THE TUFUGA'S FALE TELE:
Constructing Social Relations in the Samoan Built Environment

by

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Abstract

Social structure is an important influence on the arrangement and construction of the traditional *fale tele* (guest house) in Western Samoa. Architecture and constructed spaces are physical manifestations and expressions of culturally defined social structures and cosmologies. Social relationships are also defined by constructed space. In Samoa, social status and relationships are manifested in the *fale tele* (round guest house). In this thesis, I examine the spatial orientation of the traditional *fale tele* in the family compound and the idealized Samoan village, and how these constructions reflect the traditional social structure and ordering of the community. One of the most important and ritually defined relationships, between the commissioning *taufale* (owner of house) and the *tufuga fa'i fale* (Master Carpenter), is created and defined by the construction of a *fale tele*. I discuss the ways in which the most ritualized use of the *fale tele*, for the *fono* (village council), is defined by the constructed space of the *tufuga's fale tele*. I also discuss how significant social changes over the last fifty years have impacted and been incorporated into the built environment.
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CHAPTER I Overview and Background

1.1 Introduction

Architecture and constructed spaces are physical manifestations and expressions of culturally defined social structures. Social structure influences the arrangement and construction of traditional Samoan villages in ways that symbolize and connect many elements of culture, including social status, power, myths, ritual, and craft guilds. At the same time, constructed spaces shape social structure and provide physical boundaries for social events. Allen (1993: 34) goes so far as to suggest that these boundaries must be broken or negated so that the focus can be moved to the open centre of the village or fale tele (guest house)\(^1\) where important social actions can occur in new social-spatial relationships. In this regard, architecture and social structure are mutually interactive, complementary concepts.

The fale tele is the most important building on the compound of an ali'i (chiefly) family, and is the most significant site of social interaction in the village. It symbolizes the prestige and wealth of the owners and the village as a whole. To construct a new fale tele, the commissioning matai (chief, title-holder) must hire a tufuga fa'i fale (Master Carpenter) and he must have access to many resources, including assistance from family members, construction materials, subsistence resources, and cash. Because the fale tele is important in Samoan society, an official relationship is established between the tufuga fa'i fale (tufuga) and the taufale (owners or commissioners of the house). This relationship exists only during the construction process and is marked by a great degree of formality, ritual feasting, and gift giving. In this thesis, I will focus on this relationship, the process of constructing a traditional fale tele, and the impact of dramatic social changes since contact with Europeans (papālagi)\(^2\) on the traditional built environment. I will refer to published architectural,

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\(^1\) All Samoan words used in this thesis are explained in Appendix 1.

\(^2\) This term refers to the eighteenth century arrival of European explorers who appeared to burst through the dome of the sky at the horizon (Garrett 1982: 121; Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 42). Although Samoans had had contact with Fiji and Tonga, they believed that the universe was a dome that ended at the horizon. When Europeans arrived, they appeared to breach the dome and were assumed to be of supernatural origins, like the gods (Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 42). Fale pālagi means European-style houses and is derived from papālagi.
geographic, and anthropological sources and firsthand accounts of missionaries, travellers, and ethnographers.

1.2 Brief Introduction to Samoa

The Samoan archipelago is near the western edge of the Polynesia triangle (13°-15° S, 168°-173° W). Lapita pottery, other archaeological finds, and linguistic evidence indicate historical links with Tonga, Fiji, and other parts of Melanesia, as well as with later migrations into Eastern and Southern Polynesia (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 14-15; Kirch 1989: 19; Smith 1976: 83, 92). This evidence suggests that the first inhabitants arrived from Fiji between 1600 and 1400 BC (Kirch 1989: 18-19; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 15).

Samoans have a different explanation of their origins. Tagaloa-fa'atutupu-nu'u, the supreme creator god, formed the nine heavens, the other Tagaloa gods, the Samoan islands, and the Samoan peoples (Andersen 1928: 384-391; Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 2-10). He created the islands of Upolu, Savai'i and Manu'a as well as Tonga, Fiji and other Pacific islands out of the rock Manu'atele (Greater Manu'a) as resting places (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 15-16; Andersen 1928: 389-391; Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 2-3). He also created the first humans, who populated the islands, and established the Tui (king) titles for the islands (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 16; Andersen 1928: 389-391).

According to Samoan legends, the original Samoans "lived under the open sky" (Krämer 1995: 259) until the first two houses were built by a chief for his two sons (Turner in Krämer 1995: 259). In another story, one of Tagaloa's incarnations, either Tagaloa-matua or Tagaloa-lai, created the mythical model for the original fale tele (guest house), which has been perfectly recreated on earth by succeeding generations of tufuga fa'i fale (Buck 1930: 82-83; Guidoni 1978: 211; Holmes 1974: 52). The direct descent from the founding god of the artisanal lineage is emphasized in the names of the branches of house-builder guilds on each island; for example, Sa-Tagaloa is the family of Tagaloa, and Aiga-sa-Sao is the family of Sao (Buck 1930: 83; Guidoni 1978: 211). These stories
The first recorded contact between Europeans and Samoans took place on June 14, 1722, when Admiral Jacob Roggeveen (or Rogewein), a Dutch navigator, dropped anchor off Ta'ū Village, on Ta'ū Island (Gilson 1970: 65; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 16; Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 43). However, it is probable that Captain Roggeveen and his crew were not the first Europeans to visit Samoa because the Manu'a islanders were familiar with iron nails, and the taupou (ceremonial village virgin) from Ofu was wearing a blue bead necklace, a common trade item of the day (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 16). Between Roggeveen's arrival and the arrival of Christian missionaries in the 1830s, the only Europeans with whom Samoans had contact were escaped convicts and seamen deserters. Although poor and illiterate by European standards, these brought to Samoa new technologies -- carpentry, metal working, and fire arms -- which qualified them as experts by Samoan standards (Gilson 1970: 68). Although evidence is lacking, it is plausible that Samoans were first introduced to Western-style buildings and construction techniques at this time.

European interest in Samoa, particularly among missionaries and trading companies, continued throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In December 1899, German, British and American representatives divided the Samoan islands, along 171° W, between Germany and the United States. In 1914, New Zealand, with British support, captured German Samoa (Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 126-127). Western Samoa was a New Zealand dependency until 1962, when it became the first Pacific Island country to gain independence (Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 147-157) while retaining ties with New Zealand and the British Commonwealth.

Western Samoa is made up of two large islands, Savai'i and Upolu, and two small islets, Apolima and Manono. Apia, located on Upolu, is the nation's capital and is the main port for exporting large quantities of cash crops (primarily breadfruit, bananas, copra, and cocoa) to American Samoa and international markets. American Samoa, which remains an American territory,
is made up of six inhabited islands and a number of uninhabited islets. The main islands are Tutuila, which is approximately forty miles east of Upolu, and the Manu'a group of islands, which include Ofu, Olosega, and Ta'ū. Pago Pago, located on Tutuila, is the territory's main port and the location of the primary employers: two tuna canneries, the government, and the American naval base. Villages in both countries have experienced steady depopulation as people have migrated in search of work, and most village economies have become dependent on remittance payments from overseas relatives. Western Samoa has maintained a more traditional way of life, referred to as fa'a Sāmoa, than American Samoa. For example, outside of Apia, there are still many more traditional building types (fale Sāmoa) than the newer fale pālagi (European-style houses), while in American Samoa, American-style single family dwellings have replaced most of the traditional houses as a result of government-sponsored initiatives (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 110).

Social Structure: Foundations of Samoan Society

The important units of social organization in Samoa are the fua'ifale (household), 'āiga (extended family, kin), and the nu'u (village). Each household has a plot of land in the village on which there are a guest house (fale tele), sleeping houses (fale o'o), a cook house (fale umu), a toilet (fale vao or fale'ese), and sometimes a pigpen. Each family also owns rights to plantation lands just outside the village, on which, among other things, they grow materials to build new fale (Holmes 1974: 18; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 28; Neich 1985: 8; Shore 1982: 48-49). Individuals may belong to numerous 'āiga by virtue of birth, marriage, and adoption. Personal status is acquired through associations with prominent families, so it is not surprising that the leading 'āiga have large memberships. Each 'āiga is headed by a matai, usually male, who is responsible for the welfare and behaviour of those under his authority. 'Āiga are relatively diffuse until significant events take place, such as the death or marriage of a matai, when members are called upon to donate goods so that their matai can participate on behalf of the family in gift exchange at weddings or funerals, or when large donations are required for construction of a new fale tele or a village church (Holmes and Holmes
1992: 28). Titles, which are bestowed for life through election by members of the 'āiga, are considered to be "owned" by the 'āiga just like lands, buildings, and other material objects (Holmes 1974: 19-22; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 29).

Each matai represents his or her 'āiga in the fono, the chiefs' council, which is responsible for village policies, planning, and decision making (Filoiali'i and Knowles 1981: 211). Some senior matai titles have chiefly rank and these titles are divided into two types: ali'i (Chief) and tulafale (Talking Chief), depending on their 'āiga's tradition. Both types are further subdivided into hierarchically ranked titles. The ali'i are divided into High, or paramount, Chief (ali'i sili), ali'i, and ali'i fa'avaipou (between-the-posts Chiefs). Tulafale, Talking Chief, literally translates as "the one who sits in the front of the house," which refers to their prestigious and important position in the fono. There are also three ranks of tulafale: to'oto o, or tulafale sili are of the highest rank and are often orator chiefs for High Chiefs; vae o to'oto'o (the feet or legs of the Talking Chief) are the second rank; and the lowest ranked are the lauti laulelei or tulafale fa'avaipou, the common, or between-the-posts Talking Chiefs, which refers to the fact that they usually sit between the posts and do not have their own post in the fono (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 35; Holmes 1974: 25-26; Filoiali'i and Knowles 1981: 211).

