Hawai'i and Samoa (Oneha 2004; Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Ta'isi Efi 2009b).

17. In *A Deeper Sense of Place*, Johnson and Larsen encourage academics to collaborate with Indigenous storytellers because their "stories express the symptom of subjectification while serving as productive, participatory, ontological interventions that might call into being alternative worlds" (2013, 14).

18. For oral societies, language is not a solely human possession but the property of beings: "Language is part of an active perceptual engagement with the animate and inanimate world, and the world is full of active entities with whom humans engage" (Murton 2013, 146).

19. Far from "embodying simple unchanging essences, all agents are relatively complex and shifting, they make and remake each other through a dialectic process in changing situations" (Liu 1991, 7).

20. Critical of disembodied analyses of the role of land in Māori New Zealand, Brian Murton writes that "although Maori 'saw' or still 'see' things in the world ('landscape'), things became 'visible' primarily through language. . . . [The] European visual approach is [thus] subversive of non-Western modes of knowledge, its acquisition, revelation, and articulation" (2011, 74).

21. Place is not merely subjective space. Instead, "place is part of the structure of intersubjectivity" (Donohoe 2014, xiv). Place is inherently intersubjective because the body (subject) is always with others in the world.

22. Neither the places we encounter habitually (or that we deem exotic) nor our memories of those places are static (Donohoe 2014).

23. Through metaphors, people conceptualize their social experiences and shape and add authority to their discourses (James and Duncan 1992, cited in Young 1998, 28).

24. Similarly, Vanuatu people refer to their "home place" rather than house and describe themselves as *man ples*, a "local person" (Rodman 1987).

25. This process is continually modified by the enduring contradictions of movement. Although i'inei and local relations are always invoked, family members are now always separated because of movement away from i'inei. Over the years, people have developed linkages and sociocultural and economic networks outside community through mobility.

26. Fa'alupega are the greeting salutations of families in village history reflected in titles and names.

27. As Albert Wendt writes of the central role of oral traditions and stories in Pacific cultures, "We are what we remember," meaning the stories told to us greatly influence how Pacific people understand their storied places and place knowledge (1976, 71).