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The complexity of an archaeological site in Samoa The past in the present

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Introduction

This paper discusses post-colonial perspectives on archaeology and studies of materiality in the Pacific. It uses the Pulemelei investigations at Letolo plantation on Savai'i Island in Samoa as a case study, including events and activities that have taken place after the completion of archaeological research (Martinsson-Wallin 2007). These investigations shed light on the entanglement of values and actions in the performance of past and present power relations.

Archaeology is a relatively young science in the Pacific, developed mainly in the 20th century. Extensive archaeological excavations were not initiated until the 1940s–1950s (Gifford 1951; Gifford and Shutler 1956; Emory et al. 1959; Heyerdahl and Ferdon 1961; Emory and Sinoto 1965), but initial ethnological, anthropological and linguistic studies were made in the 18th and 19th centuries. Before these approaches, traditional history and mythology provided the primary explanation for the origin, migration and structure of contemporary societies in Oceania. The traditional history of Pacific Islanders does not separate the past from the present, as does much archaeological research, and the 'past' is seen as living within contemporary culture. There is therefore a divide between a classical evolutionary and a contextual way of looking at culture and the 'past'.

The post-processual archaeological perspective of the 1980s opined that the 'past' does not exist in its own right, but is excavated, related and interpreted in relation to the present, including to many subjective elements of contemporary culture (Hodder 1986; Shanks and Tilley 1987). This approach appears to partly bridge the traditional and scientific views of history, but it has also generated a style of archaeology that deprecates analytical methods and interprets the prehistoric material-culture record by comparison with behaviours seen in contemporary societies that may be quite different to those found in prehistory. The end result is an individualistic and deterministic form of history. Instead, I argue here that the 'past' of Oceania was collective, family based and multivocal, and archaeological methods and the study of material culture add greatly to the understanding of past events and cultural processes.

Post-colonial archaeology

The Polynesian islands are among the most recently populated places in the world. Since the colonisation of these islands by humans in prehistory, many events have shaped and reshaped island societies. These events include exchange, interaction and colonialism, which can creolise societies, but contacts can also produce multiculturalism, separatism, cohabitation and apartheid (Vergès 1999:166). Gosden (2004) stresses the importance of material-culture studies to better understand how colonialism changes societies. He suggests that consumption is a vital factor to determine when relations are built within and between cultures. Earlier approaches such as world-system and core-periphery theory have been used to determine the archaeological impact of colonial movements but have been criticised, since they use modern economic behaviour to interpret consumption (Gosden 2004:7).

In recent years, there has been a focus on post-colonial archaeology, which aims to create an alternative history from that of the colonisers by focusing on the indigenous people. The colonisers and the colonised are in one way connected, but they are also historically and culturally separated from each other. This creates ambiguity in the post-colonial discourse so that questions about the location of culture arise between individuals and groups (Gosden 2004). The aim of post-colonial discourse is the writing of an alternative history that is conscious of the colonial situation. It does not entail a dualistic standpoint, but acknowledges the hybrid nature of social action and material expression (Van Dommelen 2006).

The post-colonial approach was forcefully presented by Said (1978) in his book *Orientalism*, and has been applied by Spivak (2002) and Bhabha (2004). Their discourse has been of a textual nature and material expressions have not been a focus. Gosden (2004:4) makes the point that: 'colonialism is crucially a relationship with material culture, which is spatially extensive ... and destabilising of older values so changing all concerned – incomers and natives. It is less to do with production and exchange, unlike in old models, and more centred on consumption.' Gosden (2004) suggests a comparative model which examines the materialisation of symbolic power in various regions rather than in the colonies alone. Archaeology can contribute to the understanding of various colonial formations over long periods, since colonialism itself has a great antiquity. Archaeology also has a major role to play in investigating materiality at broad and local scales. Local agency, for instance, can be examined from the exchange of material goods between the coloniser and the colonised through the different meanings and values each place on categories and types of materiality.

Symbolic power is significant as religions/belief systems changed during the colonial contact phase. Creolisation or hybridisation at the cognitive level and the material expressions attached to this are especially interesting as they create meaning which is both a part of the local production/consumption system but also reaches beyond this to the systems of the coloniser/colonised. With culture contact came culture change, especially the introduction of Christianity to Samoa, and there is today a hierarchy among the congregations of Samoa, with the LMS (London Missionary Society), which was the first to arrive and convert the 'natives', ranked as the 'original' and most prestigious congregation.

