The Mana of the Tongan Everyday: Tongan Grief and Mourning, Patriarchal Violence, and Remembering Va

By

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Abstract

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In this dissertation, I contend that the Tongan economies and systems of va trace their roots to the Sacred, the Feminine, the heartbeat of Tonganness that consists of the natural world, the fonua (land) to the Moana (ocean) and encompasses all the worlds in between. In addition, I contend that the desecration of the Sacred was the quintessential goal of the colonial project in Tonga. The losses are systemically supplanted with the colonial institution, heteropatriarchy that is symbolized by the new white and male Christian God at the forefront of the new Tongan nation. I show that the systemic desecration of the Sacred was the aim of several historical “racialized projects” that relentlessly deployed a phenomenon that scholars term as “white terror,” which Frantz Fanon explains in his statement about European colonizers being “the bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native” (38). The European “racialized projects” began in the seventeenth century with the arrival of the first Europeans; they were Dutch explorers traveling on Tongan waters in an expedition searching for capitalistic and opportunistic gain. At the moment of contact with Tonganess, the Dutch explorers deployed “white terror” through the heinous use of firearms on the bodies of unarmed Tongan families riding on a tongiaki on their way to Samoa. This historical moment serves as a harbinger outlining the unrelenting violence of European and U.S. “racialized projects” on Tonganness.

The colonial trajectories tracking the maneuvers of “racialized projects” deploying “white terror” on Tonganness continues to the historical voyages of the renowned British Captain James Cook and his paradigmatic naming of Tonga as the “friendly islanders.” Yet this seemingly playful moniker masked a political strategy meant to erase the maneuvers and desires of British patriarchal domination and violence in the eighteenth century, to the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS) and the proliferation of the prodigious and unrelenting Christian missionizing project through the deployment of unyielding and layered forms of patriarchal violence or “white terror.” As a result, colonial invaders influenced a new Tongan nation that centered the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy, which became symbolized by both the new white and male deity at the forefront of the Tongan nation and the contemporaneous maneuvers of the U.S. Empire’s military occupation of Tonga during WWII. The production of topographies of unrelenting “white terror” on Tonganness were indelibly marked by militarized violence that had been deployed, unrelentingly, on the bodies of Tongan women and girls. Consequently, this colonial legacy opened the door for U.S. institutions such as the Mormon Church to enter and
take center stage in Tonga in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In addition, the heavy hand of the Mormon Church continues to perpetuate and proliferate the objectives of U.S. Empire on Tonganness in Tonga and in the production of Tongan communities here in the U.S.

The systemic desecration of the Sacred, a “dichotomy” that Gloria Anzaldúa describes as “the root of all violence” (59), was and continues to be a deliberate colonial strategy to subjugate Tonganness not just in the past, but to replicate it in the present moment through the normalization of violence against women within every ay Tongan lives and within the boundaries of Tongan families and intimate relationalities. Thus, I examine the colonial productions of Tongan intimate spatialities such as the colonial family production of the nineteenth-century Tongan Nationalist Family and the contemporaneous production of the Tongan Mormon Family that traces its genealogy to the maneuvers of U.S. Empire during WWII in Tonga. Furthermore, the goals of the colonial project are unyielding and without end. Its desires for domination extend to the future generation of Tongans, for as Frantz Fanon argues in his theory of “perverted logic,” the desecration of the Sacred and the simultaneous severing of Tongan va to the Sacred are colonial strategies that stifle Tongan mana and self-determination. In fact, the aim of the desecration of the Sacred—according to Fanon—is the “total” colonization of Tonganness.
Dedication

For my beloved father and hero, Tangata ‘O Lakepa Niumeitolu (1938–2013).

Thank you for teaching me how to tell a Tongan Story. Although I will never be a storyteller of your caliber, this dissertation is my humble gift to honor your courageous and magnanimous heart.

For my beloved nephew, Nikolasi Namoa Sa’afi. May this dissertation and the stories that it tells, remind you of your place in the circle of Tongan storytellers that are your ancestors of the past, present, and future. You are our dreams and joy. Don’t be afraid of the Tongan Story and let its mana guide you so that you can heal and thrive and so that you can take your place, once again, in the circle, as a unique type of Tongan storyteller from Berkeley.
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April 2019
Huichin, Oakland, California
Occupied Lisjan, Ohlone Land
Introduction

When We Tell
I know English was brought
by White people to our country.
But when WE speak it,
when we slur that language like sinews
of vine floss extracting our teeth,
grind it with coral and ironwood in our mouths.
When WE tell of the gritty taste,
we’ve got to have a Tongan way
of doing it.
Loa Niumeitolu

Research as Ceremony

The respected Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith ardently reminds us, Indigenous scholars, the protocols that we must center in the processes of imagining and producing “Indigenous research”: “Indigenous research is a humble and humbling activity” (5). Furthermore, in his important work, Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods, Sean Wilson offers some observations that define “Indigenous research”:

Something that has become apparent to me is that for Indigenous people, research is a Ceremony. In our cultures an integral part of any ceremony is setting the stage properly. When ceremonies take place, everybody who is participating needs to be ready to step beyond the everyday and to accept a raised stage of consciousness. You could say that the specific rituals that make up the ceremony are designed to get the participants into a state of mind that will allow for the extraordinary to take place. (69)

Thus, it is with a full heart that I offer this dissertation as a humble offering, a work that documents as well as traces a long and often tumultuous journey produced through Ceremony.

This is my humble attempt to tauhi va with the ancestors that have walked alongside and more than often carried me throughout the many years reminding me and preparing me at every trajectory of this journey, especially during the most difficult moments, to embody “a state of mind that will allow for the extraordinary to take place” through raising my voice and breathing life into the bodies of the stories that I share in this dissertation so that I can finish the project and finally breathe (Wilson 69). Recalling Tuhiwai Smith’s statement, the processes of tauhi va and doing “Indigenous research” through the telling of stories that trace the maneuvers of Tonganness in its varied and layered multiplicities is a “humble and humbling activity” and thus, I profusely thank the ancestors for sharing these stories with me and allowing me to carry them and to share them in this dissertation project (5). For as Deborah Miranda passionately writes about the important role of story for Indigenous peoples and cultures, “Story is the most powerful force in the world—in our world, maybe in all worlds. Story is culture” (xvi) and furthermore, she adamantly reminds us, “Culture is lost when we neglect to tell our stories, when we forget the power and craft of storytelling” (xiv).

Indigenous stories, like Indigenous cultures, and Indigenous peoples are multifarious and varied and yet, as Leeann Simpson writes, there is a “starting point”:
The starting point within Indigenous theoretical frameworks then is different than from within western theories: the spiritual world is alive and influencing: colonialism is contested; and storytelling, or “narrative imagination,” is a tool to vision other existences outside of the current ones by critiquing and analyzing the current state of affairs but also by dreaming and visioning other realities. (40)

For Indigenous peoples, like for me as a Tongan woman from Moana Nui, the contemporaneous work of carrying and telling stories or as Simpson terms it, “narrative imagination,” is a work that follows an ancestral calling and it is also to be part of a cycle and a genealogy of storytellers from Tonga and Moana Nui tracing the multiple routes and yearnings to our original homeland of Havaiki. In this ancestral cycle of producing “narrative imagination,” my role is to offer a small contribution to the collective project of imagining and crafting Tongan culture so that as Miranda reminds us, “culture is [not] lost” (xiv) through envisioning “other existences outside of the current ones by critiquing and analyzing the current state of affairs but also by dreaming and visioning other realities” (40) that offer Tongans illimitable opportunities and possibilities to engage in tauhi va and to help bring balance back to the luminous and living nexus that is Tonganness.

I recognize that the location of this section with its acknowledgement of honoring and paying tribute of gratitude to the ancestors is not a normal practice in the West and in academia but in Tongan culture, the acknowledgements, tracing and honoring of va is as Sean Wilson states a pivotal process of, “setting the stage properly” (69). Thus, the remembering and honoring of va or to tauhi va is the first thing that one must do at the beginning of each new day during morning prayer, at the beginning of public presentations, major events or projects and especially at the beginning of a Tongan dissertation project that purports to be a humble offering, a Ceremony for ancestors of the future, past, and present (69).

Chapter Objectives and Desires

My goals in this introduction chapter is to offer some definitions for conceptualizing the Tongan ontology and methodology tauhi va that I use throughout this dissertation project. In addition, I also trace the contemporaneous maneuvers of tauhi va here in present day Bay Area, California and I offer suggestions to engage in tauhi va as an ontology and methodology to produce Tonganness here in our new lives and homes in diasporas like the Bay Area, California that is occupied Indigenous lands. I specifically chose to examine California histories and local Bay Area issues throughout this dissertation because the Bay Area, California is the land that I have migrated to and currently call my new home outside of Tonga. Furthermore, highlighting California in this dissertation is also an attempt to honor this land that has generously gifted my family and me medicine to begin journeys of healing. And this land and its Indigenous peoples have nurtured this dissertation to fruition. Tracing my va to this land through narratives is to recognize relationalities and to embark in tauhi va with this land and its inhabitants.

First, I share key themes from California Indian scholar and ex-prisoner Stormy Ogden’s compelling chapter, The Prison-Industrial Complex in Indigenous California. Ogden contends that California is a site of carcerality for Indigenous women and she astutely lays out a colonial mapping of California that traces the historical maneuvers of settler colonial violence and the production of California as a site of carcerality. My objectives in this section is to use this discussion on California history to set up arguments that I make later on in the chapter that suggests ways that contemporaneous Tonganness that includes Tongan immigrants and
“arrivants” living on occupied Indian land such as California can engage in tauhi va and respectively embody Tonganness. This discussion is part of my analysis of the Tongan concept of tauhi va that I share later in this chapter. Furthermore, I also share key points from Ogden’s chapter in my work because she profoundly utilizes research methodologies that I also use throughout this dissertation project and Ogden’s work helps me to highlight these methodologies and to shed light on our shared research objectives.

Additionally, I offer some definitions for the Tongan ontology, tauhi va or “tauhi vaha’a” that is described by the respected Tongan scholar and poet Konai Helu Thaman as, “Is an all embracing concept, denoting an important relationship among physical, cultural and spiritual phenomena with people, their environment and all that is in it all wrapped into one” (4). Furthermore, I define tauhi va in this section through weaving theories offered by scholars from Moana Nui as well as the voices of various Indigenous scholars in my discussion. I then situate the occupied Ohlone land named Huichin that is now known as the Bay Area, California. This is the new land that many Tongans and peoples from Moana Nui, including myself as well as my family, currently call home. I share key themes that I make in Chapter Four of this dissertation and I offer some suggestions to Tongan and peoples from Moana Nui on ways that we can continue to honor and engage in tauhi va and to respectively be Tongan. I contend that tauhi va asks us to commit ourselves to becoming literate in the histories of Indigenous California and to work under the leadership of California Indigenous women leaders in their respective and contemporaneous projects to protect and defend the Sacred. I share some of my personal histories of standing in solidarity with the Lisjan Ohlone leader, Corrina Gould in her campaign to save the West Berkeley Shellmound here in the East Bay.

Next, I offer an overview showing the key themes and objectives of the five chapters included in this dissertation project. The Conclusion section of this chapter offers a family birth narrative that took place when I was a child growing up in Tonga during the 1970s. I show the multiple forms of tauhi va that invariably shape the textures of everyday Tongan lives and interactions and I show the various processes that my ancestors engaged in this cultural practice and in their multiple and respective productions of Tonganness and yet, the narrative reveals that although these realities compose the landscape of every day Tongan life, these webs of relationalities and Tongan realities are unknown and unfathomable in the West. I also show the new power stratifications that are created by Western colonization in Tonga and the ways that these changes privilege patriarchy and Western knowledges. Meanwhile, these changes continue to marginalize Tongan women’s knowledges and labor and these new power stratifications ultimately are constituted by the desecration of the Sacred.