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Previous writers have only described or provided limited analysis of the relationship between building types, construction methods, and Samoan social structure. Augustin Krämer (1995, originally published in 1902-3) and Peter Buck (1930) provided excellent descriptive accounts of traditional Samoan dwellings, materials, and construction techniques. Both Holmes (1974) and Holmes and Holmes (1992) provide short but perceptive descriptions of the structure and impact of social change in American Samoan.

Shore provided one of the first major anthropological analyses of Samoan village structure in his book Sala'ilua: A Samoan Mystery (1982), although it was incidental to his focus on Samoan
political structures and conflict resolution. Several authors have since discussed and analyzed his works, including Roger Neich (1985) and Lowell Holmes and Ellen Rhoads Holmes (1992). Alessandro Duranti (1981; 1994) briefly discussed the relationship between the interior space of the *fale tele* and the positioning of *matai* in the *fono* (village council meeting). However, like Shore, his analysis was incidental to his primary research focus. There are also a number of studies on Samoan communities in Hawai'i (c.f. Franco and Aga 1997), Fiji (c.f. Tuimaleali'ifano 1990), and California (Janes 1990).

I have recently become aware of the work of Anne Allen (1993; 1994), who looked directly at the social significance of constructed space in Samoa. In 1993, she produced a critical analysis of Shore's work, and in 1994 she wrote an article about the construction process of the *fale tele*. I reached many similar conclusions and have incorporated her theories into my analysis. She analyzed the social events that took place in the *fono* as being "bracketed" by constructed space (Allen 1993), an idea that I had not previously considered.

Since there is very little information about Samoan architecture (Allen 1993: 34), my analysis relies on a number of other sources. Architecture has traditionally played a very minor role in anthropology, and anthropology has only recently been acknowledged as important to architectural understanding. However, a number of important architectural analyses have been completed by anthropologists working elsewhere in the world, for example, Roxana Waterson in South-East Asia (1990), Adrienne Kaeppler in Tonga (1989), and Jan Rensel and Margaret Rodman (1997).

I have also relied on the analyses of architectural theorists such as Amos Rapoport (1969; 1990), Michael Pearson and Colin Richards (1994), Enrico Guidoni (1978), and Paul Oliver (1987). Tuan proposed that the human world could be "studied in terms of signs (which guide behaviour), affective signs (which elicit feelings), and symbols (which influence thought)" (Tuan in Rapoport 1990: 35). Rapoport argues that since people communicate verbally, vocally, and non-verbally (1990: 49), the meanings of the built environment can be studied in three major ways:
(1) Using semiotic models, mainly based on linguistics… [which] are currently the most common.

(2) Relying on the study of symbols… [which is] the most "traditional."

(3) Using models based on nonverbal communication that come from anthropology, psychology, and ethnology. These have been least used in the studying of environmental meaning.

Rapoport 1990: 36

Non-verbal communication and behaviour relies on sight, sound, smell, touch, and other sensory cues (ibid.: 49). This study focuses primarily on the visual elements of this third category, although linguistic and symbolic elements will also be discussed.
CHAPTER II  Constructions of Space in Western Samoan Villages

2.1. Layout and Components

Although the idealized arrangement of the village is frequently conceptualized as circular or oval in shape (see Figure 2-1), traditional Samoan villages are usually oblong in shape. Like many Polynesian societies, the residential areas are arranged around a circular or oval-shaped plaza, known as a *malae* (Austin 1976: 230; Buck 1930: 370; Guidoni 1978: 358). Often, a road runs through the middle of the village, and in coastal villages runs parallel to the shoreline. Figure 2-1 also shows how family compounds face onto the *malae* and extend back towards the surrounding forest.

Figure 2-1: Idealized Arrangement of a Samoan Village (adapted from Neich 1985: 9, figure 2; Shore 1982: 48, figure 3.2; Allen 1993: 36, figure 4)

The *malae* is an open, sandy area with patches of grass, and frequently a dirt or concrete cricket pitch. It is often named for a famous person or historical event, and is a focus for village identity and a link with the past (Allen 1993: 36). The *malae* was probably once used for religious

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3 The most studied Polynesian *malae* is the Aotearoa/New Zealand Maori *marae* (c.f. Emory 1969; Austin 1976).
ceremonies, and it is still in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Austin 1976: 239). In modern times, it has become the site of political meetings, inter- and intra-village interactions, life crisis events (e.g. birth, marriage, instalment of a new matai, and death rituals), and the occasional cricket match, all of which involve complex social and political discourses (Allen 1993: 36; Duranti 1981: 13; Guidoni 1978: 358; O'Meara 1990: 30-31; Shore 1982: 8). During social and political gatherings the malae becomes a taboo space in which behaviour and language are restricted, controlled, and formalized (Allen 1993: 36; Franco and Aga 1997: 177-178; Shore 1982: 25-26).

The social significance of the malae is defined by two physical features. First, the open nature of the space highlights it as a public social and political forum (Allen 1993: 36; Franco and Aga 1997: 175, 178; Shore 1982: 8). Second, prestigious architecture such as the fale tele of high status 'aiga, churches, and important community structures, are located on and define the perimeter of the malae (Allen 1993: 36; Duranti 1981: 50; O'Meara 1990: 30; Shore 1982:48-49). These buildings are usually the largest structures in the village, and the fale tele almost always have an open plan without walls (ibid.). According to Mageo, the malae is a "spatial icon of the relationship between 'aiga within the village" and the surrounding buildings are physical reflections of the social space between the families (in Allen 1993: 36). The size of buildings and social significance of structured space decrease as one moves from the village "centre" past the edge of the 'a'ai (the residential core) towards the vao (forest) (Shore 1982: 50; Allen 1993: 36).

The family compounds of the most prestigious villagers overlook the malae. The compounds of less prestigious families are either further away from the malae or face the main government road. There are a number of buildings and structures in a family compound, and their locations are symbolic. The guest fale (house) is the largest building and is at the front of the family compound. Several fale o'o (sleep or dwelling houses) are located in a rough semi-circle behind the guest fale, the number being determined by the number of individuals in a family unit, which in turn depends on the number of married sons and daughters under the care of the matai (Shore 1982: 49). The fale o'o, which are often partially concealed from the guest fale by a hibiscus or "half hidden beneath the
breadfruit trees" (Krämer 1995: 263), are where family members sleep and do light work like weaving (Shore 1982: 49). Behind the *fale o'o*, near the back of the family's compound, is at least one *umu kuka* (cook house). Except for preparing purchased canned foods, cooking is the responsibility of men. A separate work house, *faletā*, may also be in this area. Guests are discouraged from venturing into this area because it is the location of the dirtiest and heaviest work in the compound (Shore 1982: 49). The *fale vao* (toilet, also known as *faletēse*) and pig pens are located on the periphery of compound or just outside in the bush. The *fale vao* is the building farthest from the village centre, and closest to the world of the forest (*vao*) (Shore 1982: 49), as appropriate for its association with passage of bodily wastes as a private, natural (and, therefore, uncontrollable) activity. Symbolically, it also represents the opposing concepts of purity (of the *malae*) and impurity (of the *fale vao*).

The plantations and the forest (*vao*) are outside the family compound so that entering the bush suggests leaving the ordered centre and the control of the *matai* and village regulations for the dangerous place uncontrolled by the *matai* and their regulations. Being out of sight of the village, the forest represents moral and physical "darkness" (Shore 1982: 49). For example, lovers may meet in the forest to escape the watchful eyes of their families. Living in the bush is considered to be living alone, out of reach of, and away from the controls of society. The forest is the home of *āitu* (ghosts or spirits), and trouble is said to occur far more frequently in the forest than in the village (ibid.: 49-50).

2.2. **Symbolism and Significance of Village Structure**

**Front-Back**

As illustrated in Figure 2-1, the ideal Samoan village is conceptualized as a circle or oval with the *malae* in the centre, surrounded by a ring of *fale tele* with the sleeping and cooking houses radiating to the periphery (Allen 1993: 36; Neich 1985: 9; Shore 1982: 50). In practise, the *malae* is rarely the true centre of a village. As villages expand, for example, the cook house of one family
maybe closer to the *malae* than the residence of another (Allen 1993: 36) so that the actual relationship between prestige and proximity to the *malae* comes to depend on the structure within each village. Allen states that the "*malae* functions as a focal point and intersection for an infinite number of independent lines [of prestige] which radiate out from it... [and] the important lines are those which radiate out from the village "center" and bisect family land" (1993: 36). The application of this linear hierarchy is extremely flexible.

Shore argues that the layout of the idealized Samoan village creates a number of paired oppositions, or what he calls "contrasting dimensions" (Shore 1982: 48-50). In one of these pairs, 'i *tai* refers to areas that are seaward of the *malae*, while 'i *uta* refers to landward areas. However, these concepts seem less relevant to the structuring of space in the *fale tele* and the *fono* than those of the second pair: 'i *lumā* (front, facing the *malae*) and 'i *tuā* (back, facing the family dwellings) distinction (Allen 1993: 36). As Allen points out, Samoans place great importance on the distinction between "centre" and "periphery", and the hierarchical organization of the space and buildings located between the *malae* and the "periphery" of the village. This distinction between centre and periphery is manifested both structurally and verbally in the concepts of 'i *lumā* and 'i *tuā* (Shore 1982: 49).