Samoa history

In Samoa, there has been interest in finding the 'original' or 'oldest' version of Samoan oral tradition taken down by European explorers and missionaries (Meleisea 1980; Krämer 1994). There is also a focus on 'traditional' Samoan culture, rather than the modern one that is heavily influenced by European lifestyles and values. Meleisea (1980:27) has suggested that this can

cause Samoans to think of their culture as ancient instead of something lived today. The essential elements of the 'ancient' Samoan culture then have to be protected so that Samoan values are not lost. Meleisea further suggests (1980:28) there is confusion between history and culture in Samoa that has to be sorted out. Culture is something that is relative and lived (i.e. *fa'asamoa*) and therefore cannot be lost, although it constantly changes and evolves, in contrast to history, which consists of specific events and traditions/behaviours from the 'past' that if not protected can be lost. Unlike New Caledonia, which is a multicultural society with past inputs from several Pacific Islander and European groups (Sand et al. 2005), one would think it should be straightforward to present an overarching Samoan past, but as history is very much family based and tied to land and titles, with identity tied to *fa'asamoa*, there is a dense set of social and exchange relations among and between families that makes the telling and presentation of a 'Samoan history' highly complicated.

Cultural heritage

In society today, the most obvious functions of cultural heritage are to establish and support cultural identity. The use of cultural heritage to legitimise and promote group identity and political activities is clear (Aplin 2002) and needs to be recorded (Lilly 2005). In the Pacific area, there can be divisions between 'colonial' heritage and 'indigenous' heritage that are problematic. Smith (2005) has discussed the town of Levuka, Fiji's first colonial capital, situated on Ovalau Island. Even if Ovalau is considered to be national heritage and recognised as a tourist attraction, it has been difficult to determine a management plan and allocate funding, since the property is associated with processes of European colonisation. Should the protection and preservation of such sites be a government priority in post-colonial Fiji?

Karlström (2005:4–5) notes that in relation to the UNESCO World Heritage convention: 'The question is – how a global organisation, which operates according to general guidelines, can recognize and appreciate the complexity and diversity of the cultural expression that it seeks to protect.' post-colonial agendas have been used both to confront and to reconcile, but to move forward it is also necessary to raise the level of education and awareness of the past within the frameworks of traditional and scientific culture heritage. In many parts of the world these issues are complicated by migration, interaction and colonisation, which have created partly creolised societies. Even in Pacific Islands, complexity is apparent concerning archaeology, archaeological sites and issues about heritage management, and I use my scientific investigations at the large Pulemelei mound and extensive prehistoric settlement at Letolo plantation on Savai'i as a case study to illustrate the different approaches to the past in Samoa.

The relationship between European colonisation and post-colonial discourse is more subtle in Samoa than in Fiji, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Rapa Nui and several Micronesian states as there is no overt tension between the indigenous people and later migrants/colonists. Samoa is populated and governed by Samoans, but the society is affected by past colonial oppression, the introduction of Christianity and social and economic influences of modernity and globalisation. Archaeology programs were introduced just after independence in 1962, which potentially could have supported nation building and the creation of a Samoan identity. However, the social structure marked by a kinship-based title system that is tied to customary land tenure and a semi-autonomous village structure has so far had little engagement with archaeology. The cultural heritage is comprised mainly of the oral traditions and customs denoted as *fa'asamoa*. Studies of the material remains of Samoa's past are not widely viewed as historically significant.

The Pulemelei mound excavations and aftermaths

The archaeology of Samoa (excluding American Samoa) is confined to the archaeological program initiated by Roger Green and Janet Davidson in the 1960s and excavations by Jennings and colleagues in the 1970s. (Green and Davidson 1969, 1974; Jennings et al. 1976; Jennings and Holmer 1980; Jennings et al. 1982). A re-evaluation of the archaeology of Samoa by Green (2002) provides a general understanding of Samoan prehistoric society, with reviews of archaeology by Martinsson-Wallin (2007) and investigations of the mound tradition (Martinsson-Wallin et al. 2007). Most research to date has focused on the island of 'Upolu, including the first and so far only site featuring Lapita pottery (Jennings 1974; Leach and Green 1989; Petchey 2001).