**Dissertation Objectives and Desires**

This dissertation project is centered around these key arguments; I contend that the Tongan economies and systems of va, trace their roots to the Sacred, the Feminine, the heartbeat of Tonganness that consists of the natural world, the fonua (land) to the Moana (ocean) encompassing all the worlds in between. In addition, I contend that the desecration of the Sacred was the quintessential goal of the colonial project in Tonga and the losses are systemically supplanted and centered with the new white and male Christian God at the forefront of the new Tongan nation. I show that the systemic desecration of the Sacred was the aim of several historical “racialized projects” that deployed a phenomenon that scholars’ term “white terror,” which I discuss in Chapters One and Four of this dissertation. Perhaps the European colonizers
historical deployment of “white terror” is best summed up by Frantz Fanon in his statement that argues that the European colonizers are “the bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native” (38).

The European “racialized projects” began in the seventeenth century with the arrival of the first Europeans that were Dutch explorers traveling on Tongan waters in an expedition searching for capitalistic gain. At the moment of contact with Tonganness, the Dutch explorers deployed “white terror” through the heinous deployment of firearms on the bodies of unarmed Tongan families riding on a tongiaki on their way to Samoa. This historical moment serves as a harbinger outlining the unrelenting violence of European and U.S. “racialized projects” on Tonganness. The colonial trajectories tracking the maneuvers of “white terror” continues to the historical voyages of the renowned British Captain James Cook and his paradigmatic naming of Tonga as the “friendly islanders” as a political strategy to erase the maneuvers and desires of British patriarchal domination and violence in the eighteenth century. Later, the arrival of the London Missionary Society (LMS) and the proliferation of the prodigious and unrelenting Christian missionizing project facilitated the deployment of unyielding and layered forms of patriarchal violence or “white terror” to produce a new Tongan nation. These colonial influences centered the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy, symbolized by the new white and male deity at the forefront of the Tongan nation. The contemporaneous maneuvers of the U.S. Empire’s military occupation of Tonga during WWII and their production of topographies of unrelenting “white terror” on Tonganness illustrate how militarized violence has been deployed, unrelentingly, on the bodies of Tongan women and girls. This gendered violence is a colonial legacy that has opened the door for U.S. institutions such as the Mormon Church to enter and take center stage in Tonga in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. To be clear, though, the Mormon Church continues to perpetuate and proliferate the objectives of U.S. Empire on Tonganness.

The systemic desecration of the Sacred is a process that Gloria Anzaldúa describes; “this dichotomy is the root of all violence” was and continues to be a deliberate colonial strategy to subjugate Tonganness not just in the past, but it is replicated in the present moment through the normalization of violence against women within everyday Tongan lives and within the boundaries of Tongan families and intimate relationalities (59). Thus, the colonial productions of Tongan intimate spatialities such as legislating the colonial family in the nineteenth-century production of the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family are themes that I discuss in Chapters Three, Four, and Five and the contemporaneous production of the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family are themes that I discuss in Chapters One and Two. Furthermore, the goals of the colonial project are unyielding and without end. Its desires for domination is extended to the future generation of Tongans for as Frantz Fanon argues in his theory of “perverted logic” that I briefly discuss later in this chapter. Using Fanon’s theory, I show that the desecration of the Sacred and the simultaneous severing of Tongan va to the Sacred are colonial strategies aimed to stifle Tongan mana, self-determination and its aim was to ensure what Fanon argues is the “total” colonization of Tonganness.

Locating California as a Site of Carcerality

In her moving and informative chapter, The Prison-Industrial Complex in Indigenous California, Stormy Ogden, documents the histories of the land that is now known within settler colonial topographies as California. I share key points from Ogden’s chapter here because she
astutely lays out a colonial mapping of California that traces the maneuvers of settler colonial violence and I use this section to help set up arguments that I make in latter sections of this chapter. Later in this chapter, in my analysis of the Tongan ontology and methodology, tauhi va, I argue that as Tongan immigrants or “arrivants” here in California, tauhi va requires us to learn and become literate in the histories of California’s Indigenous peoples and to actively stand in solidarity with our California Indigenous relatives’ in their struggles for decolonization. Furthermore, I encourage Tongans and peoples from Moana Nui to actively participate in contemporaneous Indigenous struggles to protect Sacred sites here in our new homes in California as a means of tauhi va and attempting to reciprocate our ancestral responsibilities to the new land and its ancestors that feed us and our families and communities. Furthermore, I also share key points from Ogden’s chapter in my work because she skillfully utilizes research methodologies that I also use throughout this dissertation and her work helps me to highlight these methodologies and to shed light on our shared research objectives.

I return to my analysis of Ogden’s provocative chapter. At the very beginning, Ogden refuses settler colonialism’s erasure—she rightfully takes up space and emphatically and insightfully centers her Indigenous female body as a veracious witness and historical archive. Ogden asserts, “I write this chapter from the position of a California Indian woman, a tribal woman of Yokuts and Pomo ancestry. I also write as an ex-prisoner and a survivor of colonization” (57). Ogden traces the layered topographies of suffering at the hands of U.S. settler colonialisms that has shaped her life that include but not exclusive to: the racialization of being California Indian and being “Half Breed” or being the daughter of a Indian father and White mother, socio economic poverty, drug addiction, alcoholism, multiple suicide attempts, to the pervasiveness of cycles of domestic violence and sexual violence throughout her lifetime that began when she was a young five year old girl to her life as an adult woman. She profoundly documents:

My days and nights were consumed with alcohol, drugs, bars, and the back seats of cars, rapes, beatings, hospital visits for a broken arm, a gunshot wound, and to have an intrauterine device (IUD) surgically removed because I was raped with a cane. There were too many different men, too many empty bottles, and too many suicide attempts. (61)

In addition to Ogden’s documentation of her body being used as a site for the deployment of multiple forms of violence and suffering that transpired during her childhood and these themes continue to shape her life as an adult Ogden also profoundly documents an integral historical moment that inflicted further suffering in her life. This was the violence of her criminalization and incarceration legislated by the hand of the U.S. judiciary system “for welfare fraud at a time when she [Stormy Ogden] was suicidal, addicted and severely abused” (Sudbury xxi).

Similarly, Ogden articulates and tracks the interconnections between her individual incarceration to the dominant hand of colonial religious institutions such as Christianity in producing racialized systems that criminalize and punish California Indian peoples and cultures. She writes, “At the beginning of the colonization process two tools of genocide were forced upon Native people: the bottle and the bible” (57) and she further names the systemic desecration of the Sacred that was central to the colonial project and the process of systemic criminalizing Indian peoples here in California. “… the traditional ways of behavior and conduct of Native people were criminalized” (57). The desecration of the Sacred and supplanting these losses with institutions such as Christianity are themes that are addressed by historian Benjamin Madley in his work on early California History and he shows the productions of carcerality that transpired
through processes of conversions legislated by the hand of the Catholic Church; a process termed by Father Junipero Serra in the eighteenth century as a “spiritual conquest”:

Father Junipero Serra, called the “spiritual conquest” of California. Serra and his fellow Franciscan missionaries viewed California Indians as pagans and gente sin razón, or people without reason, to be treated as children. From this infantilizing perspective, these Franciscans—like many other missionaries working in the Americas—aimed to fashion allegedly childlike Indians into Catholic workers by replacing indigenous religions, cultures, and traditions with Hispanic ones. (26)

As Madley’s research shows, the legacy of “progress” and the legacies of European missionaries and their objectives of converting Indigenous peoples of California or populations they termed as “California Indians as pagans and gente sin razón, or people without reason, to be treated as children” into the new European institutions of Christianity and Catholicism are productions of conquest and carcerality for California Indians.

Punishment and Producing Carcerality

Ogden documents the legislation of new systems of “punishment” that are integral processes in the making of California into a site of carcerality for its Indigenous peoples through laws such as, “State and federal governments defined Native Americans as deviant and criminal through such procedures as the Dawes Act” and she contrasts the new political changes and contemporaneous landscape to the lives and cultures of Indigenous populations and their systems and economies of order and relationalities that existed before the arrival of Europeans:

Our elders tell us that the natives of California lived in well-ordered societies. Their governing bodies resided in their tribes and the people were guided by relationships that fixed the status and the position of every member. Every part of their tribal society was enriched and maintained through religious and traditional laws. There was no police force and no courts to enforce these laws and obligations because there was a strong belief and support for them from the people. Individuals accepted these laws, knowing that it ensured collective survival.

Ogden shows us that the prominent hand of settler colonialisms and its production of carceral on Indigenous lands and peoples is a system of surveillances that intervenes and governs every crevice of her life including her private life that began with the suffering of racialized “Othering” she experienced at birth and growing up as a bi-racial California Indian woman. She also documents the painful histories of sexual violence that she suffered as a child under the hand of older male adults and this cycle of suffering and unrelenting violence committed against her Indigenous female body continues until adulthood. Thus, for Ogden, the topographies of suffering created by the heavy hand of white supremacy and patriarchal violence defined the power dynamics undergirding her various relationalities within the private realm of family and it is pervasive and extends to her life in the public and these cycles continue to flourish and replicate throughout her adult life extending to the painful violence of her incarceration legislated by the state of California.

Personal Testimony as Research Methodology

Ogden’s essay utilizes the methodologies of “personal testimony” to create a phenomenon that is termed by Tanana Athabaskan scholar, Dian Million as “felt analysis” that is an Indigenous methodology for documenting and “doing history” (72) that profoundly shifts the
boundaries that Indigenous histories are produced and consumed. Million identifies the significant contributions of First Nations men and women’s “personal narratives” that catapulted a movement of Indigenous peoples and centered the voices of survivors of rape and sexual violence. Thus for First Nations survivors of rape and sexual violence, their work of “doing history” that tells the truth about these histories through uncovering and showing the visceral and raw suffering and thus illuminating the histories of historical trauma that was lined with Indigenous pain that Indigenous peoples suffered was a profound and harrowing methodology that “put Canada in an international spotlight for genocidal child abuse spanning a century” (54). For the First Nation survivors of this historical violence, their utilization of “personal narratives” and alternative methodologies of “doing history” emphatically countered the Canadian government’s official narrative touting the utility and efficacy of its Boarding Schools on the lives of First Nations children and tribes, “Native women’s personal narrative explored the racialized, gendered, and sexual nature of their colonization” (54).

Stormy Ogden’s utilization of the methodology of “personal narratives” as a strategy for “doing [California] history” is a strategy that beckons us not to look away and she asks us to view the wounds of her carcerality. She shows us that for Indigenous peoples, especially for Indigenous women, California is a site of carcerality and these gaping wounds in its layered manifestations were produced at the hands of Settler colonialisms and their productions of “progress.” She writes, “The prison-industrial complex was built on the ancestral lands of the indigenous people of this continent and has contributed to the devastating process of colonization” and in addition, Ogden points out that this violence disproportionately targets Indigenous women’s bodies, “California now has the distinction of having the most women prisoners in the nation as well as the world’s largest prison” (58, 62). These are the histories of the maneuvers and movements of Empire in California that are erased from the mainstream imagery.

As Hoopa Valley Tribe scholar, Cutcha Risling Baldy writes in her recent book about California, We Are Dancing For You: Native Feminisms And The Revitalization of Women’s Coming-Of-Age Ceremonies, “Although there are numerous public records, oral histories, and firsthand accounts to support…genocide is how the state of California was founded, there is still not public awareness of or engagement with this history” (53). Thus, unlike the mainstream imagery of California that is often venerated in the national imagery as “exceptional” for its diversity and progressive politics, Ogden’s deployment of “personal narrative” as a methodology for “doing [California] history reveals histories and visceral realities of peoples often erased in the national memory. Thus, the historical intersections in Ogden’s research are themes that Julia Sudbury reiterates in her statement, “this [Ogden’s] suffering cannot be understood outside the particular histories of the Yokuts and Pomo nations. It is this intersection of sexual and colonial violence…that both generates and naturalizes the criminalization of Native women” (Sudbury, xxi). In Ogden’s poignant telling of California, the layered histories of her female Yokuts and Pomo body is centered, and her body is a historical archive that unequivocally reveals the objectives and travels of Empire that are rife with proliferating the legacies of violence on the bodies of Indigenous lands, peoples and especially on the bodies of Indigenous women and girls. Later on in this chapter, I return to a discussion of California and the Tongan ontology and methodology, tauhi va.
Stormy Ogden’s elucidation of California as a site of carcerality for Indigenous women and girls is perhaps most poignant and telling in a harrowing line from a poem that she authored and shared in her chapter. The line is “Singing My Own Death Song,” and I humbly borrow it and utilize it as an Indigenous methodology that assists me to document my objectives for this dissertation project as well as it offers a visuality that illuminates a methodology that I centered and used to guide me when writing this dissertation. Like Ogden, I center my Tongan female body as a witness and historical archive for telling narratives about the copious discourse that is Tonganness. In writing this dissertation, I utilize the methodology of “personal narratives” and “felt theory” as a strategy for “doing history” on Tonganness that attempts to do what Gloria Anzaldua contends, “I write to record what others erase…To become more intimate with myself and with you” (167). Thus, the telling of “personal narrative” as “doing history” is a strategy that attempts to shorten the distance, the proximity that often separate us and “to become more intimate with myself and with you,” so that you can engage with me and perhaps you are able to hear the narratives that I tell about these wounds that I carry, and I hope that this methodology will allow us to engage in conversations that challenge the painful violence that is produced by the systemic and historical privileging of white and patriarchal voices as gatekeepers at the forefront of Tongan Studies and in the current productions of Tonganness. Thus, I utilize “personal narratives” for the political purposes that are defined by Dian Million, “Native women’s personal narrative explored the racialized, gendered, and sexual nature of their colonization” (54).