Symbolically, 'i *lumā* refers to the more populated and ordered domain of the village, particularly around the *malae*. This area is identified with the *fono*, the village council, and with maintaining "decorous and controlled behavior under the gaze of a dense population and watchful chiefs" (Shore 1982: 49). The *matai* sit 'i *lumā* *fale* in the *fono*, and formal speeches may only be made from the "front" of the *fale* (Duranti 1981: 53). In contrast, 'i *tuā* is associated with the back side of the family compound. It is the area of work, of private life, of informal behaviour. In the *fono*, the untitled men sit 'i *tuā* *fale*. The arrangement of the *fono* in relation to the concepts of 'i *lumā* and 'i *tuā* will be discussed in Chapter 3.
Location of Buildings

The relative location of buildings in the village and to the outside world represents the social ordering of the community. This can be seen in the layout of other Polynesian villages. For example, in traditional Tongan villages women's houses were the only communal houses in the community, and, unlike in other island societies, there were no men's houses (Gailey 1987: 100). Women made mats and *tapa* (bark cloth) in these houses, which were located in chiefly compounds if the women were *matāpule* (chiefly) or in a central location for *tu'a* (commoner) women. Prior to contact with Europeans, the houses were scattered in the hamlets throughout a district. After contact, the women's house was located on the *malae*, an area considered to be chiefly and sacred (Gifford 1929: 147, in Gailey 1987: 100). The location and existence of the women's house relates to the traditionally important roles of women as producers of status items (*koloa*) and as sisters. Christine Ward Gailey also argues that this role as "sole creators of socially valued products effectively prevented the emergence of class relations" (Gailey 1987: 105).

In Samoa, women also weave the fine mats that are exchanged and displayed at all major life crisis events (Allen 1994: 77). However, there are no communal weaving houses like the ones in Tonga, although groups of women meet to weave mats in one woman's *fale*. Social and gender status is displayed through the location of buildings in relation to the *malae*. The highest status family houses in a community are closest to the *malae* while those of lower status are further away (Shore, 1982: 19). The houses towards the front of the family compound are more public, hence behaviour in them must be more controlled and more formalized. Also, since men almost always hold the *matai* titles, they are responsible for representing their families' interests in the *fono*. With the exception of the *taupo* (village maiden), women are absent from the *fono* and so lack a direct voice in village affairs. Instead, the women, along with the untitled men who do the cooking, prepare the feast that follows the *fono*.
CHAPTER III Constructing Social Relationships: The Fale Tele and the Relationship Between Tufuga and Ali'i

3.1. Description of the Traditional Guest Fale

There are two forms of guest houses (see Figure 3-1), the fale afolau (or faletū), which is rectangular or rectangular with rounded ends, and the fale tele, which is oval or completely round (Allen 1994: 78; Buck 1930: 19; Guidoni 1978: 211, 358; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 28; Krämer 1995: 262). They are referred to somewhat interchangeably in the literature, but I will focus on the construction and symbolism of the fale tele and compare it with the fale afolau.

Figure 3-1: Simple Cross-sections and Plans of Guest Fale (adapted from Allen 1994: 79-80; Handy and Handy 1924: 10 Fig. 2, 15; Krämer 1995: 261 Fig. 20)

The fale tele is used to greet, entertain, and accommodate guests, but rarely serves as a sleep house for family members. It is not always clear which fale tele would be used for the fono, the chiefs' council meeting, where village policies, planning, and decisions are made and crises are resolved or diverted, but it may be held either in the fale tele of the highest ranking chief or in a separate guest house built for this specific purpose (Buck 1930: 22; Duranti 1981: 30; Filoiali'i and Knowles 1981: 211). The fale afolau is used primarily to accommodate guests, and as a sleep house
for a matai family (Shore 1982: 49). It rarely serves as the site for a fono. Each family member may use the guest fale to receive visitors, although the head of the household usually greets and welcomes guests to the family's compound (Shore 1982: 49).

The more oval-shaped fale tele were "from forty to fifty feet long & about thirty or five & thirty feet wide" (Williams in Moyle 1984: 251) and are "comparable to a round extendable table after a small section has been added (large house) or several (long house)" (Krämer 1995: 261). They are open on all sides and there are no solid internal walls such as are in North American houses. The fale has a centre section (itu), which may be significantly reduced and occasionally indiscernible in the fale tele, flanked by two ends (tala). The luma (front) is the side of the fale tele facing either onto the malae or the road, while the opposite side is referred to as tua (back) (Buck 1930: 24; Allen 1993: 42-43; Shore 1982: 50). The fale is supported by a series of house posts, placed at specific intervals, with woven palm or coconut leaf blinds or mats suspended from the roof line in between. The mats are usually lowered at night and to protect against inclement weather (Guidoni 1978: 358; Goodman 1998a: np). Siapo (tapa) bark cloths may be hung as partitions to provide privacy. The wooden structure of the guest fale traditionally was held together using a variety of joints and lashings. Several authors have noted the "brilliant vari-colored ornamental sennit" (Handy and Handy 1924: 4) lashings that were bound in diverse patterns around the wood joints (Buck 1930: 19; Krämer 1995: 264; Holmes 1974).

A partially raised floor provides protection against flooding and heavy annual rainfall in the tropical climate. Samoans have adapted this need to be an expression of chiefly status. Guest fale are frequently built on platforms or foundations (paepae) of rock, coral rock, or, more recently, concrete (Guidoni 1978: 358; Goodman 1998a: np; Krämer 1994: 263; Williams in Moyle 1984: 251). The fale tele and fale afolau of the highest chiefs have the most intricate designs, are the most solidly constructed, and are built on larger platforms than those built for less prestigious matai (Gilson 1970: 11). Fale tele usually do not have terraces surrounding them, as they must be
accessible from all sides (Krämer 1994: 263), but fale afolau frequently do have terraces, the size and number of which increase with the prestige of the residents (Gilson 1970: 11). Krämer notes that the average terrace is about one to two feet high and extends about "ten paces in front of the house" (1994: 263). The foundation of the guest fale is covered with crushed coral or pebbles. When the building is in use, the floor is covered with mats (Duly 1979: 80).

The general shape of the roof for both styles is a high, steeply-pitched form that slopes to within four to five feet of the ground on all sides and spans between three and four metres, although larger fale tele may be wider and have higher roofs (Handy and Handy 1924: 4; Krämer 1995: 262). The roof is covered with overlapping rows of palm or sugar cane leaf thatch, which is made by weaving and sewing the leaves together with sennit (Guidoni 1978: 358; Goodman 1998a: np). The thatching bundles are made by women but are attached to the roofing slats with sennit rope by men (Kamu and Toren 1989). The thatching and the overall shape of the roof are very effective for keeping the rains out and the interior comfortably cool (Goodman 1998a: np). A "framework of inclined, parallel wooden arches and a crosswise, denser minor network," is attached to a central ridge beam to support the roof (Guidoni 1978: 358). In the fale tele, two or three vertical pillars in the centre of the floor plan, support this ridge beam; in the fale afolau, it is supported by a row of heavy posts on either side (Krämer, 1995: 262; Handy and Handy 1924: 4). The roof of the fale tele is a "continuous dome-like curve on [a] framework of crossbeams and elements bent to shape" (Guidoni 1978: 211). The roof of the fale afolau has more obvious straight sections along the long sides, and, if the ends of the house are apsidal, the ends of the roof are also rounded.

Early European visitors to Samoa noted the pleasure of staying in the traditional open-sided fale. The high roof, which protects against the sun, "is very refreshing and beneficial, all the more since painstaking orderliness and cleanliness... prevails within" (in Krämer 1995: 260). More recent

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4 Similar gendered division of labour exists elsewhere in the Pacific and the world. For example, on Vaitupu, Tuvalu (former Ellice Islands), women also make the thatching bundles (known as lau) while men attach the bundles to the roof (Oliver 1987: 90). Among the Mundurucú of the Brazilian Amazon, women collect the roof
writers have also extolled the suitability of the traditional *fale tele* to the climate. Richard Goodman notes (1998a: np):

... Not only does the traditional Samoan fale have the greatest beauty of any traditional South Pacific home, but it is also ideal for the climate... Set on a raised stone platform several feet high, it caught the breezes that nearly always blew inland from the ocean. The thatched roof was ideal for keeping the interior cool, and the only time it became really uncomfortable was once for about 24 hours when I and some 30 or 40 other people endured a hurricane with winds of around 120 miles per hour... A westernized "fale" with a roof of corrugated iron radiates heat down into the structure and can be most uncomfortable. The walls of western-style wooden houses prevent breezes from cooling the interior. For sheer comfort in the hot Pacific climate, nothing surpasses the traditional Samoan fale.

Colin Duly and Peter Buck both argue that the rectangular, round ended *fale afolau* was the original guest *fale* because it is more "directly derived from the dwelling house" (Buck 1930: 20). Duly argues that it evolved through the oval shape to the round *fale tele* to accommodate a growing number of chiefly people (Duly 1979: 83). Since the most honoured chiefs are seated at the rounded ends, it is plausible that an inflation of titled ranks may have resulted in a rounding of the ends of the *fale tele*. Although archaeologists suggest that as long ago as 2550 BP there was no cultural preference for shape (Holmer 1976: 16-17), the evidence suggests that larger *fale* were more rectangular and smaller ones were more rounded. Since the size of the structures reflects the status of their owners, this appears to contradict both Buck and Duly. However, the rectangular shape of larger *fale* may also solve the need for structural support. Also, shape is tied to function. The smaller, rounded *fale tele* is a site for the *fono*, which is attended by *matai* title-holders and is the site where important decisions about the village are reached. The only untitled persons allowed in the *fale tele* during a *fono* are the *taupo* (the village virgin or maiden) and the untitled men who prepare the *kava* for the *kava* ceremony (see Section 3-4).

thatch and clay for the floors. The men thatch the roof but the women make the floors, a very dirty job that involves carrying heavy baskets of wet clay and then spreading and smoothing the clay (Murphy and Murphy 1985: 155).
3.2. Role of the Tufuga Fai Fale in Samoa

House building is a predominantly male activity in Samoa and, while every man is capable of building his own house, a tufuga fai fale (referred to as tufuga), or a master carpenter, must be employed to direct the construction of fale tele (and fale afolau) according to traditional designs (Goodman 1998a: np). According to Enrico Guidoni, tufuga are "at one and the same time architects, carpenters, and sculptors... who occupy a position at a remove from the other classes" (Guidoni 1978: 210). Tufuga acquire privileged status as artisans because chiefs and influential families employ them to construct the most politically and socially important buildings. By constructing new fale tele, the tufuga continue the technical knowledge and skills as well as the mythology associated with their craft.