In 2002, I initiated an archaeological project with colleagues at the large Pulemelei mound on the extensive Letolo prehistoric settlement in the southwest part of Savai'i (Figure 1). The Letolo plantation is one of the few large 'freehold' properties in Samoa and is owned by O.F. Nelson and Co. Ltd. This was the first major archaeological excavation on the island, but an extensive survey of the Letolo plantation had been made by US Peace Corps volunteer Gregory Jackmond in 1977–1978. The survey data and other surveys of prehistoric settlement in Savai'i and 'Upolu had been used to compare the prehistoric settlement pattern with the post-European settlement pattern (Jennings et al. 1982). During the European contact period, the large inland settlements at Letolo, Sapapali'i, Mount Olo and Falefa'a valley were depopulated, indicating a shift from extensive use of inland zones to an extensive use of near-costal locations (Davidson 1979).

The purpose of the project at the Pulemelei mound was to investigate the origin and development of monumental architecture in West Polynesia. The rise of Polynesian chiefdoms and



Figure 1. East view of Pulemelei mound during excavations 2004.

the relationship between the monument-building traditions of West Polynesia and East Polynesia was also investigated (Wallin 1993; Martinsson-Wallin 1994, 2007; Clark and Martinsson-Wallin 2007). Activities at the Pulemelei site involved clearing vegetation from the mound so that it could be properly mapped, geophysical survey and archaeological excavations. Training for local students in field techniques and the heritage management of a prehistoric monument impacted by tourism were also involved (Figure 2).

Since the Letolo copra plantation had not been active for the past 25 years, there was heavy vegetation growth over the multitude of prehistoric mounds, walls, walkways and raised rim earth ovens that had been surveyed by Jackmond in the 1970s. The plantation includes the large Pulemelei mound, which measures some 65 m x 60 m x 12 m, and is located about 2 km from the coast. The Pulemelei stone mound and surrounding area was initially surveyed and mapped during the 1960s (Scott 1969), but only a small trench some distance from the main mound was excavated. The Pulemelei mound when cleared of vegetation was exposed, allowing a deeper understanding of its monumentality and strategic location on the landscape. The excavations indicated that the Pulemelei mound and surrounding area comprise a complex prehistoric site. At least 2000 years of human occupation were uncovered in the archaeological research. The mound itself is likely to have been built around 700–900 years ago and was used, added to and re-used in various phases, until being abandoned in the past 200–300 years (Martinsson-Wallin et al. 2003, 2005, 2007).

The exposure of the Pulemelei mound and archaeological finds recovered from the site triggered renewed interest in the prehistoric past from different quarters. Before excavations in 2003, the landowners suggested a ceremony should be carried out at the Pulemelei mound.



Figure 2. Ms Siumaga Setisefano and Helene Martinsson-Wallin taking soil samples during excavations at Pulemelei mound in 2004.

The *asi* (sandalwood) ceremony was a purification and holy oil ritual that took place at sunset and at sunrise. The proposed reason was to lift the *tapu* of the mound in case human remains were found during excavation (Tamasese 2003). In performing the ceremony, the mound was transformed into a contemporary monument. There were numerous aspects to the ritual, including indigenous religious revival and the bridging of new and old religions (Tamasese 2003, 2007). Other interests could be interpreted in terms of land ownership related to local and national politics, while the view that the Pulemelei mound was an ancient diaspora site from which West Polynesians left to settle East Polynesia might be seen as supporting pan-Polynesian connections. The purpose of the ritual was transmitted through the involvement of local and national chiefs and the national and international media.

The land in Samoa is for the most part customary land, owned by villages (Ward and Ashcroft 1998). During the European contact phase with Germany, and especially when Samoa was governed by Germany, large parts of the land were sold to foreigners. By the end of the 19th century, freehold land was regulated by the Berlin Act of 1889 (Ward and Ashcroft 1998). According to the Berlin Act, only 7–8% of Samoa's land was considered freehold. The Letolo plantation has long been freehold land, but ownership of it has been disputed. It belongs formally to O.F. Nelson and Co. Ltd. and probably came to the Swedish merchant August Nelson when he married a chief's daughter, Sina Masoe, from Safune, about 100 years ago. The *matai* (chiefs) of the nearby village of Vailoa of the Palauli district claim the Letolo plantation is traditional land belonging to their village, a view which has caused major conflict. This view has been prevalent particularly since the copra plantation ceased to operate on a large scale and many locals employed on the plantation lost their income. Disputes and even violence occurred between the current landowners and Vailoa village before the archaeological excavations and after the *asi* ceremony. A new archaeological project at the Pulemelei site in 2004 initiated opposing action from the *matai* of Vailoa and put a stop to the excavations, and in a separate incident, the burning down of the plantation manager's house in April 2005 and the taking of cattle from plantation lands. These actions can be seen as a struggle between the landowners, who themselves have different ideas about what to do with the property, and the *matai* of Vailoa for the land, as well as a struggle more generally between the *matai* and the government of Samoa. Since 2005, there have been several court cases and a struggle over the land and assets at Letolo plantation. The village sued the landowners and demanded economic compensation of SAT\$80 million. In 2010, the landowners won all of the court cases and the people of Vailoa village are now legally banned from the site.