My utilization of the methodology of “personal narrative” is committed to a “doing [Tongan] history” that is committed to examining the “racialized, gendered, and sexual nature” of our colonization that in turn, these systems ineluctably constitutes the layers of our Tonganness. The telling and examining of these “stories that haunt,” as they are termed by Mishuana Goeman are central to our work of tauhi va or in our work that aims to mend intimacies or va, “the key to reconciling the conflation in historical trauma rests in the stories that haunt, which we must engage, because to ‘decolonize’ means to understand as fully as possible the forms colonialism take in our own times” (110). Thus, the telling of the “stories that haunt” or as Stormy Ogden has poignantly documented as “singing my own death song” is central to our work towards the decolonization of Tonganness and it is also a means to fulfill our ancestral responsibilities that are asked of us in tauhi va.

A Politic Born Out of Necessity

This dissertation and the stories it tells about Tonganness engages with the methodology that Ogden terms as, “singing my own death song” as well as this dissertation project and its objectives of centering the Tongan female body as a veritable historical archive is a methodology that is a “politic born out of necessity” of being a Tongan daughter in this moment of great crisis in our families, in our Tongan communities in Tonga and in the diasporas, and in our Tongan nation (19). Hence, I also center Cherrie Moraga’s “Theory in the Flesh,” that she describes:

A theory in the flesh means one where the physical realities of our lives—our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings—all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity. Here, we attempt to bridge the contradictions of our experience. (19)
I want to emphatically state that many of the themes that I examine in this dissertation project was not a choice that I came to willingly and for many years, I resisted and silenced the aching that swelled inside me to tell these narratives because of the heavy weight of the shame and grief that lived inside me.

Additionally, I also desperately wanted to belong, to have a home and to be part of the norm by following the new colonial laws implemented on Tonganness that I term as internalizing heteropatriarchy that I discuss in Chapters One and Two of this dissertation. I argue that this phenomenon is a colonial surveillance that disciplines Tonganness, especially Tongan women, to the limited performances of; gratitude, obedience and silence. Thus, as the oldest daughter and oldest granddaughter in a Tongan family, I desired to be a “good daughter,” and a “good woman” and to please my parents and family members and I also feared the retaliation of patriarchal violence and the banishment of home that are often the punishment allocated to Tongan women like me. Yet, it was the unrelenting hauntings, in its various forms and iterations, that brought me back, time and time again, to envision and write this dissertation and it was only when I finally recognized the reality that while I was alive in this Tongan woman’s body, I didn’t have any other choice but to tell these stories or as Stormy Ogden terms them as “Singing my own death song” that is also described by Moraga as a “politically born out of necessity” that I made the decisions to embark on new pathways of healing that required me to leave home and these new routes required that I leave patterns and cycles of the familiar so that I could finally write, tell the stories and complete this project as an attempt towards what Anzaldúa describes as, “To become more intimate with myself and with you” (167) or as I mentioned earlier in this essay, to take my place in a fortuitous cycle, a genealogy of ancestors and to do my small part to help mend the severed va, intimate, that we share. Thus, Ogden’s methodology of “singing my own death songs” is a route that has guided me with this journey of finding my way back home.

**Theorizing Tauhi Va**

In this section, I offer some definitions for the Tongan ontology, tauhi va through weaving the respective theories offered by various Moana Nui and Indigenous scholars in my discussion. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang contend that “One of the distinguishing features of Indigenous methodologies” are “that they are built upon the concept of relational validity or relational accountability…Theories accountable to those relations between land, sovereignty, belongingness, time and space, reality, and futurity shape Indigenous research methods.” (Tuck and Yang xi) The themes of “relational accountability” to the webs and economies of relationalities shared between “land, sovereignty, belongingness, time and space, reality, and futurity” are the values that undergird the Tongan ontology, tauhi va. As elucidated in the definitions of tauhi va or “tauhivaha’a,” offered by Tongan scholar and poet, Konai Helu Thaman, “nurturing inter-personal relations” (3).

In addition, Helu Thaman writes about the production of this “important relationship” that is a phenomenon inclusive of multiple spatialities that include, simultaneously, the physical, cultural and spiritual:

- **Tauhi vaha’a** (protecting vaa) is a major aim of socialization in many Pacific societies where it is a core value to be learned and taught…In Fiji, for example, is an all embracing concept, denoting an important relationship among physical, cultural and spiritual phenomena with people, their environment and all that is in it all wrapped into one. (4)
The Samoan scholar Albert Wendt writes in his seminal essay, “Tatauing the Post-Colonial Body,” about the centrality of va to Samoan culture and to the productions of Samoaness especially since Samoan culture and values are “communal,” rather than individualism like most of Western culture: “this is crucial in communal cultures that value group unity more than individualism, that perceive the individual person, or creature, or thing in terms of group, in terms of va, relationships” (402).

Wendt further defines the concept of va:

Important to the Samoan view of reality is the concept of Va or Wa in Maori. Va is the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-All, the space that is context, giving meaning to things. The meanings change as the relationships and the contexts change...A well-known Samoan expression is ‘Ia teu le va’—cherish, nurse, care for the va, the relationships. (402)

Wendt’s important contribution delineates the significant role of spatialities of relationalities for Samoan and for peoples of Moana Nui: “the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that relates.” He also delineates the important work to “Ia teu le va’--cherish, nurse, care for the va.” Wendt’s definition helps me with contextualizing the Tongan concept and methodology of tauhi va that is a practice that is committed to “cherish, nurse, care for the va” (402).

I also offer First Nation scholar, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson’s Nishanaabeg term, “Kina Gchi Nishnaabeg-ogamig” that delineate spatialities that are “in deep relationship to each other” (8) to further contextualize this discussion on the Tongan ontology and methodology of tauhi va. Simpson writes “Our nation is a hub of Nishnaabeg networks. It is a long kobade, cycling through time. It is a web of connections to each other, to the plant nations, the animal nations, the rivers and lakes, the cosmos, and our neighboring Indigenous nations. Kina Gchi Nishnaabeg-ogamig is an ecology of intimacy.” (8) Simpson’s concept of “Kina Gchi Nishnaabeg-ogamig” described as systems that are “in deep relationships with each other” and are interconnected through “an ecology of intimacy” are definitions that are profound and I use them to help me further my understanding of the Tongan concept of va and to better understand what my responsibilities and obligations are to Tonganness (8).

In addition, I also share another theory that has helped me to deepen my understanding of the Tongan concept of va. Robin Kimmerer’s theory, “language of animacy” is shaped by the shared and collective “ecology of intimacy” that Simpson writes about. (8) Kimmerer, a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, describes the Indigenous values and knowledges that undergird the language of her nation that center ecologies of relationalities and “kinship” between humans and the natural world:

Yawe-the animate to be. I am, you are, s/he is. To speak of those possessed with life and spirit we must say yawe...Isn’t this just what it means, to be, to have the breath of life within, to be the offspring of Creation? The language reminds us, in every sentence, of our kinship with all of the animate world. (56)

I briefly return to some of the key themes and objectives that frame and shape the contours of this research project that I mentioned earlier in this chapter.

Throughout this dissertation, I argue that before the coming of Europeans, Tongan economies and systems of va led directly to and were rooted in the Sacred. The Sacred, the Feminine, is the center, the heartbeat of Tonganness and it is a site of copious mana; a fertile and productive site of strength, power and ancestral knowledges for maintaining, producing and
imagining Tonganness. Thus, the severing of Tongan va to the Sacred and the systemic supplanting of the losses with the new institution of heteropatriarchy that is represented by the centering of the new white and male Christian deity at the fore front of the new Tongan nation is the quintessential objective of the colonial project in Tonga. The colonial project aimed to create imbalances that would stifle Tongan mana and Tongan self-determination and to permanently colonize Tonganness.

**Heteropatriarchy and Perverted Logic**

I use the term heteropatriarchy to define a central organizing principle in the colonial “racialized projects” that were historically deployed in the projects of “white terror” by the European explorers, Christian missionizing project, U.S. Empire and militarization that is a historical legacy that is continued by Mormon missionaries in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to continue the goals of the colonial project and to subjugate Tonganness. As M. Jacqui Alexander has argued, “heteropatriarchy functions in ways that supersede the sexual. At this historical moment, for instance, heteropatriarchy is useful in continuing to perpetuate a colonial inheritance (24). These are discussions that I make in Chapters Two and Four of this dissertation and I share key points from these discussions in this introduction chapter.

Frantz Fanon in his seminal work, *Wretched of the Earth*, profoundly deconstructs the white colonizer’s insatiable desire for power by identifying the psychological root of this desire as a European ontology and methodology that he terms, “perverted logic” (210). Fanon contends that the “perverted logic” of the European colonizer that undergird the colonial project is unrelenting and insatiable in its desires for subjugating the Native, “Perhaps we have not sufficiently demonstrated that colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future” because this is not enough and to further demonstrate the insatiable appetite of European colonizers,’ he states, “Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native’s brain of all form and content” because, according to his analysis, the colonizers deployed a strategy that is methodical and strategic and it, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (210). The Tongan past that the colonial project heinously and unrelentingly “distorts, disfigures, and destroys” is the Sacred, the Feminine, the heartbeat of Tonganness.

Fanon continues his arguments by reminding us that the strategies and methodologies deployed by colonizers to subjugate the natives were strategic and not “left to chance” (210). In addition, and perhaps most significantly, the colonial desires for domination born out of what he posits is the colonizer’s, “perverted logic” demanded unfettered domition of “the total” scope, contour and interceding into every crevice of the Native’s life (210). Thus, the colonial project desired all of the Native, all sum and “total,” and they refused to settle even for just a partial domination. In fact, the colonizers’ “perverted logic” desired dominion of everything that the Native owned, the past, the present and the future. Fanon poignantly contends:

> When we consider the efforts made to carry out the cultural estrangements so characteristic of the colonial epoch, we realize that nothing has been left to chance and that the total result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness. The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarianism, degradation, and bestiality. (211)
Fanon’s clearly points out one of the most potent weapons deployed in the colonial project that aimed for a “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native was “to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness” and thus, to convince the Native that the trajectory of their new lives away from the “darkness” was dependent on the colonizer, “The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarianism, degradation, and bestiality” (211). Thus, one of the main objectives of “perverted logic” was to disempower the native and to sever the native’s self-determination.

The colonial project’s objective for “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native, strategically aimed to define the Native’s past by marginalizing it, “devaluing pre-colonial history” a colonial technology and process that Epeli Hau’ofa documents transpired in Tonga and in the Pacific region that resulted in the severing of time and space into two dichotomous spatialities, “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism, and the era of light and civilization ushered in by Christianity” (28). Frantz Fanon’s arguments are in agreement with Hau’ofa, he states, “devaluing of precolonial history” that included the systemic denigration and the criminalization of the “customs of the colonized people, their traditions, their myths…are the very sign of that poverty of spirit and of their constitutional depravity” (42). In addition, and most significantly, the colonial project located the Tongan Sacred within “prehistory” or “era of darkness” and the new values of the Western linear timeline of “progress” that strategically centered the colonial values of heteropatriarchy demanded the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, or as I have argued throughout this dissertation project, the Sacred is the heartbeat of Tonganness. Thus, the colonial objective to desecrate the Sacred was the quintessential goal of the colonial project in Tonga because to sever the heartbeat of a people is to obliterate the lifeline of a people. These legacies of ghastly and innumerable historical losses and sufferings define and shape the boundaries of contemporaneous Tonganness and these histories tracking the movements of “white terror” motivated by the colonizers’ “perverted logic” produce the phenomenon of the contemporaneous collective Tongan “soul wound” and they also produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that are themes that I discuss in Chapter Three.