3.2.1. Origin of the Tufuga Craft

Throughout Polynesia, craft specializations have their own gods, and some master specialists act as priests. The Tahitian god of carpenters is Tane, the son of Tangaroa (the supreme god) and Atea (who represents space). Tahunga (Tahitian) and other related forms throughout the Pacific mean expert or specialist, and usually refer to master craftsmen and priests (Guidoni 1978: 210-211). In Samoa, the term tufuga refers specifically to specialists in tattooing, boat building, house building, and surgery (specifically performing male circumcisions). However, the term does not refer to religious specialists or expert fisherman as it does in eastern and central Polynesia (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 49). Currently, most work throughout the village, including house building, is cooperative, usually being performed by family groups, special units under the aualuma (unmarried women's group), aumaga (untitled men's group), the Women's committees, or groups involving the whole village.

One of Tagaloa's incarnations, either Tagaloa-matua or Tagaloa-lai, is believed to have created the first guest fale. Originally he used humans to form the building but decided he needed a
material that would provide greater support. With the help of the founders of the first carpenter's guild, Sa-Tagaloa (the family of Tagaloa), he created a strong, rectangular-shaped, well-built house (Buck 1930: 82-84; Holmes 1974: 52). He then designated the members of the Sa-Tagaloa to recreate the mythical model perfectly on earth (Buck 1930: 82-83; Guidoni 1978: 211; Holmes 1974: 53). The direct descent from the founding god is emphasized in the names of the branches of house-builder associations on each island. Sa-Tagaloa is the name of the oldest association, and all builders belong to this association. Within the main guild, there are a number of smaller societies that claim descent from one of the original Sa-Tagaloa members. These smaller societies have become associated with different districts. For example, Aiga-sa-Sao is the family of Sao on Manu'a, the Aiga-sa-Singi is the family of Singi on Savai'i, Aiga-sa-Longo is the family of Longo on Upolu (Buck 1930: 85; Guidoni 1978: 211).

3.2.2. The Tufuga Guild

There are four high ranked societies, of which the Aiga-sa-Longo and the Aiga-sa-Solofuti, from Savai'i, are the most important (Handy and Handy 1924: 15; Buck 1930: 85). The rank of each society is determined by its genealogical relationship to the original society: the highest ranking societies are the ones that were formed when the original society was founded; the other lower ranked branch societies were founded later (Handy and Handy 1924: 15). The rank of individual tufuga is determined by the rank of his society and the number of generations that his professional ancestry extends back in a direct line. Therefore, a tufuga who can trace his professional ancestry directly to the first founding tufuga of the guild holds the highest rank (ibid.: 15-16).

Like regular aiga, each society elects a matai tufuga to act as head of the guild. He presides over meetings of the society and is the master carpenter for all major projects. The most important of the society's meetings is the one marking the admission of a new tufuga. A young man, usually from a prestigious matai family, apprentices himself to an experienced tufuga, who is often a relative (Buck 1930: 85; Holmes 1974: 52). Once the apprentice has overseen the successful completion of a
large house, proving to his supervisor and the rest of the community that he has mastered the profession, a ceremony will be held to initiate him as a *tufuga* (Handy and Handy 1924: 16). There are no other tests or exams. The meeting is very formal and includes an *inu* (*kava*) ceremony, speech making, and gift giving, and concludes with a large feast hosted by the newly admitted *tufuga* in honour of his sponsor. The leading *tufuga* of the society from each district attend the meeting. The new *tufuga* presents gifts, including finemats and bark cloth, to the *tufuga* to whom he has been apprenticed. When a higher ranked *tufuga* is present, the apprentice's sponsor may offer the gifts to him. However, it is customary that the higher ranked *tufuga* graciously accepts the courtesy but refuse the gifts, "insisting that they be presented to the *tufunga* [*tufuga*] in whose honour the feast is being held" (Handy and Handy 1924: 16).

A *latu* (head carpenter) from another society may be hired to oversee a construction project. He may hire a *tufuga* from the family whose house is to be built, but the assistant loses the privileges associated with his title in his own society including his rank because he is not overseeing the project (in Handy and Handy 1924: 16).

The *Sa-Tagaloa* frequently acts as a unit and the following incident, recorded by E.S. Craighill Handy (in Handy and Handy 1924: 16-17), demonstrates the control that the guild has over economic factors in the community. In the 1920s, kegs of salt beef had to be supplied at the feasts. Money was required to purchase them, as well as other supplies for the construction of a house (like thatching). However, after World War I, the cost for trade items increased while the income from copra and other export items had decreased to such an extent that even the wealthiest *ali'i* families could not afford the cost of constructing a new building. Despite increasing protests from commissioning families, "no carpenters or societies dared to diverge from the established order of things" (ibid.: 17), and as a result fewer houses were built and little work was available for the carpenters. Representatives from all of the carpenters' societies on all of the islands met as a whole to discuss the growing crisis. They decided to omit several of the established feasts until the
economy improved. As a result, families were better able to afford the costs associated with building new structures (ibid.).

### 3.2.3. The Tufuga Craft

The carpenters use a variety of tools to construct a *fale tele*. The basic tool kit includes: a *to'i*, a heavy adze with a hatchet head lashed at a 90° angle to the end of a crooked stick; a light adze made with a flat steel cut to the desired shape and sharpened on the lower side; a *sila*, an adze made by hafting a curved blade to a large gourd or by bending a piece of steel to the desired shape and sharpening the edges; chisels; and gouges (Handy and Handy 1924: 5). Traditionally, saws and nails were not used, but these, and other Western tools like the plane and brace and bit, have become standard items in contemporary house building (Holmes 1974: 53).

*Tufuga* use no blueprints. Instead they construct the *fale tele* according to a series of basic units of measurement. The *aga*, the most frequently used unit, is the length from the tip of the thumb to the index finger when the hand is at maximum spread. For example, one might have a post measuring 26 *aga* in length (Holmes 1974: 54; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 62). The *gafa* is the span of outstretched arms, one fathom. A *vaе fatafata* is half a *gafa*, the length from the tip of an outstretched arm to mid-chest. A *vaе luaga o le lima* is a quarter of a *gafa*, from the tip of the fingers to the elbow (Holmes 1974: 54; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 62).

In the Gilbert Islands and elsewhere in Micronesia (c.f. Alkire 1970), similar sets of measurements based on body parts exist that are used specifically for "housing, canoe, fish and other edibles" (Hockings 1984: 547). The equivalent terms for the *aga* is *nimai ni bai*, the *vaе fatafata* is *te bwenawa*, and the *vaе luaga o le lima* is *te manoku ni bai* (ibid.). Different measurement terms are used for sleeping mats and other small, flat objects (ibid.). There are a number of other specifically named measurements in Gilbertese that were not mentioned by either Holmes (1974) or Holmes and Holmes (1992) so it is difficult to determine whether the authors neglected to mention them or if
such terms do not exist in Samoan. It is not clear whether the Samoan measuring terms are limited to house, canoe building, and the like, or if they apply to measure any dimension.

3.3. Relationship between *Tufuga* carpenter & *Matai* employer

It is through the relationships established to build a *fale tele* that the *tufuga*’s artisanship can be viewed as "the pivotal and mediatory point of the social system" (Guidoni 1978: 211). A *tufuga* is employed to construct the *matai*’s guest house because the guest *fale* symbolizes the associations between power, myth, ritual, and craft specialization and is where a chief receives guests and offers them *kava* and food (Guidoni 1978: 211). The carpenter's profession has always been a highly honoured one, and carpenters have been referred to as the *agai o tupu*, "the supporter of chiefs" (Handy and Handy 1924: 17). According to O.F. Nelson, the high chief informant of E.S. Craighill Handy, the carpenter was the most honoured and trusted attendant to his chief (in Handy and Handy 1924: 17).

Strict rules control the relationship between the employer (*taufale*) and the *tufuga*. The most important is that the "product defined in every element and made in conformity with strict professional rules must be paid for according to the demands of prestige and tradition by regular and adequate outlays of food, rounded out by gifts and banquets offered by the owner at critical phases of the construction" (Guidoni 1978: 211). The price of a *fale tele* depends on the rank of the *taufale*. Holmes estimates that a chief of a lower rank might pay the equivalent of US$500 but a higher ranked chief might pay twice as much for the same sized *fale* (1974: 56). The payments are made with cash, finemats, food, *tapa*, and *kava* roots.
3.4. Constructing a Traditional Fale Tele

John Williams’ descriptions of the construction and layout of the fale tele suggest that the traditional techniques have changed little over the last several hundred years (in Moyle 1984: 251). Handy and Handy (1924), Krämer (1995), and Buck (1930) all provide excellent, detailed descriptions of the construction process so I will only highlight some of the more interesting features and those that are important to the discussion in this thesis.

The construction of a fale tele requires an enormous amount of resources, labour, and cash, and takes anywhere from 3 months to a year to complete, depending on its size, type and the speed of the carpenters (Allen 1994: 81). It also depends on whether new materials have to be collected, or if materials from the old fale tele can be used again. For example, breadfruit wood can often be used in three houses (Allen 1994; Holmes 1974: 55). Fale tele usually take less time to build than fale afolau, because they use shorter logs and need fewer spliced joints than fale afolau (Holmes 1974: 55).