According to current traditional history, the large Pulemelei mound at Letolo is a *tia seu lupe* (pigeon-snaring mound), but it is also said to be the residence of chief Lilomaiava Nailevailiili, who according to Samoan genealogies dates to around AD 1650 (Scott 1969; Krämer 1994). According to Asaua (2005), this chief is associated with the Palauli district, which is one of the six districts on Savai'i. The village of Vailoa is the closest village to the Letolo settlement and Pulemelei mound. The Vailoa *matai* claim that Letolo is their ancient burial ground and belongs to them and insist Pulemelei should not experience excavation. In 2004, their actions stopped the archaeological excavations. This was both an action against the landowners in a struggle for authority and funds, but also a way to try to be in control of 'outsiders' moving around and disturbing 'spirits'. Meleisea's (1980:21) statement on culture and change in Samoa in the proverb 'We want the forest, yet we fear the spirits' may be appropriate.

The activities that stopped archaeological investigations were subsequently explained by the village *Pulenu'u* (mayor) as an act against the landowners and not against archaeological research as such. In 2006, we were able to carry out further investigations, under a new plantation

manager, and the *matai* of the district and village of Satupaitea on the west side of Letolo plantation were involved (Martinsson-Wallin 2006). In the conflict over land, a whole set of social relations tied to the Pulemelei mound site surfaced. Since the Letolo plantation is freehold land which was alienated from the local village by the 19th century colonisers, it is part of the colonial inheritance. There are the old colonial aspects to consider, but O.F. Nelson and Co. Ltd is not just a group of outsiders, but a group that might be considered as a creolised group of individuals with Samoan and European descent who have owned the plantation for at least 100 years. On the other hand, the archaeologists might be seen as a new colonial group aligned with the former colonisers, while the archaeological investigations have reinforced the value of the site as a symbolic place and as a tourist attraction. From this, the primary value of the land has moved from being a plantation to grow and produce food. The *matai* of Vailoa village hold the view that even if O.F. Nelson and Co. Ltd comprises Samoans (and one of them is the current head of state), the village's traditional rights to the land should be respected.

In 2006, the Pulemelei mound was also nominated by the World Monument Funds as one of the world's 100 most endangered sites (Martinsson-Wallin 2007). A suggestion to nominate the site to the tentative World Heritage list was also presented by the author to the cultural heritage committee at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) in Samoa and to members of ICOMOS and UNESCO, who were included in the Pacific 2009 World Heritage program working on the nomination of cultural sites in the Pacific region. Members of the nomination group visited the Pulemelei site, but jointly with the cultural committee at MNRE, they considered that the political difficulties and land dispute were too problematic to support nomination. It is important to note here that World Heritage sites are those identified officially as meeting the criteria of Outstanding Universal Value, rather than sites that are realistic to nominate based on current political conditions, and that the 2009 selection of sites was aimed at identifying potential World Heritage properties rather than producing nomination dossiers for sites to be inscribed on the UNESCO WH List.

Samoa signed the World Heritage convention in 2001 and started working out cultural heritage policies. Two policies on cultural heritage have been published by the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture: the Heritage Policy (2002–2005) and the Cultural Policy (2008). A draft of a Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation Policy for the Cabinet Development Committee was developed in 2010. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture have organised a Heritage Coordinating Committee to work on cultural management, as part of the 2002 Heritage Policy, which states that the Pulemelei mound is a national heritage site. In 2008, a display of the Pulemelei excavation, including two *toi ma'e* (stone adzes) and soil from the Pulemelei mound excavations, was given as a coronation gift to the new Tongan king from the head of state of Samoa.