The theme of the colonial desecration of the Sacred is confronted by Saidiya Hartmann in her compelling book Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route. Hartmann writes about the slave master’s surveillance of the slave’s relationality to their ancestors that are produced within their memories of their pasts: “In every slave society, slave owners attempted to eradicate the slave memory, that is, to erase all the evidence of an existence before slavery…A slave without a past had no life to avenge. No time was wasted yearning for home” (155). Furthermore, Hartmann profoundly documents how the surveillance of the slave’s memory and the severing of their relationality to the Sacred is a technology that was deliberately deployed to disempower the slave against resistance:

Expunged all memories of a natal land, and it robbed the slave of spiritual protection. Ignorant of her lineage, to whom could the slave appeal? No longer able to recall the shrines or sacred groves or water deities or ancestor spirits or fetishes that could exact revenge on her behalf, she was defenseless. No longer anybody’s child, the slave had no choice but to be bear the visible marks of servitude and accept a new identity in the household of the owner. (156)

Thus, the surveillance of memories are potent technologies for managing the slaves and keeping them in their subservient roles.
The colonial project’s quintessential objective of severing Tongan va to the Sacred is a prodigious historical undertaking that aimed to do precisely as Hartman argues and the new changes would ensure that Tongans had “no choice but to bear the visible marks of servitude and accept a new identity in the household of the owner” and as Frantz Fanon theory of “perverted logic” poignantly lays out, the historical and contemporaneous colonial productions of desecrating the Sacred aimed for the “total” colonization of Tonganness (156).

**Tongan Migrations, Occupied Indian Land and Tauhi Va**

This section situates the occupied Ohlone land named Huichin that is now known as the Bay Area, California. This is the new land that many Tongans and peoples from Moaana Nui including myself as well as my beloved sister Loa and nephew Nikolasi currently call home away from our island homelands in the Pacific. In this section, I share key themes that I argue in Chap 4 of this dissertation project and I offer some suggestions to Tongan and peoples from Moana Nui on ways that we can continue to honor and engage in tauhi va. I contend that tauhi va asks us to commit ourselves to becoming literate in the histories of Indigenous California and to work under the leadership of California Indigenous women leaders in their respective and contemporaneous projects to protect and defend the Sacred.

Earlier in this chapter, I shared key themes from a moving chapter written by California Indian writer, Stormy Ogden titled “The Prison-Industrial Complex in Indigenous California.” I shared Ogden’s work upfront in this chapter because California is a site that I return to at the end of the chapter and Ogden’s chapter maps the settler colonial topographies of California and she show their racialized, gendered and sexualized legacies. Thus, the themes she examines that is illustrated in the metaphor and visuality “singing my own death song” highlights many of the critical junctures that shape this chapter and this dissertation project especially in this brief discussion that examines and imagines processes of tauhi va for Tongans, like myself, that have made our new home here in the Bay Area, California.

Thus, as a Tongan woman living on this occupied Indian land that is California, spatialities of contemporaneous carcerality for Indigenous communities and especially for Indigenous women, how do I contend with these histories of California that are imbued and rife with the voices of Indigenous peoples, especially Indigenous women “singing” their “own death song[s]” that ferociously haunt the contours of this land? What are my ancestral responsibilities as a daughter of Moaana Nui, an immigrant, a settler, an “arrivant” to California, a land, a living ancestor that is breathing and aching with the singing of “death songs” of its Indigenous peoples and especially the “singing the death songs” of Indigenous women? What are my responsibilities to the festering wounds of this land that I call my new home?

**Engaging with California Histories**

Cutcha Risling Baldy tracks the topographies of unrelenting settler colonial violence and “genocide” that produced California, “The brutality of California Indian history is palpable to contemporary California Indian peoples, and it is difficult to summarize the widespread violence and destruction that invaded the once peaceful and abundant territory of my own people” (52). In addition, Risling Baldy contends that examining the histories of California’s Indigenous peoples that confront the histories of “genocide” that shape their contemporaneous lives is an important practice and this will help us to better “grasp the importance of cultural revitalization as
decolonizing praxis” such as the current struggle of “cultural revitalization” here in the Bay Area conducted under the leadership of Lisjan Ohlone Leader, Corrina Gould to save the West Berkeley Shellmound. For as Risling Baldy states and I reiterate the importance of this point for Tongan and Pacific peoples, especially in our work to tauhi va here in California. Thus, we Tongans and peoples of Moana Nui must learn and engage with the histories of the First peoples of the land that we currently occupy, “It is necessary to explore the brutal and unrelenting history of genocide in California to grasp the importance of cultural revitalization as decolonizing praxis” (52).

In a recent cover story titled “Living On Ohlone Land,” by Will Parish and featured in the East Bay Express, he documents the historical significance of the Shell mound for Ohlone people and why they actively resist the desecration of this site:

In the last two years, Chochenyo Ohlone people and their supporters have been locked in a campaign to protect a portion of one of the oldest sites of human habitation and an important Ohlone ceremonial place along San Francisco Bay…The West Berkeley Shellmound and Village Site is estimated to be roughly 5,700 years old, according to radiocarbon dating. The sacred mound, a pyramid of shell and earth, was roughly 30 feet high and covered the area of about two or three football fields. (Parish, Living On Ohlone)

In an on-line interview, Gould addresses the legacies of settler colonial violence and their current aim to desecrate the Sacred here in the Bay Area as a strategy for producing futurities that center settler colonial values and eradicating Indian peoples and communities. Gould argues:

What I say about this development that happens all over the Bay Area, is that it’s a cultural genocide. They’re trying to wipe us out, in a different kind of a way. There’s no more monuments of the ancient people, of my ancestors, here in the Bay Area. When people go around to those places to try to find out, who were the native people here, what did they live like? There’s nothing here. (Gould qtd. in Lundberg, Ohlone)

Gould’s statement elucidates the contemporaneous legacies of the histories of settler colonialisms here in the Bay Area and she reveals the “death songs,” wounds, irreparable losses, historical trauma and “cultural genocide” that her people have suffered and continue to suffer in the current colonial maneuvers to desecrate the West Berkeley Shellmounds and to use the land for real estate development and economic profits: “In what has become one of Berkeley’s most heated development battles in recent memory, a proposed housing and retail development there would involve digging to depths of eight to ten feet across the property” (Parish, Living on Ohlone).

The historical trauma and “cultural genocide” that Gould delineates in her statement is a unrelenting violence that is taking place at this present moment as well as it is founded in the past and her statement also shows that the colonizer’s greed is insatiable and they aim to center settler colonial futurities by eradicating the Ohlone from our knowledges and memories or the colonial project is committed to the production of “cultural genocide” through the desecration of the West Berkeley Shellmound and other Ohlone Sacred sites here in the Bay Area. Gould’s statement allows us to view that “cultural genocide” of Ohlone Sacred Sites is a colonial objective that is inextricably linked to the material and gratuitous violence of genocide that brought death and destruction on Ohlone and Indigenous peoples. These projects are mutually interconnected to the settler colonial production of eradicating and erasing California’s Indigenous peoples.
Land as Sacred and Protecting the Sacred

Robin Wall Kimmerer documents the significance of land to Indigenous peoples’ and to Indigenous identities, cultures and value systems. She emphatically declares, “But to our people, it was everything”:

Children, language, lands: almost everything was stripped away, stolen when you weren’t looking because you were trying to stay alive. One thing our people could not surrender was the meaning of land. In the settler mind, land was property, real estate capital, or natural resources. But to our people, it was everything; identity, the connection to our ancestors, the home of our nonhuman kin-folk, our pharmacy, our library, the source of all that sustained us. Our lands were where our responsibility to the world was enacted, sacred ground. It belonged to itself; it was a gift, not a commodity, so it could never be bought or sold. (17)

The Indigenous view of the land as “everything” reiterates core belief systems and economies of va that delineate that the land is a living ancestor and the land is Sacred. These Indigenous views of land as living ancestors and land as Sacred are echoed in ‘Epeli Hau‘ofa poignant statement on the significance of our Tongan and Pacific Sacred sites that include “seascapes” and “landscapes” (17). He profoundly declares, “Our landscapes and seascapes are thus culture as well as physical. We cannot read our histories without knowing how to read our landscapes (and seascapes)” (73).

In addition, Hau‘ofa reminds us of the importance of protecting our Pacific Sacred sites as work that is a central project for producing and maintaining our self-determination, “There are reasons why it is essential not to destroy our landmarks, for with their removal very important parts of our memories, our histories, will be erased” (73). Hau‘ofa’s statements also helps Tongan and Pacific peoples to reconceptualize and to reimagine our roles and new responsibilities in the projects of saving and protecting “seascapes” and “landscapes” as we forge the trajectories of our new lives and communities even in homelands outside of the Pacific such as California.

Bay Area as Home Away From Home

More than a decade ago, I followed a dream and moved to the East Bay to embark on a new life that led me to pursue graduate studies at UC Berkeley. The East Bay is also the new home for many Tongans and Pacific peoples. According to the 2014 U.S. Census, California hosts the largest Tongan population in the U.S. second to Hawai‘i (EPIC, Report on 2014 Census). In addition, Tongans and other Pacific Islanders are the fastest growing population in Alameda County with a 41% increase in 2000-2010” (PI Health Fact Sheet for Alameda County). Although I am an Indigenous woman from Moana Nui, and as I argue in Chapters One and Two, my migration and my family’s migration to the U.S. was navigated through the Mormon Church and it follows in a legacy of U.S Empire over Tonganness that traces its historical roots to the U.S military occupation of Tonga during WWII, my place here in the Bay Area is vexed and haunted with the markings of “settler colonial relations” and as Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang argue, “In this set of settler colonial relations, colonial subjects who are displaced by external colonialism, as well as racialized and minoritized by internal colonialism, still occupy and settle stolen Indigenous land” (7). Tuck and Yang’s statement are important for Tongans and other Pacific peoples to center because contrary to the values of colonial
institutions that facilitate our migrations to the U.S. like the Mormon Church, these scholars ardently remind us Tongans and peoples from the Pacific that our “American Dreams” and aspirations of “progress” are built at the expense of California Indian “death songs,” wounds and on the breathing bodies of “stolen Indigenous land” (7).

Settler, Native And Arrivant

The vexed complications of “settler colonial relationships” that define Tongan relationalities to California are themes that Scott L. Morgensen offers in the definition of the term “arrivant,” which elaborates upon Native American scholar Jodi Byrd’s definitive work: Racialized non-natives inhabit Indigenous lands while experiencing colonial and racial subjugation, and that her accounts of their participation in colonization and their responsibilities to Indigenous decolonization call for a term distinct from white people. These accounts acknowledge close ties of “settler” status to whiteness while they trace distinctive relations to settler colonialism borne by variously-situated non-native peoples of color. (Morgensen, Decolonization: Indigeneity)

Jodi Byrd’s theory of “arrivant” is borrowed “From African Caribbean poet Kamau Brathwaite to signify those peoples forced into the Americas through the violence of Europeans and Anglo-American colonialism and imperialism around the globe” (xiv).

Furthermore, Byrd’s theory shares definitions and protocols for those of us that are, “Settler, native and arrivant,” currently living on “Stolen Indigenous land.” She profoundly lays out: “Settler, native and arrivant each acknowledge their own positions within empire and then reconceptualize space and history to make visible what imperialism and its resultant settler colonialisms and diasporas have sought to obscure” (xxx). Byrd’s statement generously offers Tongans, “settler, native and arrivant” living here in California, opportunities to tauhi va and to be Tongan, respectively, while embarking on work that honors our va, our ancestral relationalities and responsibilities to this new land, California, an ancestor.