The matai patron (taufale) approaches a tufuga to commission a fale tele by offering him food, finemats, and money. Finemats are exchanged at all important social events, including life crises. Women weave the finemats from pandanus fibres, and many Samoans consider these valuable objects to be the "linchpin of the culture" (Allen 1994: 77). The tufuga accepts the commission to become the latu by accepting the gifts. If he does not wish to construct the fale tele he rejects the gifts, and the commissioning matai continues his search for a willing tufuga (Allen 1994: 77). Once the commission has been accepted, the terms of the agreement are established. Allen indicates that the most common contract leaves the amount of payment to the patron's discretion. However, if the tufuga is dissatisfied with the amount, he and his carpenters will abandon the project, leading to public ridicule of the patron and his family. Work will restart once the patron agrees to pay the acceptable amount plus an additional fine of food, tapa, finemats, and kava roots to
compensate the carpenters (Allen 1994: 78-79; Holmes 1974: 56). Once all of the terms have been set, the latu forms his group of carpenters who are known, collectively, as au tufuga, and the tauafale and his family set about collecting and preparing the materials for construction (Allen 1994: 77-78; Holmes 1974: 55).

A great variety of wood is used in the construction of a fale tele (Krämer 1995: 264). So long as it has remained dry, 'ulu (breadfruit tree) wood is preferred over other woods for the interior construction because of its brownish-red colour, strength and durability (Krämer 1995: 264). Traditionally, other woods that withstand moisture, such as the trunks of pani (iron wood tree) and tree ferns (Cyathea sp.), were used for the pou, the edge or sitting posts. More recently, the house posts have been made from pou mulfu, which is a light, strong wood (Goodman 1998a, b: np). These trees are occasionally planted in small groves in the forest and left to grow for five to ten years before being harvested (Goodman 1998a, b: np). Talie, laupata, magele, and 'ole bamboo were used for posts at one time. Other woods used include: u'unu (Psychotria sp.), olamea (Randia sp.), laumomo (Cyrtandra sp.), and paogo (Krämer 1995: 264). The posts and timbers are frequently roughed out near the felling site before being carried or dragged to the building location (Handy and Handy 1924: 5). The size of the logs is determined by the tufuga based on the size of fale that the patron wants built.

Apart from the wood, the family collects sennit, the fibres from the husks of coconut, to plait into 'afa, which is then made in long ropes, known as fausaga (Kamu and Toren 1989). The sennit is prepared by family members, and it usually takes several weeks to prepare enough 'afa for a house (Krämer 1995: 264). The 'afa is stored in large balls known as afata'ai or afatagai (Pratt in Krämer 1995: 264). The fausaga is the lashing material that was traditionally used to hold the building materials together.

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5 John Williams was the first European missionary to arrive in Samoa in 1830. He was a representative with the London Missionary Society (LMS).
6 This is the Samoan common name; the scientific name is unknown.
The women also prepare the thatch for the roof (Buck 1930: 23). They gather and dry sugar cane leaves, *lafi* (three feet long reed stems from swamps), and the midribs of coconut leaflets. The *lafi* are the basis of the thatch and, beginning at one end, the sugar cane leaflets are doubled over the reed one leaf after another along the length (Handy and Handy 1924: 9). The leaves are held in place with the coconut midribs, which act like pins. Each thatching piece is about two and a half to three feet long and the loose half of the sugar cane leaves hang as a fringe from one side. Handy notes that "in British Samoa women are paid one pound sterling [per one] hundred pieces for making them" (in Handy and Handy 1924: 9).

Once all of the material has been collected, a ceremony, known as *fa'atuga o le fale* (the causing of the house to stand upright) is held to honour the carpenters and to mark the erection of the first house post (Holmes 1974: 55; Allen 1994: 78). The raising of the house posts is a symbolic occasion because the posts are the primary support for the building and they are the "foundation" around which the rest of the house will be built. All of the *taufale* family, the carpenters and their families, and other chiefs are invited to this highly ritualized event. The commissioning family members and the chiefs bring food for the carpenters and also lengths of sennit to add to the needed construction materials (Holmes 1974: 55). When the carpenters arrive, they present the family with an *o'o*, a gift usually consisting of pork or coconuts (Allen 1994: 78). *Tūlafale* make speeches, and *kava* root is prepared for an *inu* ceremony in which the *latu tufuga* drinks first and receives the cup in the name of Sao. Food and gifts are distributed to the guests, and a large feast follows. After the meal, the carpenters start work (Holmes 1974: 56; Allen 1994: 78).

Allen refers to this ceremony as the opening bracket of the construction process. She argues that it is a "multivalent bracket" (1994: 78) because the ritual involves the opening and closing of several processes. It opens the building process and the relationship between the master *tufuga* and the donor family. It also opens a relationship between the *tufuga* and the village because the constructing of a *fale tele* is a major event in the life of a Samoan community, and the *fale tele* will become the major point of interaction and connection between the commissioning family and the
community (Allen 1994: 78). At the same time, the fale will become a symbol of the village's prestige, which is displayed through the number and size of guest fale in the whole community (ibid.). The inclusion of important village matai as guests at the fa'atuga o le fale symbolizes and emphasizes this "larger social significance of the construction of a guest fale" (ibid.). The seating arrangement at the feast follows the hierarchy of the village elite and is similar to that found in the fono (Allen 1994: 79) (see Section 3.5).

The first posts raised are the ones in the centre of the floor plan, pou tu (see Figure 3-1). These are usually three breadfruit logs, but sometimes two for a smaller fale tele, which will bear the entire weight of the structure. Their size and placement will determine the "final spatial characteristics of the fale" (Allen 1994: 78), hence the elaborate rituals surrounding their raising.

The rest of the centre section (itu) is constructed after the main posts are placed. The number of so'a, main horizontal support beams, is "the measure of the size as well as of the quality and beauty of the house" (Krämer 1995: 267). Krämer also notes that "the taller the house, the more roof purlins and the more main girders. The lowest number... is two. A chief of status has no less than five" (ibid.). The largest fale that Krämer saw was built in Fitiuta in 1898 by Tufele and had twelve girders (ibid.).

The latu tufuga and his crew are responsible only for certain phases in the fale's construction, primarily the erection of the direct supporting structures. The family constructs the secondary elements, which do not directly support the fale and do not require complex skills. Once the carpenters have secured the side posts to the superstructure, their work on the itu is complete. The middle post on the front, tala luma, is for the third highest ranking chief present in the fale tele (Handy and Handy 1924: 13). The middle post at the back is the seat for the taupo when she prepares and serves kava at public ceremonies, and the remaining side posts, pou lalo, serve as back rests for the lesser ali'i and tulafale (ibid.). Once the side posts are raised, the family completes the section by securing the thatching, that the women made, to the roof (Allen 1994: 79).

Once the centre section is complete, construction begins on the end sections (tala) one at a time. The angle, size and placement of the primary middle rafter (fa'i) is critical to the construction
of the *tala* because it is used as the reference for the placement of the other rafters above and below it (Allen 1994: 80; Handy and Handy 1924: 15). An end post is placed at the centre of each *tala*. Once these posts (also called *tala* or *matua tala*) are erected, the carpenters' work is complete. The *latu tufuga* indicates the completion by lashing a *talitali*, a non-structural shelf, to the *matua tala* (Allen 1994: 80). The family once again raises the peripheral posts and thatches the *tala* sections. Once both *tala* are completed, the family must lay a foundation platform (*paepae*) from loose rock, stones, and pebbles (ibid.). The foundation is not crucial to the structure or integrity of the building as a whole, and no ceremony marks its completion.

The two *matua tala* are the seats reserved for the two highest ranking chiefs present at a *fono* or other important gathering (Handy and Handy 1924: 13; Allen 1994: 81). They are also the focus of ritual activities, such as the serving of *kava*, which define them as focal points of prestige. The posts are sometimes larger than the others in the *fale tele*, elaborately carved or painted, or composed of several logs to further highlight their prestigious function (Allen 1994: 81).

No nails are used in the traditional construction of a *fale tele*, the construction material being held together by a variety of joints and lashing techniques. The ridge beam may also be mortised, either simply or set back, where it rests on the three supporting pillars (Krämer 1995: 265). The wooden support beams of a roof are joined using scarf joints (Kamu and Toren 1989). "One-sided rebating generally occurs only at the edge posts of the house which carry the lowest purlins, the frame, and at the ridge beam whose 'dovetail' rebates the tenon of the centremost rafter of the round part" (Krämer 1995: 264).

Of equal importance is the *fausaga*, or lashing, used to lash the poles and roofing slats to the support beams (Kamu and Toren 1989; Krämer 1995: 264). There are four types of lashing methods used in the construction of a house (from Krämer 1995: 264):

(a) *fatu le uhu'aso*: "lashing the heads of the rafters," used for the pin spar;

(b) *fatu le lagolau*: "lashing the ribbon," used for the ledge, half bight, the small arched purlins (*huaga*), and the rafter;
(c) **selemamu**: "birds noose," used for lashing the arched purlins and the rafters (*fau*) in a continuous buttoned seam;

(d) **sumu**: "cross lashing," used for scarfing two beams that are butting up against one another, like *so'a* (braces) and *amo* (large roof purlins), and ridge beams and supporting posts.

The same style of lashing is used for certain types of joints. Krämer maintains that it is the unique patterns, rather than the variety of colours, which give the *fale tele* "a particular charm" (Krämer 1995: 264) and that the lashing used to hold the *fau* (purlins) to the many pieced pin spars are "particularly unique [sic.]" (ibid.). He also notes that the *sumu* lashing (d) is equally unique and artistic and that it is similar to the "rhomboid Balistes fish," which is also called *sumu*, and the Southern Cross, which Samoans also call *sumu* (ibid.).