Archaeology, CHM in Samoa: Education and legislation

In the wake of the Pulemelei excavations, the Centre for Samoan Studies at the National University of Samoa suggested a development course in archaeology, and in 2005 it invited the author to assist. To conceptualise archaeology in Samoan terms a new word was invented: *tala eli* (history from the soil). The venture was made possible by an educational exchange from the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). This exchange also included both Swedish and Samoan students who have had the opportunity to undertake an exchange semester. Swedish students have also been involved in minor fieldwork studies in Samoa (SIDA sponsored) and have written BA theses about issues in archaeology, cultural and natural-heritage management in Samoa (Brødholt and Vuijsters 2004; Listfeldt 2005; Nord 2006; Wehlin 2006;

Bornfalk-Back 2008; Johansson 2008; Enström 2009; Jonsson 2009; Fosselius 2010; Rosén 2010) (Figure 3). The projects have included studies of the legislation, policies and education relating to the tangible heritage of Samoa, as well as interviews about heritage. A synthesis of the student projects indicates that the tangible archaeological heritage and its management do not have a high priority in Samoa. On the positive side, since 2006 NUS has provided courses in archaeology and CHM, and since 2007 a permanent lecturer in archaeology has been employed. From 2010, NUS students can choose archaeology as a minor subject. The fact that there are higher-education courses evidences both a will and an interest to engage in archaeology and CHM (Figure 4). This interest is partly about using archaeology and CHM in cultural tourism, but is also suggested as an addition to *fa'asamoa* and the preservation of Samoa's cultural heritage (Jonsson 2009).

The concept of archaeology and CHM of tangible heritage is almost nonexistent in the school curriculum at elementary, secondary and senior level in Samoa. So far, it is not until the 11th grade Social Studies curriculum that the prehistory of Samoa is touched on. The students are given three different versions of the origin of the Samoans. One version states the common scientific view that Samoans originated ultimately from island Southeast Asia through the Austronesian expansion of maritime-oriented groups carrying so-called Lapita pottery. Another view is the one put forward by Thor Heyerdahl, suggesting a South American origin for the Polynesians, and the third states that the god *Tagaloa* placed humans in Samoa.

The two cultural-heritage policies have led to an increasing interest in protecting Samoa's cultural heritage, both the tangible and the intangible (Heritage Policy 2002–2005, Cultural Policy 2008). However, the lack of funding and human resources has delayed implementation of measures to do this. The 2008 cultural policy states that the past should be treasured and covers the following sites and activities:

- heritage sites, including legends and myths, mountains including volcanic mountains, stone mounds and monuments
- museums and archives
- visual arts, crafts and literatures
- traditional sports
- fusion of animate and inanimate or tangible and intangible qualities

In Samoa, the word 'culture' can be defined in three words: *fa'asamoa*, *aganu'u* and *faia*. The *fa'asamoa* is often used as a synonym for 'traditional Samoan culture', and does not commonly include contemporary behaviours, nor the culture of other groups living in Samoa. It does include how people treat their environment, not only the land and the sea, but also the social environment. *Aganu'u* stand for social rules, often associated with the power of the village council (*fono*) in terms of governing social cohesion. Culture can also be referred to as *faia*; the relationship of people, families and villages to each other, to their titles and to their lands.

The cultural policy has used Dr Melenaita Taumoeofolau's definition of culture (Cultural Policy 2008):

We can define culture for now as the typical kind of behaviour of a particular people and the characteristic pattern of behaviour which renders them different from other groups of people – their particular life ways which set them apart, including the ways in which they cook, the things they characteristically eat, the customs they regularly keep, the ways in which they dress, their religion, their dances, their music, their technologies, their medicines and the kind of language that they speak – [one thing about culture is that it changes, but just because it changes this doesn't mean it is not there].



Figure 3. The Swedish MFS student Ms Moa Nord and Ms Katrin Litsfeldt interviewing the Honorable Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi Tupuola Tufuga Efi (current head of state in Samoa) on Samoan history and cultural heritage in 2005.



Figure 4. The two Samoan archaeology students Mr Silau Vagai and Mr Akuso Kafe excavating at the monument *Fale o le Fe'e* (the house of the Octopus) in 2007 during the first field school given at the National University of Samoa.

To tie back to the post-colonial discourse on the location of culture, Bhabha (2004:163) notes that culture is something that is acted and is the outcome of actions and power relations between individuals and groups.