Tauhi Va, California and Protecting the Sacred

Retracing some of the themes that I shared earlier in this chapter about Tauhi va. Konai Helu Thaman defines Tauhi va or “tauhihava’a” as a project of “nurturing inter-personal relations” (3). In addition, Helu Thaman writes about this “important relationship” that is a phenomenon inclusive of the spatialities of the physical, cultural and spiritual:

Tauhi vaha’a (protecting vaa) is a major aim of socialization in many Pacific societies where it is a core value to be learned and taught… it is an all embracing concept, denoting an important relationship among physical, cultural and spiritual phenomena with people, their environment and all that is in it all wrapped into one. (4)

Albert Wendt writes in his seminal essay, “Tatauing the Post-Colonial Body,” about the centrality of va to Samoan culture and to the production of Samoaness especially since Samoan culture values “communal,” rather than individualism like most of Western culture: “this is crucial in communal cultures that value group unity more than individualism, that perceive the individual person, or creature, or thing in terms of group, in terms of va, relationships” (402).

Wendt further defines the concept of va:

Important to the Samoan view of reality is the concept of Va or Wa in Maori. Va is the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that
relates, that holds separate entities and things together in the Unity-that-is-All, the space that is context, giving meaning to things. The meanings change as the relationships and the contexts change... A well-known Samoan expression is ‘Ia teu le va’—cherish, nurse, care for the va, the relationships. (402)

Wendt’s definition points to the significant role of cultivating and nourishing spatialities of relationalities for Samoan and for Pacific peoples: “the space between, the betweenness, not empty space, not space that separates, but space that relates” (402). He also reminds Samoans and Pacific peoples to remember and to be committed to the important work to “‘Ia teu le va’ -- cherish, nurse, care for the va” (402).

Wendt’s definition helps me with contextualizing the Tongan ontology and methodology of tauhi va that is a practice that is committed to “cherish, nurse, care for the va” and the definition that Wendt offers as well as the definitions offered earlier by Konai Helu Thamm assists me with imagining and forging Tonganness here in my new home in California (402). Returning to Jody Byrd’s statement to “Settler, native and arrivant” that delineates protocols and responsibilities, “Each acknowledge their own positions within empire and then reconceptualize space and history to make visible what imperialism and its resultant settler colonialisms and diasporas have sought to obscure” (xxx). Byrd’s statement offers the “terms and obligations” that Tongans and Pacific peoples must center in our engagements and embodiments of tauhi va here in California and these are the values that we must place at the forefront in our processes of forging our new homes located on “Stolen Indigenous Land” (7).

Many of the theories and themes that shape this introduction chapter as well as this dissertation project, that are both shown and not shown on these pages, including embarking on the many healing journeys and Ceremonies that helped me to imagine and to write this dissertation project to fruition are generous gifts that I received through engaging in years of solidarity work supporting the leadership of American Indian leaders and communities here in California in their various and respective campaigns to protect and save their Sacred from desecration. As I mention here in this section as well as in Chap 4, it is not an exaggeration for me to state that my work with California Indigenous peoples to protect the Sacred is a work that saved me and it helped me to “find my way back home” to my own, respective, Tonganness. Recalling Linda Tuhuiwai Smith’s statement, “Indigenous research is a humble and humbling activity” defines the historical trajectories of this work” (5) and it illuminates my immense gratitude for the copious joy and hope that my journey here in California has generously gifted my family and me throughout the years.

My work with California’s American Indians, that included but is not exhaustive of; reading California Indigenous histories and literature, organizing and attending poetry readings and writing workshops at Heyday Books, attending countless planning meetings, cooking food and washing dishes, singing and talking-story for hours and on occasions this lasted for days and perhaps even weeks, visiting and meeting with families and tribes, babysitting children, painting and making protest signs and banners and marching out in the streets participating in public protests and demonstrations, participating in protocol and Ceremony, letter writing and phone banking projects, participation in Indigenous occupation of land, visiting various Sacred sites throughout California to offer prayers and to participate in Ceremony, attending Ceremony with Indigenous relatives that included American Indian and Pacific Islander prisoners incarcerated in Solano, San Quentin and Chowchilla prisons here in California etc., etc. are just some of the work that I did here in California and under Indigenous women’s leadership to save and protect the Sacred. In turn, this work with California’s Indigenous peoples encouraged me to recognize
and to map the trajectories of the desecration of the Sacred in my own life and throughout Tongan histories that is a phenomenon that scholars have termed as “historical unresolved grief” that I analyze in Chapter Three and this work unrelenting in its generosity also offered me and my family pathways to embark on healing from our Tongan histories of grief and trauma.

Although in my new life here in California, I have engaged in solidarity work with various California Indian Tribes and community organizations throughout the years that include Southern California and throughout Northern California, my analysis in Chapter Four that I briefly share here, concentrates on my recent work with Lisjan Ohlone leader, Corrina Gould and the campaign to save the West Berkeley Shellmound which is an on-going struggle with multiple stages. For as Arwin et al. argue, “settler colonialism must be understood as a multi-fronted project of making the First Peoples of a place extinct; it is a relentless structure” (7). Thus, this statement accurately describes the current stage of Gould’s work to save the West Berkeley Shellmound. Although the campaign has yielded many recent victories it is still unresolved and is currently in the stages of a lawsuit. Gould’s indefatigable commitment to her Ohlone ancestors demonstrated in her courageous work to protect the Sacred that includes the West Berkeley Shellmound is a work that has invigorated and breathed new life into the hearts of so many of us, East Bayers, that also include me and my family and so many of us from Moana Nui that now live in the East Bay. This work has generously offered me opportunities to “find my way back home” to my own respective Tonganness.

Overview

This dissertation draws on various historical narratives that track the trajectories of “progress,” or historical phenomenon that Toni Morrison terms as “narratives of success” that is poignantly described by Colin Dayan as “Residues of terror are never really dead and gone but, through the terms of law, survive and always find new bodies to inhabit, new persons to target…the ghosts of Enlightenment past become the demons of modernity” (xiii). My analysis of the historical production of the “Residues of terror” that transpire in Tonga begins in the 17 century with the arrival of the first Europeans to documenting the contemporaneous maneuvers of U.S. Empire during the twenty-first century that mark the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII to the U.S. Mormon Church’s deployment of a phenomenon that Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez terms as “reterritorialization” of Tonganness that continues the legacies of U.S. Empire and the aims of settler colonialisms in the twentieth and twenty-first century after the U.S. military’s “official” withdrawal from Tonga in 1945 (65).

My analysis of historical narratives throughout the dissertation, centers the Tongan female body as an archive for tracking the trajectories of “progress” and I look at the surveillance and disciplining of the Tongan female body within past and contemporaneous spatialities that produce and negotiate Tonganness. My analysis pays close attention to the surveillance of intimate and private relationalities such as the production of families and relationalities that are often termed by scholars as “tender ties.” As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Tongan ontology and methodologies of va and Tauhi va, are important in the telling of the narratives that I share in this dissertation project not only because they show the complex webs of Tongan systems and economies of relationalities but furthermore, tauhi va is especially important in charting the political changes that take place after the coming of Europeans that mark the legislation of new systems of colonization and imperialisms on Tonganness.
Chapter One examines the twentieth-century production of the “racialized project” that is the Tongan Mormon Family. I begin the chapter by telling about my recent encounter with ghosts and hauntings after reading articles in The Salt Lake Tribune that addressed the pervasive and systemic culture of rape and sexual violence at Brigham Young University, the premiere Mormon university located in Provo, Utah. I trace narratives documenting the maneuvers of “progress” within the spatiality of my Tongan Mormon Family that center the new colonial values of heteropatriarchy. Concomitantly, I trace the normalization of systemic rape and sexual violence within the contours of the Tongan Mormon Family to my experiences as a young undergraduate female student at Brigham Young University and I connect these respective contemporaneous histories to the histories of U.S. militarization of Tonga during WWII and their legacy of “white terror” in the Tongan imagination that was produced by histories of militarized rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls.

According to Tongan government statistics and statistics from the Mormon Church’s official headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, Tonga currently holds the global record on hosting the largest conversion rate into the U.S.-based Mormon Church in both the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Tongans are converting into the Mormon Church at an exponentially higher rate than any other racial or ethnic group in the world. The publication, Matangi Tonga reports, “Tonga is the world’s most Mormon Country, having a higher proportion of Mormons per capita than any other nation” (Fonua, Matangi Tonga). Matangi Tonga also elucidates the inextricable links between Tongan conversions to the U.S-based Mormon church and the Tongan migrations to U.S. that are navigated through the Mormon church because as the reports also reveal, most Tongans living in the U.S. are members of the Mormon Church. Some of the questions that shape this chapter are; what is at stake for the Pacific nation of Tonga to be the “world’s most Mormon Country”? What is at stake for Tonga, one of the most marginalized and economically disenfranchised nations in the Pacific to be associated or to share an intimate relationality with one of the most economically wealthiest and most powerful U.S. institutions—the Mormon Church? And what does this relationality shaped by the objectives of Western “progress”, shared between two profoundly unequal institutions ask or perhaps even demand from Tonganness? What is the cost for “being the world’s most Mormon country” for Tonganness? Thus, this chapter traces the insatiable historical “debt” that Tonganness owes the U.S.-based institution, Mormonism for “rescuing” them from a life of “darkness” and placing them on a new trajectory of “progress.”

I argue that “the debt” that Tonganness owes Mormonism is inextricably defined by the histories of U.S. Empire in Tonga and in the Pacific during WWII. The U.S. militarized occupation of Tonga during this historical moment and the military deployment of systemic violence, especially violence against Tongan women, is at the center of the making of “the debt” that legislate the boundaries that connect and shape the relationality shared between Tonganness and the U.S.-based Mormon Church in the past two centuries. In addition, I argue that “the debt” that Tonganness owes Mormonism is the rigorous and relentless Tongan production of a phenomenon that I term is the internalization of heteropatriarchy. Chapter Three looks at Feifafa, the protagonist of the Tongan nationalist narrative, “The Origin of Kava,” as a representative of the contemporaneous and festering Tongan “soul wound.” Feifafa is the “good daughter,” in the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalistic Family and in the larger Tongan nation and her image silences as well as she reveals the histories of past and contemporaneous Tongan suffering or the phenomenon that scholars term as “historical unrecognized grief” produced through the histories of Western colonialism’s systemic deployment of violence on Tonganness.
and in addition, it is imperative to note that the violence disproportionately targeted the bodies of Tongan women and girls (Brave Heart et al). This chapter contends with the pain produced by the unfettered and unrelenting violence deployed by colonialisms that produced historical trauma.

Ultimately, I am actively participating in the phenomenon that Homi Bhabha terms as “painful remembering” of Tonganness and I share historical narratives that track the maneuvers of early Western colonial projects in Tonga that produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief.” The first historical moment features the renowned British Captain James Cook’s historical naming of Tonga as the “Friendly Islands” during his third voyage in 1777. Second, the arrival of the British Christian missionaries in 1797 and their institutionalization of linear time that leads to the desecration of the Sacred. Thirdly, I examine a Tongan “origin narrative” that privileges Taufă‘ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate and to sever va with the Tongan Sacred and lastly and correspondingly, I examine the Tongan nationalist trope claiming that “Tonga was never formally colonized” that is often told side-to-side with the paradigmatic narrative depicting Taufa ‘ahau’s desecration of the Sacred that I shared earlier. I recognize that I examine this paradigmatic narrative in this chapter and in Chapter Four. I ask the reader to please bear with me because this was my attempt at grappling with the horror and perverse violence that the narrative represents. Thus, the narrative memorializing Taufa ‘ahau’s desecration of the Sacred as well as the historical narratives that I share in this chapter produce the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and they also produce the “Soul Wound.”