During construction, the *taufale* must provide the carpenters with food and drink (Buck 1930: 23; Holmes 1974: 56). The family also supplies a *tapuaiga* (one who prays for the work) to ensure the success of the project. This family member, usually an older male, keeps the workers company by telling them stories about traditional customs and legends of particular interest to the younger workers. He cannot criticize the work but Holmes implies that his presence deters inferior quality work (1974: 55).

The final payment is made to the *tufuga* and his work crew on the last day of construction at a large ceremony, known as the *umusā*. Originally this payment was made at a feast, *fa'aumataga*, that was held when the carpenters had finished erecting the end posts (Buck 1930: 96; Allen 1994: 80-81). The members of the commissioning family provide goods and food to pay the *latu tufuga* and his crew. All other master carpenters from the village and nearby communities are invited to form a "family of Sao," the ceremonial work party for the last day (Allen 1994: 81). The day is filled with *kava* ceremonies, feasting, and elaborate speech-making. The central feature is the final payment, in which the commissioning family presents the *tufuga*’s wife with finemats and household goods in
recognition of her role in supporting her husband and his work crew. The family then presents the tufuga and his crew with their payment (Buck 1930: 96).

This final ceremony represents what Anne Guernsey Allen refers to as "a complex closing bracket" (1994: 81) to the whole construction process. The ceremony has its own set of opening and closing components, such as the kava ceremony and final payment ceremony. During the feast, "the master builder adds the final bits of thatch" (Allen 1994: 81). This gesture, which is more ceremonial than actual, provides the second of two elements that are added personally by the latu.

The positioning of the final roof section conceptually and physically closes off and completes the space which the fale defines. At the end of the ceremony the work is theoretically complete, the space fully delineated and separated from the surrounding space.

Allen 1994: 81

Thus the whole building process, the creation of a structured symbolic space and the temporary relationships that were created by the building process, is completed. The tufuga has created a fale tele and has created the space for future relationships between the taufale and the outside world.

3.5. Discussion

The fale tele symbolizes and connects many elements of Samoan culture, including social status, power, myths, ritual, and crafts specialization. Like the malae, the fale tele's open spatial style gives "visual accessibility", which "points to indigenous political and social forms" (Allen 1993: 36). A matai receives his guests and offers them kava and food, both symbols of wealth, in the fale tele. Important meetings are also held in the fale tele (Shore 1982: 49; Duranti 1981: 48). The size of the guest house is directly related to the owner's status and wealth. The number of crossbeams is directly proportional to the length of the house. Also the number of support poles varies according to the size of the house. Each pole provides a back rest for guests, and a large house
with more poles is a symbol of the owner's prestige and wealth to accommodate and entertain a large number of guests (Guidoni 1978: 211; Buck 1930: 96-97).

The *fale tele* situated closest to the *malae* usually belongs to the most senior titled *matai* (usually an *ali'i*) and it may be used for the *fono*. The *fale tele* becomes a highly ritualized and structured space when a *fono* is held (Figure 3-2). The *matai* system is a highly structured, hierarchical system in which each *matai* title has a specific position in relation to the other *matai* titles. As discussed earlier in this Chapter, the different ranks of *matai* can be seen in the idealized seating plan of the *fono* (Figure 3-2) because where a *matai* sits dictates when he may speak and the kind of language he may use (Duranti 1981: 48). The *fono* is what Gutman (1976: 41) refers to as a "communication net" because it "opens up certain channels for the exchange of messages and, by opening up some, thereby closes off others" (ibid.).

*Figure 3-2: Idealized Plan and Distribution of Space in the Fono* (after Krämer 1995: 278, Fig. 25 and Shore 1982: 80, Fig. 5.1)

According to Duranti, there is a difference between the idealized and the actual seating arrangements. In the idealized arrangement, the two highest ranked *ali'i* titles, which are the very
old, powerful titles of the High, or paramount, Chief (ali'i sili), are seated at the central posts (matua tala) at either end of the fale tele. The next highest ranked matai is seated at the centre front post; and the other ali'i are seated along the sides of the tala according to rank. A third rank of chief, called ali'i fa'avaipou (between-the-posts Chiefs), who are the matai of branches of large families, frequently do not have their own posts and usually sit near the Chief with the paramount title of their family (Duranti 1981: 50; Holmes 1974: 25-26; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 35; Kamu and Toren 1989; Krämer 1995: 278; Shore 1982: 80).

The Talking Chiefs, tulafale (literally, the one who sits in the front of the house), also have three levels of importance and idealized seating arrangements. The to'oto o, or tulafale sili, are of the highest rank and are often orator chiefs for High Chiefs. They are also known as "difficult people" because of their ability to eulogize, persuade, and intimidate through their dexterity with words and extensive knowledge of protocol (Holmes 1974: 27). Because of these abilities, they frequently serve as village spokesmen in inter-village ceremonies or negotiations, and they are seated at the posts located at the front of the fono. They are flanked by Talking Chiefs of second rank, known in Fitiuta (American Samoa) as vae o to'oto'o (the feet or legs of the Talking Chief). Like the ali'i fa'avaipou, the lowest ranked Talking Chiefs, lauti laulelei or tulafale fa'avaipou (common, or between-the-posts Talking Chiefs), may not have their own post, and are seated next to the senior tulafale of their lineage (Duranti 1981: 50; Filoiali'i and Knowles 1981: 211; Holmes 1974: 25-26; Holmes and Holmes 1992: 35; Kamu and Toren 1989; Krämer 1995: 278; Shore 1982: 80).

Untitled men are seated along the back row where they prepare kava and are available to assist the ali'i and tulafale. When present, the village taupo is seated in front of the untitled men. (Duranti 1981: 50; Kamu and Toren 1989; Krämer 1995: 278; Shore 1982: 80). All other members of the community may gather outside the fale tele if they are interested in the proceedings of the fono.
Duranti found that there were some significant deviations from this idealized plan when *matai* were actually seated in the *fono* (1981: 50). He noted that *tūlafale* and *ali'i* sometimes sat in the back of the *fono* if there was not enough room in the front. An orator informant explained the implications of such an arrangement:

[A. Duranti]: Can one give a formal speech (*lāuga*) if he sits in the back?

[Orator]: He can't. It is not appropriate according to the custom.

[Chief]: If you sit in the back you are untitled!

In Duranti 1981:53

The Orator and Chief both laughed at this last joke. This final comment highlights the relationship between the idealized and the actual arrangement. His comment that a *matai* who sits in the back becomes untitled suggests that by one's seating arrangement one becomes like those who are supposed to be seated in that area in the ideal model, in this case, untitled men (1981: 53). While the orator explained that one could not give formal speeches from the back, this was in reference to the particular form (*lāuga*) that Duranti asked about; the *lāuga* is given only by *tūlafale* seated in the front (ibid.). These comments suggest that:

... the ideal arrangement should be understood as an interpretation of the actual seating arrangement. From time to time, according to who is present and to the roles and degrees of involvement of different participants in a particular meeting, different actual arrangements are possible, but the abstract model stays the same to provide the missing interpretation.

Duranti 1981: 53
CHAPTER IV   Post-Contact Changes to Traditional Building Types

4.1. Introduction of Pālagi-Style Buildings

The fale tele described in Chapter 3 is the most traditional form and new fale tele are rarely built in this fashion today. Most fale tele are still built in the Samoan style and shape, but imported materials have replaced some of the traditional building materials. For example, nails have replaced the fausaga in all new buildings, and corrugated iron or tin roofing has replaced the woven palm thatching in some cases.

The most radical changes have taken place in the living quarters. Most Samoans are choosing to build pālagi-style residences rather than the traditional fale o'o. However, the incorporation of European-style building elements and techniques is not a product of recent times. Samoans were already incorporating elements of pālagi styles into their traditional fale when John Williams visited in 1830. The first European residents (convicts and deserters) may have introduced European technologies in carpentry (Gilson 1970: 68), but written observations indicate that the first European-style dwellings were built using local materials in the late 1820s. John Williams noted in his journal for May 31, 1830:

On arriving at the houses of the teachers we were surprized to find them so comfortable. Their houses are plastered with lime made from coral, and the floors boarded — the Internal Part [sic.] of the house divided into rooms by neat plastered partitions comprehending bedrooms sitting rooms &c [sic.] and looking remarkably neat. Several also of the natives have Plastered [sic.] houses [fale afolau or fale tofa] but built after their own fashion i.e. very narrow, not exceeding eight feet in width; but so high in the middle that the rafters appeared almost perpendicular.

John Williams in Moyle 1984: 24-25

However, John Williams did not favour Samoans generally adopting pālagi-style houses, as his journal entry for October 23, 1832 indicates:

We thought it would not be well to advise the natives to adopt other buildings with plaster etc for their dwelling houses, those they at present live in being clean &
airy & well adapted to the climate mostly supplied with a kind of matting under
the eaves which they can draw up or let down at pleasure.

Williams in Moyle 1984: 142

Williams was not alone in his disapproval; Augustin Krämer remarked in his 1902-3 monograph that "one can with certainty deduce from the number of native houses the degree of decline of a people's characteristics; the abandonment of their unique dress and houses provides the first visible signs of dissolution" (Krämer 1995: 260-261). However, in spite of opposition, pālagi-style houses were built, and now symbolize social status and access to international resources, particularly cash from overseas relatives. As with other Pacific Island societies (c.f. Small 1997; Perminow 1993; Rensel and Rodman 1997; Waterson 1990), contemporary Western Samoan society has undergone significant change since contact with Europeans, and particularly since independence in 1962:

Western Samoa generally has maintained a more traditional way of life, referred to as fa'a Sāmoa, than American Samoa. Outside of Apia, there are still many more traditional building types (fale Sāmoa) than the newer fale pālagi (European-style houses). In sharp contrast, American-style single family dwellings have replaced most of the traditional houses in American Samoa. For example, following Hurricane Tusi, which devastated the Manu'a islands in January 1987, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) provided new, concrete "hurricane" houses (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 110). In the village of Fitiuta, on Ta'ū, no traditional fale remained standing after the hurricane, and none were rebuilt (ibid.: 111). Some of the new FEMA hurricane houses incorporate the traditional pattern in so far as having more open sides than a traditional American house, but they also have internal partitions, doors, windows, and corrugated roofs.