In 2007, a summary of existing laws, policies and conventions referring to cultural issues in Samoa was published on UNESCO's website in its Cultural Heritage Laws Database (www.unesco.org/culture/natlaws 2009-05-26). The protection of the tangible archaeological heritage in Samoa under the Planning and Urban Management Agency from 2004 provides:

A planning framework for the management and protection of land in Samoa, integrated with environmental, social, economic, conservation, and resource management policies, at national, regional, district, village and site specific levels. This includes the development of national, local and site specific management plans, which plan and regulate a development of an area e.g. can restrict or prohibit construction work on an archaeological site.

Other laws that can reinforce the protection of the tangible historical cultural heritage are the *Samoa Antiquities Ordinance* from 1954 (revised 1972). This regulates what can be done with an object/site considered to be a 'Samoa Antiquity', with the head of state having the final decision about an antiquity and the ability to acquire it on behalf of the government. In the Lands, Survey and Environment Act of 1989, Part VIII Conservation and Environment states that management plans should include '... objects and sites of biological, archaeological, geological and geographical interests'.

The National Parks and Reserves Act 1974 furthermore states that:

Historical reserves, where in the opinion of Cabinet, any public land that is not set aside for any other public purpose is of national, historical, legendary or archaeological significance, the head of state, acting on the advice of the cabinet, may by order declare the land to be an historic preserve, for the benefit and enjoyment for the people of Western Samoa.

The Forest Act from 1967 states that if an archaeological place is found in the forest, the Minister may demand that the owner should leave it undamaged. A new bill on the Land Titles Registration Act passed in 2008 includes changes to land ownership, but the implications of this act are yet to be seen. In 2006, Government-owned land in Samoa constituted 10.7% of the total, and freehold land comprised only 2.8% of the total, with the majority customary land (Jonsson 2009:18).

As outlined above, there is education and legislation regarding the protection and preservation of the tangible historical heritage in Samoa. However, there is currently no mechanism to maintain and reinforce legislation. A Cultural and Natural Heritage Conservation Policy has been developed by the Division of Land, Survey and Environment at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Education in archaeology and heritage management is also in its infancy and increased human-resource capacity in heritage management is needed to move from legislation to practice and reinforcement of the laws. Further education and awareness programs involving archaeology and CHM are a priority, but how these programs should be run and who should run them must be discussed by Samoans. A key contributor, given its interest and expertise in archaeology, will be the Centre for Samoan Studies at the National University of Samoa.

Some last words

The archaeological excavations at the large Pulemelei mound site raised issues about post-colonial discourse and the role of archaeology and cultural-heritage management in Samoa and the Pacific region. Problems and possibilities have been experienced in the introduction of archaeology and cultural-heritage management to Samoan society as in any post-colonial setting. The customary land tenure in Samoa, which is tied to the chiefly *matai* system is a vital part of the *fa'asamoa* (the Samoan way of life). Since land is limited and titles have been split and have proliferated over time, there has been an increasing amount of conflict among chiefs, people and villages over land. Oral traditions and history are important in the Samoan society, but these are tied in the main to the extended family history, and are important assets in land and title disputes. Oral traditions also evolve in a society like that of Samoa which has a rapidly changing culture. Even if policies are worked out and legislation exists, the above facts, along with lack of funding and education, make the protection and preservation of the archaeological remains and historical sites difficult to undertake. On the other hand, archaeological remains and historical sites are also seen as potential assets to be used in the tourist industry, which is a major income source in Samoa. A possible way to move forward and protect and preserve these sites could be to incorporate them into *fa'asamoa*, and at the same time to strengthen legislation and work out practical means of preserving cultural heritage. To make this happen, there is an urgent need to develop human expertise in archaeology and heritage. Most important of all, in my view, is that there is a will and initiative from the authorities and the academic community in Samoa to pursue these issues because: 'Facing the future, we treasure the past. For without history, we have no roots, and without roots, there is no future.' (Cultural Policy 2008).

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'You started this thing, so you have the responsibility.' This is what my good friend and colleague Rapanui archaeologist Sonia Haoa-Cardinale has said to me many times. In stating this, she is not referring just to me, but to me as one of many archaeologists who have worked on Rapanui. In recognising my responsibility to the past, present and future of archaeology and heritage management in the Pacific, I would like to thank my Samoan and Swedish students and colleagues who have made me recognise the problems as well as the promise that our work holds. In pursuing these positive possibilities, I am forever grateful to two of my Pacific Island colleagues, Tautala Asaua and Sonia Haoa-Cardinale. Fa'afetai lava and Maururu Nui.

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