Correspondingly, in the contemporaneous Tongan imagination, Feifafa is a representation of our collective Tongan “Soul Wound.” Chapter Four examines the production of the Tongan Nationalist Family, one of the official and major “racialized projects” and carceral spatialities in Tonga that is founded on and maintained through the colonial desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, and these histories of relentless “white terror” are replicated in the contemporaneous normalization of violence against women within everyday Tongan life within the intimate and private spatialities of the familial. I contend that the normalization of violence against Tongan women is an importation from European settlers and Christian missionaries and I trace the genealogies of patriarchal violence by examining the three notable historical moments defining Tongan encounters with Europeans and in each respective moment, I highlight the Europeans’ deployment of “white terror” on Tonganness. Furthermore, I also examine the legacies of “white terror” on contemporaneous Tonganness and I offer strategies for reclaiming Tonganness by working in collaboration with Indigenous communities in the U.S. diaspora to protect the Sacred.

In Chapter Five, I continue to examine the genealogy of colonial violence in Tonga that I often refer to as patriarchal violence that is a defining factor in the phenomenon of “white terror” because as I show in this chapter and throughout this dissertation, this violence is an import from Europeans that disproportionately targets the bodies of Tongan women and girls. This chapter examines the legacies of colonialisms and its manifestations in shaping the textures of the spatiality of contemporaneous Tongan manhood. I examine the vociferous Tongan patriarchal resistance to the Tongan Prime Minister, ‘Akilisi Pohiva’s, decision to finally, after ten years in the making, ratify CEDAW, or the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women in 2015. Thus, I historicize the 2015 representations of Tongan manhood performed at the anti-CEDAW and anti-Tongan women’s rights demonstrations that took place in downtown Nuku'alofa to a harrowing narrative from1840 that memorializes a moment of Tongan “several old chiefs” participating in what I term as a march of surrender that is a production of Tongan manhood. Furthermore, I also draw connections from
the 1840 Tongan march of surrender to a harrowing march that took place here in California in 1863 called “the Konkow Trail of Tears” that took place after a massacre of California Indian lives described as, “one of the most ghastly marches” (McPhate, *California Sun*). I contend that the contemporaneous state of Tongan manhood depicts the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and the festering Tongan “soul wound” that are the consequences of the systemic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine.

**Tauhi Va, Our Moana and Mending the Severed Intimate**

The last part of this section is a family birth narrative that took place when I was a child growing up in Tonga during the 1970s. I show the multiple forms of tauhi va that invariably shape the textures of everyday Tongan lives and interactions and I show the various engagements with tauhi va that my ancestors embodied in their productions of Tonganness and yet these complex webs of relationalities, knowledges and Tongan realities are unknown and unfathomable in the West. I also show the new power stratifications that are legislated by Western colonization in Tonga and the ways that these changes privilege patriarchy and Western knowledges while it marginalizes Tongan women’s knowledges and mana and these new power stratifications ultimately leads as well as it is constituted by the systemic desecration of the Sacred.

*It was at the changing of the seasons, the moments of slippage, the inbetweeness, the time when both light and darkness meet, oscillate into each other just before breaking, the time that encapsulates the multiplicities of va, of the future, the present and the past, and in the early morning hours in the second week of May, according to the markings on the Western calendar, when everyone was asleep, except for the spirits of the Ancestors drinking kava at Mala‘e Kula, the royal burial grounds and Sacred site located in downtown Nuku‘alofa, and while the hungry dogs furiously mate, that the baby girl knew that the time was right to release her grasp of the umbilical cord and to come out of her mother Litia’s belly.*

*The time of her entrance into the world, early in the morning hours, during the time of darkness with its pending edges of new light, was however, a time that was non-compliant and disobedient to the Western-trained doctor’s medical predictions. The Western-trained doctor was the baby girl’s beloved grandfather Dr. Siaosi Niumeitolu, known and revered throughout Tonga. He was a Methodist jafekau, pastor and a Western-trained medical doctor. Siaosi had a hand in the birth of Tongan children throughout Tongatapu in the 1960s, 1970s and 80s. The baby girl’s birth didn’t follow the Western calendar’s classification of linear time and yet, the baby girl knew that she was right on time. Her birth followed in accordance to the timeline given to her mother, Litia, by her grandmother, Vaimoana and the information was given to Vaimoana by the grandmothers and grandfathers that came before her. The old ones, always here. They have never gone away.*

*Vaimoana was a healer that used the old Tongan knowledges but she often kept this practice hidden from public eyes, especially from the scrutiny of her own family and relatives. As a Commoner woman using the old Tongan ways, Vaimoana’s labor was not often welcomed. Her labor and the labor of other Tongan women healers that centered Tongan cosmologies and knowledges were made illegal and often invalidated so as to open the door for the entrance and privileging of the institution of Western medicine and to center the expertise of Western-trained male doctors.*
The baby girl holds a memory that took place when she had grown into a young girl of about six or seven years old that takes place in her grandmother Vaimoana’s family home located in Longolongo, a small town located in Nuku‘aloa, the capital city of Tonga. Vaimoana stepped out of the front door to quiet the nuisance of the barking dogs and she was met by relatives arriving from a long trip from Ha’ano, Ha’apai. The traveling party included two daughters, their aging father in his late 60s and two teenage boys along with gifts of fish, taro, ‘ufi and koloa for Vaimoana and her children. The family traveled the long distance across acres of ocean from Ha’ano, Ha’apai to humbly petition Vaimoana to remember their va and to use her healing hands to put an end to a collective pain shared by their family.

The Elder man carrying the suffering body was a distant relative to Vaimoana. He was once a renowned fisherman known throughout the Ha’apai islands but he lost his vision many decades earlier in a gastically accident during a tumultuous storm that took place in the deep ocean or Moana. The accident not only took the fisherman’s sight but it abruptly took the lives of two men, close relatives that were like brothers to the fisherman. The irreparable losses that took place on the Moana, drastically altered the fisherman’s va with the Moana. The fisherman began to fear and loathe the Moana and for the first time in his life, he became afraid of the vulnerability of his smallness. He suddenly became afraid of the large body of salt water that encircled him and he angrily denounced and severed his va with her because of the losses and suffering that she represented in his life.

The fisherman also changed his livelihood and he attempted to become a farmer and to make a living by working on the land. He raised animals such as pigs and he planted root crops but these new goals never came to fruition and in fact, his family claimed that he failed at being a farmer. The Moana was his first and perhaps greatest love and the loss of his eye sight was a daily reminder and metaphor of his suffering and his severed va with her. In addition, his suffering was not a burden that he carried alone for it haunted his daughters, his grandchildren, great grandchildren and everyone on the island.

In a series of dreams, the fisherman’s Ancestors came to him and instructed him to make the pilgrimage to visit his relative Vaimoana in Tongatapu and to ask her to remember their va and to share her medicine with him and to heal his vision. But the new vision for healing and liberation that the Ancestors brought to the fisherman required the fisherman to do the most difficult work of his life. He was required to confront his greatest fear and to, once again, come face to face with his greatest love, the Moana. The fisherman was required to travel on the Moana on a small boat for several days until he reached the shores of ‘Uafu Ko Vuna in Nuku ‘aloa in the main island of Tongatapu and the Ancestors instructed the fisherman to go on the land and he will be led to the home of, Vaimoana and her family that were living in Longolongo, Nuku ‘aloa, and he was directed to ask her to remember their va, the shared genealogies, the economies of relationalities, the “tender ties” that connect them and then to ask her for the medicine to heal him. His Ancestors promised him that if he followed these instructions, he would be healed and the suffering would end for him, his family and for everyone around him.

When the fisherman first received the messages from his Ancestors in dreams, he was angry and he asked to be left alone because his fear and anger of the Moana could not be reconciled. But a few months later after he overheard his two daughters’ and grandsons’ crying while in prayer on his behalf, he quickly gathered the courage and there he was standing at Vaimoana’s front door in Longolongo asking her to remember.
Vaimoana and the fisherman were drawn together by va, ancestral intimacies and genealogical lines founded in the land, fonua, and Moana, and solidified by their unrelenting faith in the Sacred. As the story is told, Vaimoana sent two of her older grandchildren to the corner store to buy kapa pulu or tins of corned beef imported from New Zealand that would be cooked with onions in a gravy and this dish would be eaten with a big pot of haka or the cooked root crops taro and manioke boiled in coconut milk prepared by the older grandchildren and her daughter, Salote, in the family kitchen located in the back of the house. As a healer and as a Tongan woman, Vaimoana knew well that tauhi va was a work that included the generosity shown through sharing and receiving food. The kapa pulu, imported processed food from New Zealand was expensive because they were a poor family according to Western terms but the relatives arriving from Ha‘ano were hungry and feeding them was her responsibility.

After the meal and a long conversation that included laughter, the recitation of the webs of genealogies, exchanges of shared tears and gifts, Vaimoana proceeded with the faito’o faka Tonga or the administering of Tongan medicine that took place outside and behind the house. The processes of remembering, honoring va and sharing of medicine was a Ceremony. Vaimoana earnestly looked into her blind relative’s eyes to access the problem then she bent slowly to the ground and pinched a bit of earth into her forefingers and with the spit from her mouth, she kneaded a small ball while she recited a chant, a long prayer taught to her by her Ancestors in a language that was unknown and not allowed within the boundaries of the Christian Sunday school or even within the boundaries of her home. After some time and as the prayer came to a closing, Vaimoana carefully placed small amounts of meticulously measured earth mixed with her warm and moist spit on the man’s eyelids and then after some time, and when she saw that it was ready, she used her forefingers to wipe off the medicine from his eyelids. Then she slowly moved his eyelids open allowing him to bear witness to the luminous and bright world around him and to witness the benevolent and crying faces of relatives that surrounded him. As the story is told, the fisherman, looked at Vaimoana and everyone around him and he wept large tears of joy and when the tears fell into his mouth and into the flesh of his tongue; he tasted the Moana, the salt water, intimate in its taste and once again his memory awoke and started to tenderly unfurl, and he remembered. His heart began to open and he breathed in the memory that he never forgot, he fell in love, once again, with the Moana, the facilitator of his healing, the Great Mother.

That day, the fisherman not only profusely thanked his relative, Vaimoana for remembering and honoring their va and for sharing her mana with him and healing his sight, but he also thanked the Christian God he learned about in Sunday School. The fisherman was careful and wanted to cover all his bases. He also profusely thanked his Ancestors for their patience with him and for appearing to him in countless dreams and directing him to Vaimoana’s front door and the fisherman fell to the ground and his eyes continued to weep large tears of salt water until it formed into bodies of water like a never ending ocean. He thanked the great Mother, the Moana, our beloved Pacific Ocean, the progenitor of the shared va that connected him to the webs of lifelines that sustain him and his ancestors. The Moana’s love is without end, or beginning, always abundant. It cannot be mapped by the hands of Western cartographers. She is the heartbeat, the steady rhythm that is always here. She grounds, nourishes and heals their Tonganness.
Chapter One: Tongan Ghost Stories: The Telling Takes Me Home¹

How many rivers do we have to cross,
Before we can talk to the boss? Eh!
All that we got, it seems we have lost;
We must have really paid the cost
–Bob Marley, *Burnin and Lootin*²

Walk along some wagon road, down the iron rail,
Past the rusty Cadillacs that mark the boom town trail,
Where dreamers never win and doers never fail,
It's sad, but the telling takes me home.
–Utah Phillips, *The Telling Takes Me Home*

Introduction

This chapter acknowledges the hungry ghosts and hauntings that are a legacy of “progress” and the colonial production of Tonganness. I trace the dominant hand of the U.S.-based Mormon Church in producing and maintaining the legacy of ghosts and hauntings in the contemporary colonial spatiality of the *Tongan Mormon Family*. In this first section, “Haunting, Mormonism, and Patriarchal Violence,” begins with my recent encounter of familiar ghosts and hauntings when I ran across articles in *The Salt Lake Tribune* that addressed the pervasive and systemic culture of rape and sexual violence at Brigham Young University (BYU), the premiere Mormon university. I include narratives documenting the maneuvers of “progress” within the spatiality of my family that center the new colonial values of heteropatriarchy and white supremacy. Conversely, I trace the normalization of systemic rape and sexual violence within the contours of my respective Tongan Mormon Family to my experiences as a young undergraduate female student at BYU. “Haunting as Methodology and History” looks at theory and methodologies of Haunting and the efficacy of using this phenomenon to “see” and to tell historical narratives about the predominance of heteropatriarchal violence in women’s lives that are often systemically invisible.