One of the most significant fomenters of social change has been the depopulation of traditional villages as people migrate in search of work and higher education in Apia, and abroad in Hawaii, New Zealand, other Pacific islands, and the Pacific coast of mainland America. The remittance payments and supplies, which many migrant workers send to relatives in home villages,
have become important sources of income in the Samoan economy (Davidson 1967: 418; Franco and Aga 1997: 176; O'Meara 1990: 32). The money is often used to buy luxury items, and to build new buildings, often in pālagi-style. Neich found that the percentage of fale pālagi was related to the communities' access to external resources. He found a higher percentage of fale Sāmoa in the more isolated regions of Savai'i and Upolū, but the communities that were closer to Apia and with larger numbers of migrant workers had many more pālagi-style fale (Neich 1985: 26).

4.2. Changing Housing Styles

The six different types of houses in Samoa (Neich 1985: 20-26) range from traditional fale that are constructed completely with traditional materials to European-style houses constructed exclusively with imported goods. However, despite the variety of introduced materials and processes, the basic structure of the fale Sāmoa has remained the same (Allen 1994: 84, note 3). The building process is also the same, and "every important stage in the erection of the house is [still] marked by a feast" (Handy and Handy 1924: 14). Allen distinguishes the fale pālagi from the fale Sāmoa in the following ways:

... a Western style house (fale pālagi) utilizes machine worked wood in the Western derived carpentry techniques and a cement foundation. As a residence, such a building has walls. As a guest fale it is open. The actual usage of these terms [fale Sāmoa and fale pālagi] in Sāmoa is quite fluid, often applied to structures in comparison to others nearby.

Allen 1994: 84

Pālagi-style houses demonstrate status and wealth and help lure émigrés back to Samoa, particularly those who should be elected to assume matai titles. Shore tells of one such case in which the sisters of Tuatō Fatu, a deceased matai from Sala'ilua, planned to construct a new, large pālagi-style house following their brother's death. The new residence had several purposes:

[It would] solidify the position and rights of Fatu's siblings in relation to the house site and associated land... A new house would serve as a symbol of the continuing presence and power of Fatu's branch of the descent group within the...
village. Finally, a new *pālagi*-style house would serve as an attractive residence for Enele [Fatu's younger brother] and his family, long accustomed to living in European-style houses.

Shore 1982: 36

Enele was a New Zealand-educated headmaster of a government junior high school on the North coast of Savai'i. The family's claim to the title would only be legitimated if he moved his family to Sala'ilua, and his sisters acknowledged that he and his family would only agree to do so if a European-style house was built for them. Thus social changes such as being educated and working abroad can influence architectural change. In many cases, these changes to traditional housing occur within the existing social and physical structures. The construction of a large house, whether in traditional or *pālagi*-style, symbolizes the family's wealth, access to resources (labour and materials), and claims to specific land holdings.

Some Samoans are wary of *fale pālagi* because the erection of walls is seen to be an attempt to hide potentially inappropriate behaviours, as Tim O'Meara discovered while building his own house. Not being comfortable with total lack of privacy of the traditional houses, O'Meara added a low exterior wall, made from plaited bamboo, to the house that was built for him. However, when his informants chide him for his adaptation, he questioned them:

"Why are walls prohibited by Samoan custom?"
"When people see that your house has walls," Selesele explained, "they will think you are doing something bad that you must hide."

O'Meara 1990: 41

The lack of walls in *fale Sāmoa* provides a strong measure of social control (Goodman 1998a: np). This "control over behavior is exercised to an enormous degree by public exposure and public shaming rather than by internalized norms" (ibid.). However, with the increasing number of *fale pālagi*, it would be interesting to see whether problems and tensions have arisen as individual privacy encroaches on the traditional system and methods of social control.
The *fale pālagi* does not outwardly appear to share similar characteristics with the *fale Sāmoa*, but the interior space is structured in similar ways. All furniture and storage chests are arranged along the edge of the *fale Sāmoa*, leaving the central space clear for meals, meetings, sleeping, or working (Allen 1993: 39). A similar pattern of marked boundaries surrounding an open, central space is seen in Western-style houses. The *fale pālagi* has a main central room with maybe one or two smaller, auxiliary rooms connected directly to the central space (see Figure 4-1). There are no hallways, and the side rooms are used as storage rooms, or occasionally for accommodating honoured guests. As in traditional *fale*, except for cooking, all domestic activities, including sleeping, take place in the main room. The auxiliary rooms enclose the perimeter in a similar way that the furniture and storage chests do in the *fale Sāmoa* (Allen 1993: 39).

*Figure 4-1: One Possible Fale Pālagi Floor Plan (adapted from Allen 1993: 40, figure 7)*

The *pālagi*-style *fale tele* is built on a concrete foundation (*paepae*), has a rectangular, or occasionally square, floor plan, sawn timber frame that is nailed together, open sides, and wall posts that support a corrugated tin or iron roof (Neich 1985: 21). Some of the more important ones have highly decorated railings that enclose the space. It is clear that the introduction of *pālagi*-style *fale* and *pālagi* building techniques have both had a significant impact on the construction of *fale Sāmoa*. Many traditional techniques, particularly the use of elaborate *fausaga*, have fallen out of use.
However, Samoan folk art is being incorporated into the fale in new ways, as in the guest fale in Vaito'omuli, on Savai'i, described by Neich:

All of the posts and beams inside are painted in various arrangements of red, white, blue and yellow while the main beams are decorated with incised zig-zag lines and triangles picked out in blue and yellow. On the longitudinal main plate beam or amo pou, which is painted yellow, there are small paintings of flowers, pineapples, trees, leaves and birds in blue, red, black and yellow.

Neich 1985: 27

4.3. Constructing a Fale Pālagi

The building of a pālagi-style fale tele is much simpler than for a traditional one. A Western fale can be built in a week, depending on the internal complexity of the house and the number of workers involved (Allen 1994: 81). The construction materials for the fale pālagi are usually brought in from Apia or other large towns, so there is no need for young men and women to collect and prepare the wood and thatching materials from the forest and plantations (ibid.). The formal construction process begins with the physical assembling of the building rather than with the arrival of the builders as for a fale Sāmoa. There is no elaborate commissioning ritual and no finemats are exchanged to formalize the agreement between the taufale and the latu. Instead, the taufale may hire family members with construction experience, or a contracting company (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 107), and the commission is formalized with a written contract, which includes the specific value of the fale pālagi (rather than leaving the value of compensation to the discretion of the taufale) (Allen 1994: 81-82). There is no ceremony at the start of the building process to incorporate the workers into the community. Instead, the first ceremony takes place at the laying of the foundation (ibid.).

In contrast with the paepae of the fale Sāmoa, the foundation of the fale pālagi is the first element constructed because it is "a fundamental support element without which the house could not be raised" (Allen 1994: 83). Allen argues that as the primary support for the fale pālagi, the pouring of the foundation is equivalent to the raising of the main support posts in the fale tele, both of which
serve to define the space and boundaries of the *fale*, and it is marked by what she calls an "opening bracket" ritual (ibid.). The foundation of a *fale pālagi* cannot be altered without great expense or inconvenience once it has been poured, so an experienced builder must be present to supervise the arrangement of the wooden frame and the mixing of the concrete, and he is usually also involved with the pouring and levelling to ensure that the foundation is properly constructed (ibid.). The cement is poured directly onto the ground, or over a pre-formed platform of rocks or earth (ibid.). Once poured, the foundation is frequently hidden by coral and/or rocks.

The raising of the ridge-pole and the rafters are the next major events in the construction process. As in traditional *fale*, these elements serve to visually outline the upper limits of the constructed space (Allen 1994: 83). Once the corrugated tin or iron roof has been applied directly to the rafters, the house is complete and a final feast is held, which "functions as the keying signal for the temporal closing bracket of the construction process" (ibid.).

4.4. Impact on Traditional Relationships

It is unclear from any of the literature whether the professional builders hired to construct *pālagi*-style houses are also *tufuga fai fale*, Master Carpenters of the *fale Sāmoa*. Neich comments towards the end of his monograph that the "older people in Vaito'omuli doubt that any *tufuga* carpenters remain in the district who could build such a house [a traditional *fale Sāmoa* with *fausaga* and a thatched roof]" (Neich 1985: 27). Holmes and Holmes note that in American Samoa, "the modern European-styled houses... are no longer the products of *tufuga* and their crews of apprentices" (1992: 107). However, information, both elsewhere in Neich and in other sources, suggests that the builders of the *fale pālagi* must have at least some knowledge of the traditional techniques (Allen 1993; Allen 1994; Shore 1982). It is clear that further research is needed to understand the ways in which the growing popularity of *fale pālagi* has altered the role of the *tufuga fai fale*. 

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CHAPTER V Conclusion and Recommendations for Further Work

1.1. Conclusions

The built environment controls and reinforces socially important values, goals, and acceptable behaviour because buildings are "symbols representing ideas and practises in the social realm" (Gutman 1976: 43). In Samoa, the *fale tele* is where the patron family meets and interacts with the wider community, and where, as the location for the *fono*, *matai* will make important decisions that affect the whole village. The position of the *fale tele* overlooking the *malae* means that language and behaviour are highly controlled and ritualized. The meaning of buildings is derived from social interactions and is "conferred upon them by social groups" (Duncan 1976: 392). It is through the *fono* that the *fale tele* creates and structures the most elaborate and important social relationships in Samoan life. The *tufuga faifale* establishes an influential role through the construction of the most public interaction sphere in the village, and it is through the relationships and bracketing rituals that are established with the commissioning family to build a *fale tele* that the artisanal role of the *tufuga* can be viewed as "the pivotal and mediatory point of the social system" (Guidoni 1978: 211).