In “Settler Colonialism, Tonganness and Mormonism,” I unpack some of the layers of the “settler-colonial” relationship that Tonganness shares with the U.S. Mormon Church. In “Tongan Mormon Family, a Legacy of Haunting: Patriarchy as Organizing Principle,” there are several sub-sections that examine the historical production of the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family and the centrality of the institution of heteropatriarchy within this colonial familial spatiality. In “Tongan Mormon Family & Following the Tracks of Tongan Nationalist Family,” I historically traces the twenty-first century Tongan Mormon Family’s genealogies to two historical “racialized projects” that were produced through the deployment of unrelenting patriarchal violence on Tonganness and these new forms of violence specifically targeted the bodies of Tongan women and Tongan girls. The first racialized project is in the nineteenth-century *Tongan Nationalist Family*: a spatiality produced by Christian hegemonies through the unfettered deployment of patriarchal violence to produce a new Tongan nation headed by an Indigenous Tongan monarch and new systems of va that centered the values of the new white male Christian God. I share some key points from my research in Chapters Four and Five.
Next, “Military Occupation of Tonga in WWII” examines the second “racialized project” that produce the Tongan Mormon Family that I posit is the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII. The U.S. occupation of Tonga during WWII was defined by the U.S. military’s exertion and deployment of unfettered patriarchal violence, but this authority is especially visible in the U.S. military’s deployment of rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls. Several sub-sections examine specific aspects of the U.S. military’s deployment of relentless violence on Tonganness during WWII. Furthermore, in this section, I analyze narratives about Tongan women’s sexualities during this historical moment told by prominent Tongan male scholars Siosiua F. Pouvalu Lafitani and Futa Helu. I look at the silences that shroud their narratives and what it reveals and conceals about this historical moment and about the legacy of massacre and horror that is carried by Tonganness as a consequence of this historical moment.

“Mormonism, Militarization and Terror in the Tongan Imagination” looks at the image of whiteness and U.S. Empire in the Tongan imagination. I posit that in the contemporary Tongan imagination, U.S. Empire is represented as “white terror” and these histories of empire enable and sustain the unprecedented growth and dependence of Tongan peoples on the Moron Church. Finally, in “The Tongan Mormon Family, ‘Progress’ and the Criminalization of Ghosts,” I tell a narrative that recounts a specific historical moment in my Tongan Mormon Family’s trajectory of upward mobility and “progress.” The narrative is titled Tongan Ghost Story, The Haunted Chair and it retells an archival memory that took place many decades ago when I was eight years old in Nuku’alofa, Tonga shortly after my baptism into the Mormon Church. The narrative recounts the new laws and prohibitions that are legislated to surveil my life and the life of my family members after our conversion into the Mormon Church. In addition, the narrative traces the new forms of criminalizing Tongan ancestral knowledges and continuing the colonial process of desecrating the Tongan Sacred that are central to maintaining the Tongan Mormon Family.

Haunting, Mormonism, and Patriarchal Violence

I recently came across a news story by David Noyce, “Salt Lake Tribune Wins Pulitzer for Campus Rape Coverage, Praises Victims for Sharing Their Stories,” in The Salt Lake Tribune, a newspaper that I often read while growing up in Utah. Noyce revealed that the Tribune was awarded the prestigious 2017 Pulitzer prize “for a string of vivid reports revealing the perverse, punitive and cruel treatment given to sexual-assault victims at BYU, one of Utah's most powerful institutions.” The prize-winning articles in this series highlighted the voices of victims of rape and sexual violence at BYU protesting their punishment and ill treatment by the university. Correspondingly, the articles revealed the victims’ critical responses to the university’s “Honor Code.” The “Honor Code” are mandatory “morality laws” that students and faculty are required to sign:

- It points students, faculty and staff members toward “moral virtues encompassed in the gospel of Jesus Christ,” prizing chastity, honesty and virtue. It requires modest dress on campus, discourages consensual sex outside marriage and, among other things, prohibits drinking, drug use, same-sex intimacy and indecency, as well as sexual misconduct. (Healy, “At Brigham Young”)

The victims of rape and sexual violence at BYU stated that their perpetrators were emboldened by the laws of the “Honor code” and used them as weapons to silence their victims and to make them submissive. In addition the articles also revealed that Mormon Church leaders as well as
University officials deployed the “Honor code” laws as weapons to silence the victims of rape or sexual violence after they came forward to report the violence. Thus, the “Honor code” was a technology used to silence the voices of the victims of sexual violence and it was used to further their suffering: “Brigham Young University students who are victims of sex crimes say they are investigated by the school and sometimes disciplined after reporting their abuse, a consequence that critics say silences victims and emboldens offenders” (Noyce).

Jacques Derrida and Bernard Stiegler write, “A specter is both visible and invisible, both phenomenal and nonphenomenal; a trace that marks the present with its absence in advance . . . It is in the element of haunting that deconstruction finds the place most hospitable to it, at the heart of the living present” (39). Derrida and Stiegler describe how precisely during “. . . the element of haunting . . . at the heart of the living present,” the ghosts were reawakened and they reminded me that they were always here, “a trace that marks the present with its absence in advance ” always haunting, hovering around me, hungry for recognition and to be remembered (39). Derrida and Stiegler continue, “It is in the element of haunting that deconstruction finds the place most hospitable” but before I deconstruct, I return to sharing narratives about specters, ghosts and hauntings that have recently reawakened reminding me of their central role in my journey of “progress” that is navigated through the U.S.-based Mormon Church (39).

I now return back to the series of articles examining the systemic rape and sexual violence at BYU that I had recently encountered. Upon opening and reading the first article online, I was startled. I stared at the computer screen for a long time and then a river of inexorable grief traveled through my body and then slowly, I began to drown. I reached for my phone and cancelled my appointments for the day. The truth is, in fact, I cancelled appointments for the next few days, for the next week, weeks and even for the next few months. The restless ghosts and their hauntings were awakened. The pain that this phenomenon incited had wrecked a storm in my life that included the return of a debilitating depression created by a heavy shame. I proceeded to open each respective article in the series on the computer screen, meticulously, one after the other, awakening the tender skin of memory, I read each article with great care. Some of the articles were titled: “BYU Students who reported Sex Assaults Say They Faced presumption of Guilt,” and “BYU students say Victims of Sexual Assault are Targeted by Honor Code.” I read the articles multiple times, taking apart sentences and reciting the names of the victims out loud as if we knew each other, intimately. I weighed the heavy words on my tongue until they bled like broken teeth in my mouth, then I spit the blood out to start the process all over again.

The process of confrontation with the ghosts was excruciating and they showed no signs of acquiescing. Although the articles in the Tribune told narratives of sexual assault and rape victims that were strangers to me and they centered the narratives of white women and some white men, the narratives validated histories and secrets that I’ve kept hidden for decades about the violence of rape and sexual violence at BYU. The articles recount the contours of various historical trajectories in my life that I was not allowed to reveal especially because as a Tongan immigrant daughter, I was always taught to believe that the Mormon Church “rescued” us and we were one of the fortunate Tongans to be placed on a new trajectory of “progress.” Within the cycle of “progress,” obedience, gratitude and silence or a phenomenon that I term as internalization of heteropatriarchy were my only legitimate options as I discuss in Chapter Two. The cycles of obedience, gratitude and silence required me to doubt myself and to attempt to forget the histories of violence and suffering and as a result, I often wondered if the memories were even “real.”

Cathy Caruth describes these histories of trauma: “In its repeated imposition as both
image and amnesia, the trauma thus seems to evoke, the difficult truth of a history that is constituted by the very incomprehensibility of its occurrence” (153). Elaine Scarry writes, “The difficulty of expressing physical pain, at every moment lingering nearby was another subject, the political complications that arise as a result of that difficulty. How intricately the problem of pain is bound up with the problem of power” (12). Additionally, the prominent role of power is further articulated by Ned Blackhawk in his important historical work documenting the irreparable hand of settler colonialisms on Indigenous peoples in the Early American West: “Colonial violence, in sum, characterizes these Native worlds as the violence that saturated communities on the margins of empire has also destabilized the categories of analysis used to describe them” (8). Thus, the Mormon Church systemically produced the violence and this institution simultaneously also produced the silence of its victims. Yet, decades later, here in my new life in Oakland, California, the secrets were right here with its very flesh revealed in the articles. The secrets were alive, breathing, and “real”—they were no longer contained by silence.

The narratives in the articles showed me that my secrets were not wounds that I carried alone but they are a collective suffering from patriarchal violence that was systemically produced by the Mormon Church and the violence was materially enacted by the hands of men that I knew in my everyday life and within the boundaries of my Tongan Mormon Family, in my Tongan Mormon community, and men that were my colleagues at BYU. My histories of suffering from patriarchal violence was a collective struggle that connected me with innumerable women and a few men that were victims of patriarchal violence at the premiere Mormon higher education institution, BYU. The articles telling of the normalization of patriarchal violence, rape, and sexual assault against women at BYU memorialized my undergraduate experiences as a young woman and these stories also retell the historical trajectories of growing up as the daughter in a Tongan Mormon Family in various Mormon communities in Tonga, Hawai‘i, Utah, and here in California.

This chapter is an effort to acknowledge and engage with the presence of ghosts and hauntings that have always been here as a legacy of the histories of “progress” and as a consequence of the pernicious hand of Western colonialisms and patriarchal violence that trace the arrival of the first Europeans in the seventeenth century to the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII to the exponential growth of the U.S.-based Mormon Church’s privileged role in the center of the Tongan political landscape in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The ghosts and hauntings that this chapter acknowledges are the histories documenting the often salient but pervasive maneuvers of “progress” on Tonganness that center and are contingent on the deployment of relentless patriarchal violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls especially within the twentieth-century colonial familial spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family.

The Tongan Mormon Family and Normalizing Violence

I was a teenager when my mother, Litia, pursued a PhD in the Department of Statistical Science at BYU. She raised five children—four daughters and a son—worked a full-time job as well as worked small-paying gigs to pay bills while pursuing a degree in a predominantly white and male field and institution. My father, Tangata, was employed as a Tongan language translator for the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City. Although my father cared for us the best that he could, he was often absent and when he was home, violence often followed. Although Tangata stopped drinking alcohol when he was baptized into the Mormon Church in Tonga, the
many wounds of the past—produced by the violence he had experienced as a young boy at a Boarding School in Australia—remained unhealed and these wounds festered and were exacerbated by the new political stratifications legislated by of the Mormon Church. The Church legislated a new manhood that differed from the Pacific worldview and Tongan values that he knew. Tangata’s new life in the Mormon Church was rife and ravished by ghosts and hauntings as well as he played a hand in exacerbating the birth of ghosts and hauntings within the intimate contours of our Tongan Mormon Family.

My telling of this narrative that centers my mother Litia took place on a Sunday afternoon after the main church program called Sacrament Meeting had ended and everyone had gone home. My mother Litia requested an urgent meeting with the Tongan Mormon priesthood leaders to ask them for their intervention to help save her family. Behind closed doors, Litia desperately unfolded a litany of suffering. She documented the stories of the brokenness created by Tangata’s violent rages in our home. She desperately pleaded for help from the male leaders. She believed that they were her salvation and they could help her save her home, her marriage, and the desperate lives of her five children. But Litia left the Mormon Church leaders’ office, that afternoon, covered with a newfound shame and hopelessness that broke her spirit. The Tongan Church leaders responded to Litia’s cries for help by silencing her. In response, the Tongan male Church leaders cited Mormon scripture, and the words of Mormon Church leaders and official doctrine to remind Litia of the importance of the Mormon family and the laws of gender. They reminded her that Tangata had the authority of the priesthood and he was the patriarch of the home. Instead of helping to dissipate and end the suffering, the Tongan male Church leaders exacerbated the velocity of the suffering and they punished Litia for coming to them and for speaking out against the violence. Furthermore, the Tongan male Mormon Church leaders promised Litia that if she was obedient and followed the rules and laws of the Mormon Family and the gender roles legislated by the Church, peace would ensue in the home.