The ideal representations of the village and *fono* as concentric circles of decreasing rank and formality are also important in understanding the representations of Samoan social structure. In other cultures (for example, the Inuit of northern Canada, the Maasai of eastern Africa, and the Moundang of Cameroon, all discussed in Rapoport 1969: 55-58) circular village forms also emphasize the opposition between the public centre and the private periphery. This distinction has also been combined with gendered and political spheres of influence. For example, among the Foulbé of Cameroon, a man's house is located in the centre of his compound and is surrounded by the houses of his wife and children (ibid.: 56-57). Bororo villages in the Amazon are also structured with women's huts surrounding a central men's house (Lévi-Strauss 1973: 220). Hierarchy in Samoa is distinguished in circular forms through the idea of 'i *lumā* and 'i *tuā*, and concentric arrangements of both village and *fono*, which distinguish between ranks of *matai* titles (within the *fono* and in
relation to the *malae*, titled and untitled men (both within and outside the *fono*), and men and women (inside and outside the *fono*).

Social change is also manifested in the built environment. Remittance money is used to build *fale pālagi* rather than traditional *fale*. The story of Enele illustrates how Samoan families are compelled to build *pālagi*-style houses in order to lure migrant family members home. However, the construction of a new *fale*, whether *pālagi* or traditional, remains a symbol of status and wealth, because the commissioning family needs access to large amounts of building supplies, labour, and/or cash, and the new building is a physical symbol of the family's claim to specific land and title holdings. The traditional ceremonies to mark important phases in construction have changed but there is still an emphasis on ritually marking (bracketing) the erection of significant elements in the construction of a *fale Sāmoa*. The ritual emphasis remains focused on the creation of temporal and physical spatial boundaries (Allen 1994: 84). The structural framework provides the physical bracketing of space, while the accompanying ceremonies provide the temporal bracketing and framework for the building process (ibid.).

1.2. **Recommendations for Further Work**

While it is hoped that this literature-based thesis provides an important framework around which to build a better understanding of Samoan architecture, fieldwork is necessary to provide more important answers and analyses, particularly about the relationship between social structure and the built environment, and the impact of cultural change on building styles and usage. As Duncan (1976: 400) concluded:

... it is very difficult to interpret behaviour extracted from the context of the immediate physical and social surroundings, and yet the study of the surroundings or landscape has been severely neglected. In everyday life, however, people are constantly aware of landscape and use it as one of the important cues to the definition of the situation and the identities and intentions of others. Accordingly, people employ a variety of strategies in order to communicate their own social
identity. Anthropologists, geographers, and sociologists, therefore, could profitably consider landscape as an active agent of communication and as a dynamic and integral aspect of any social situation.

The study of architecture has, until recently, been incidental to anthropological research. The physical layout of villages and/or buildings has been peripheral to understanding kinship or political structures (c.f. Shore 1982; Lévi-Strauss 1973; Kay 1971). While these are important studies, and have provided valuable information, they have not dealt directly with architecture or its important role in shaping and reflecting social relationships. Anthropological researchers need to show how "visual and verbal modes of expression are embedded in social structure and cultural philosophy, as well as how ritual belief systems are integrally related to artistic and aesthetic systems" (Kaeppler 1989: 220). Many aspects of Samoan architecture still need further study and field research, including:

1. The role of tufuga fai fale in the building of fale pālagi and the ways in which Samoan gender relationships are defined by architecture are not well understood. An extended analysis of the spheres of male and female work and influence in relation to constructed space would provide more valuable information about gender roles in Samoa.

2. Whether the style of Samoan government buildings includes representations of the fale tele, the meeting place for the village fono. Shore mentions that the village where the late Prime Minister, Fiamē Mata'afa Faumuina, had an official residence had a circular layout that was part of a "deliberate effort to realize the ideal village pattern" (Shore 1982: 50). Meleisea and Meleisea (1987: 220) mention that the parliament buildings are called the Fale Fono (Parliament House), but do not describe or explain the structure or layout of the building. It would be interesting to examine the parliament buildings to see if such representations exist in any form. Linguistic evidence certainly makes a connection to the traditional structure
(Davidson 1967: 11-12; Meleisea and Meleisea 1987: 154), and a physical link might also be established with detailed observations of the buildings.

3. Focused analyses of the structuring of space in Samoan churches in relation to social structure and the fono, and of the church as a symbol of village and parish pride would provide valuable insights into Samoan society as a whole. The church, particularly the Congregational Christian Church of Samoa, continues to play the most crucial role in Samoan society, next to family and the matai system, by maintaining a central position in the social, economic, and political lives of Samoans (Holmes and Holmes 1992: 19). The church has also influenced Samoan building styles. The first missionaries used the fale tele as congregational houses for early converts. In 1832, John Williams sought to erect a chapel at the Sapalii mission, which was to be "a model for all the other settlements to imitate" (Williams in Moyle 1984: 141). The chapel was to incorporate elements from both the Samoan fale tele and European buildings. It was to have plastered walls, windows, doors, and pews, but was to be circular with a steep roof, and the floor was to be covered with mats (ibid.). However, large, concrete, mock-Gothic style churches replaced the traditional fale tele congregation houses by the mid- to late-nineteenth century. The adoption of the English church style appears to have been part of a desire to emulate some of the late Victorian customs and practices, including playing cricket (Garrett 1982: 277-278). Churches are still built in the English country style using concrete and wood. Since writers have mentioned the social organizations in churches only in passing more direct research is needed.

4. The historical relationships between Samoa and other Polynesian and Micronesian islands could be explored through similar building styles and technical terms. For example, the

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7 The Congregational Christian Church of Samoa was formerly known as the London Missionary Society (LMS) and was introduced by John Williams in 1830. The LMS devised a written form of Samoan in 1834.
names of some parts of the traditional houses on the island of Vaitupu in Tuvalu (Ellice Islands) are the same as those used in Samoa (Oliver 1987: 89-90).
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>afa</em></td>
<td>Sennit</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>afa lau</em></td>
<td>Long house</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>'a'ai</em></td>
<td>Residential core; village center</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>'aiga</em></td>
<td>Extended family; kin; descent group</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>aiga or aiga sa</em> le Malama</td>
<td>Carpenters' guild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ali</em></td>
<td>Bamboo pillow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ali'i</em></td>
<td>High chief; nobleman; a <em>matai</em> title</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>amo pou</em></td>
<td>Main plate</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>amo pou lalo</em></td>
<td>Lower plate</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>aso</em></td>
<td>Oblique ribs or laths</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>au</em></td>
<td>Adze handle made of orange wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>auau</em></td>
<td>Ridge pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fa'a fa'i or faa fau</em></td>
<td>To bind with sennit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fa'a fau faa magaia</em></td>
<td>To make ornamental lashings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>f'a'a magaia</em></td>
<td>Ornamental lashings</td>
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<td><em>fa'a Sāmoa</em></td>
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<td>Courting party for an <em>ali'i</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>fale vao or fale'ese</em></td>
<td>Toilet</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>fatuga</em></td>
<td>Flat oblique rafters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fau</em></td>
<td>Curved end plate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fau lalo</em></td>
<td>Lashing used to hold a variety of joints together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fausaga</em></td>
<td>Shortest curved end rafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fau tele aso</em></td>
<td>Adze head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fau tomu</em></td>
<td>Longest curved end rafter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fau tu</em></td>
<td>Floor or floor mat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fola</em></td>
<td>Chiefs' council; meeting household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fono</em></td>
<td>European culture; European language (i.e. English); the European way of doing things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>fua'ifale</em></td>
<td>One row of thatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>iliili</em></td>
<td>Kava ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ine'i lau</em></td>
<td>Literally, &quot;the side of the foundation&quot;; branch of a titles group whose title has been split</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>inu</em></td>
<td>Reed stem used in making thatch mats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>itū paepae</em></td>
<td>Straight, round, horizontal rafters in <em>fale tele</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lago</em></td>
<td>Binding rods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lau</em></td>
<td>Sugar cane leaves or thatch mat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lago matua or ulu</em></td>
<td>Straight, round, horizontal rafters in the <em>afa lau</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latu</td>
<td>Person in charge of a work party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luaga</td>
<td>Horizontal rods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ma'a</td>
<td>Stones used to make platforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miota</td>
<td>Formal term for residence of an ali'i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matai</td>
<td>Chief; title holder; head of extended family ('aiga)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matai Tufuga</td>
<td>Head of society, director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moamoa</td>
<td>Block at either end of ridge pole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moega</td>
<td>Sleeping mat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mu'u</td>
<td>Village; settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paepae</td>
<td>Stone pavement; house foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paepae Ma'a</td>
<td>Stone platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papilagi</td>
<td>Literally, &quot;sky breaker;&quot; Europeans; whites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilagi</td>
<td>European style; see also fa'a pilagi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pou Lalo</td>
<td>Small outside posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pou Tu</td>
<td>Main posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siapo</td>
<td>Bark cloth; used as hanging or partition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sila</td>
<td>Adze blade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Si'osi Ma'a</td>
<td>Curbing of square coral blocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So'a</td>
<td>Horizontal braces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So'o</td>
<td>Beveled juncture of sections of rafters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tala or Matua Tala</td>
<td>End posts in fale tele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tala Luma or Pou Tala Luma</td>
<td>Middle front posts of fale tele</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>