Ironically, these are the very same guidelines that Litia used to silence me, a few years later when I was a young woman in my twenties. I desperately went to her pleading for help to save my life. Behind closed doors, I lifted my blouse revealing the markings of heavy bruises coagulating on my belly, breasts, and thighs. These were the vulgar marks of rape and sexual assault made by the hands of a Tongan boyfriend, a Mormon return missionary and leader in the Mormon Church. Ironically, Litia’s advice to me that night echoed the words of the Tongan Mormon Church leaders. She reminded me of the importance of obedience to the laws of the Mormon family and the importance of gender roles and she promised that if I complied with these laws, peace would ensue. Litia and I both knew that our roles as Tongan women in the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon family and in the Mormon Church was limited to the arduous performances of gratitude, obedience and silence. These respective performances of gratitude, obedience and silence depict the Tongan embodiment of the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy. In Chapter Two, I argue that the internalization of heteropatriarchy requires Tongans not just to perform repetition but they are required to “internalize” the laws of heteropatriarchy.

**Haunting as Methodology and History**

Ghosts, specters and hauntings are phenomenon that are prominent in the contemporaneous colonial discourse of “containment” of Tongan and Pacific peoples as I show throughout this chapter. Before I proceed to discuss some of the theoretical framework that I
utilize in this chapter, I want to note that the colonial objectives of ghosts and specters as metaphors of “containment” differ from Tongan cultural norms that I share in a narrative at the end of this chapter titled Tongan Ghost Story, The Haunted Chair that documents va that continue to thrive between the living and the dead or an ancestor spirit that is classified as ghost in the West. The narrative documents a historical moment remembering a conversation conducted between two figures, one that is alive and the other is dead or ghost that takes place during the 1970s after my family had converted into the Mormon Church. The narrative recounts a once common Tongan practice of cultivating va with ancestors that have passed to the world of the dead or are ghosts. This va shared between the living and the dead becomes criminalized after the arrival of Christian missionaries as part of their quintessential project to desecrate the Sacred. The criminalization of Tongan va with the dead or ghosts are further exacerbated after the arrival of the Mormon missionaries and in their missionizing projects in Tonga after WWII.

In the prize-winning novel Where We Once Belonged, Samoan writer Sia Figiel writes about “Mail aiku,” defined as the “The sickness of ghosts. It is when an unhappy agaga reveals itself in the body of the living to show his unhappiness” (48). Scholars in Tongan Studies posit the term ‘avanga as the Tongan “sickness of ghosts” described by Mapa Ha’ano Puloka as, “Avanga in its popular Tongan conceptualization means an acute short duration sickness caused (or believed to be caused) by a spook” (Puloka 268). In her work examining Tongan health and healing practices, Claire D. Parsons points out the new pejorative significance that ‘avanga began to represent after the arrival of Europeans, “The coming of the missionaries brought the word ‘devil,’ which became in Tongan, tevolo. The parallel between the malevolent activities of the avanga and those of the tevolo were readily available, and the new word quickly became applied to avanga, especially by Europeans” (95). However, Parsons adamantly reminds us that Tongans often refused this conflation and located ‘avanga outside of the reach of Christianity especially in regards to healing, “Rather than being equated with the biblical devil, however, the avanga are usually construed by Tongans as belonging to a domain separate from Christianity. Thus, the Tongan people chose to deal with such spirits through their own (secular) means, usually by bringing in faito’o avanga, spirit healer” (95).

In the next part of this section, I share some of the theoretical framework that guides my discussion of ghosts, specters, and hauntings in the production of the historical “containment” of Tonganness especially in its contemporaneous manifestations and maneuvers deployed by the U.S.-based Mormon Church. In their compelling article, “A Glossary of Haunting,” Eve Tuck and C. Ree offer the vastly different views of justice that are depicted in the representations of ghosts and apparitions in Japanese horror films vs. U.S. films. For instance, U.S. films portray the hero as “innocent” and undeserving of the monsters and hauntings that befall them and thus, the duration of films are centered on the heroes’ battles of “containment” of monsters and ghosts, “The hero spends the length of the film righting wrongs, slaying the monster, burying the undead, performing the missing rite, all as a way of containment” (641).

On the other hand, the heroes in Japanese films respond to ghosts and monsters in different ways: “The depth of injustice that begat the monster or ghost is acknowledged, the hero does not think herself to be innocent” (Tuck and Ree 641). Tuck and Ree offer a road map that they liken to a math equation delineating the colonial cycles of producing and reproducing ghosts and hauntings that the U.S. hero participates in and yet, he also performs its “containment.” I share this equation here and I show how the U.S.-based Mormon Church and U.S. settler colonialism together legislate this cycle of producing and “containment” of a legacy of ghosts and hauntings in Tonga and on Tonganness:
Story arc has the same seduction as math, a solution to the problem set of injustice. i.e.,
crux of the hero’s problem often lies in performing that mathematics. Chainsaw the
phantom + understand the phantom = a return to the calm of our good present day . . . .
Until the next breach, which triggers the next round of problem solving. (641)

Thus, as the authors illustrate, the U.S. preoccupation with an innocuous hero that is entitled to a
peaceful life without the presence of ghosts and other apparitions is unrealistic and even
undeserved by the U.S. hero because “Haunting is the cost of subjugation. It is the price paid for
violence, for genocide” (643). Furthermore, the authors contend that haunting is not an apolitical
nuisance but it is a methodology that is mired with political objectives: “For ghosts, the haunting
is the resolving, it is not what needs to be resolved. Haunting aims to wrong the wrongs” (642).

The importance of acknowledging ghosts and hauntings as a means of working towards
justice are key themes that Avery Gordon addresses in her important book, Ghostly Matters.
Gordon encourages researchers to acknowledge the phenomenon of ghosts and hauntings and to
participate in uncovering the historical antecedents that birthed them as fertile methodologies for
conducting research on modern social life. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, Avery
asserts that the methodologies of haunting change the ways that knowledges are produced:

Haunting is a constituent element of modern social life. It is neither premodern
superstition nor individual psychosis; it is a generalizable social phenomenon of great
import. To study social life one must confront the ghostly aspects of it. This confrontation
requires (or produces) a fundamental change in the way we know and make knowledge,
in our mode of production. (7)

Gordon also contends that the methodologies of ghosts and hauntings can help us to trace the
social realities that are systematically concealed, “The ghost or the apparition is one form by which
something lost, or barely visible, or seemingly not there to our supposedly well-trained eyes,
makes itself known or apparent to us” because as she argues, “The ghost is not simply a dead or
a missing person, but a social figure, and investigating it can lead to that dense site where history
and subjectivity make social life” (8).

Earlier, I wrote about the profound and debilitating suffering that I experienced after
encountering the articles in the Salt Lake Tribune that looked at the systemic sexual violence in
the premiere Mormon institution, BYU, because the narratives mirrored my own histories as an
undergraduate student at BYU and as a daughter in a Tongan Mormon Family. The articles
awakened cycles of hauntings, ghosts, and they aggravated sufferings that I have kept as secrets
and hidden for decades as strategies to help my family and me to survive the day-to-day and to
navigate our new lives here in the U.S. These secrets were burdens that I carried in silence
because we were on the linear timeline and embodied within the “stories of success,” as Toni
Morrison terms them. Yet ironically, the relentless hauntings of ghosts and specters resist the
status quo and they dispute the veracity of the “stories of success” and “progress,” because as
Tuck and Ree have argued, “Haunting aims to wrong the wrongs” (642).

As I mentioned earlier, what was most profound and empowering about the articles in the
Salt Lake Tribune, is that they showed me that my secrets were not imagined but they were real
and these were not wounds that I carried in isolation but these wounds were a shared and they
were part of a collective suffering, a heartbeat that connected me with innumerable survivors of
sexual violence produced and maintained by the hands of the Mormon Church. This new
knowledge gave me a map to name and process my suffering. The harrowing stories of violence,
courage and survival offered me a new commitment to wholeheartedly pursue and finish this
dissertation or as Gloria Anzaldua astutely documents about the act of writing, “Because I must
keep the spirit of my revolt and myself alive.” Furthermore, Anzaldúa reminds us about the important role of writing as a strategy for acknowledging the legacies of hauntings and ghosts, “I write to record what others erase when I speak, to rewrite the stories others have miswritten about me, about you. To become more intimate with myself and you” (167). Following Anzaldúa’s example, I write as an attempt to remember va and to mend the intimacies that have been broken by the hands of patriarchal violence.

**Settler Colonialism, Tonganness and Mormonism**

The narratives about Tonganness and the legacies of ghosts and specters that haunt Tonganness take place in my Tongan homeland and also here in the U.S. I show how Tongan women’s bodies in these various and respective locations map the “ongoing horror” of settler colonialisms “made invisible by its persistence—the snake in the flooded basement” (Tuck and Ree 642). In his informative book, *Red Skin White Masks*, Glen Sean Coulthard defines the goals of “settler-colonial relationships” as a “particular form of domination”:

A settler-colonial relationship is one characterized by a particular form of domination; that is, it is a relationship where power—in this case, interrelated discursive and nondiscursive facets of economic, gendered, racial, and state power—has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchal social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority. (7)

I show how a “settler-colonial relationship” defined as “set of hierarchal social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority” defines the relationship shared by Mormonism with Tonganness and this “particular form of domination” produces ghosts and hauntings for Tongans not just in our Tongan homeland but also here in the U.S. (7). I examine the contours of the “settler-colonial relationship” shared by Mormonism with Tonganness by mapping Tongan women’s bodies as historical archives and as sites for the deployment of patriarchal violence that takes place in Tonga and within the contours of Tongan Mormon communities here in the U.S. Mishuana Goeman writes, “Native women’s bodies also become the conduit of possible violence that reinforce settler structures of violence” (100). Tongan women’s bodies are the “conduit” “that reinforce settler structures of violence” both in Tonga and here in Tongan communities in the U.S. (100).

The next part of this section briefly traces the histories of U.S. Empire and occupation during WWII that undergird the settler colonial ties between Tonganness and U.S. Empire. These histories of U.S. Empire and U.S. imperialisms underpin the framework of the contemporaneous relationality shared by Tonganness to Mormonism and this relationality is marked by the unprecedented and exorbitant Tongan conversions into the Mormon Church in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mishuana Goeman suggests new epistemological directions for settler colonial studies and for analysis of “settler-colonial relationships” that I use to guide me in this analysis. She argues:

If the aim of settler colonial studies is to confront colonial structures, it must consider an investigation of embodied practices in settler societies beyond the way that settler knowledge represents the indigenous as absent. Settler colonial theory needs also to be accountable to how bodies move through spaces and the scales of spaces set up through imposed criteria—or a logic of containment. Furthermore, embodied practices must move
Goeman’s arguments offer important epistemological trajectories for framing this research that centers the Tongan female body as a site for the deployment of patriarchal violence and as a historical archive for tracing “settler-colonial relationships” “that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority” (7).

As I have shared earlier in this chapter, Tongans hold the global record on the highest conversion rate into Mormonism after WWII and in addition, most Tongans living in the U.S. are members of the Mormon Church. This reality is often deployed as self-evident pointing to the superiority of U.S. Empire, Mormonism, and Western “progress.” However, in this chapter, I show a map that counters this colonial logic. I center the Tongan female body and begin by locating her in her Indigenous Pacific homeland, Tonga, and I trace the dominant hand of U.S. Empire during WWII that lends to her subsequent conversion into Mormonism and migration to the U.S. mitigated by Mormonism and the authority of the Mormon Church continues and it intervenes to shape the political contours of Tongan communities and Tongan families here in the U.S. The settler-colonial relationship that Tonganness shares with Mormonism is an overarching and unrelenting “particular form of domination,” that “that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority” (7). This relationship marks the respective lives of the Tongan subjects and the contours of their narratives that I share throughout this chapter. I trace a “particular form of domination” that transpires in the Pacific and is reproduced here in the U.S. and thus, “Settler colonial theory needs also to be accountable to how bodies move through spaces and the scales of spaces set up through imposed criteria—or a logic of containment” (102).

Contemporaneous Tonganness under the heavy hand of the U.S.-based Mormon Church, in various geographic locations, exemplifies the statement, “the settler never leaves” and its the “Settler-colonial relationship” of unparalleled domination that shapes and is manifested as patriarchal violence deployed on the bodies of Tongan women (Wolfe qtd. in Simpson 19). The “settler-colonial relationship” that Tonganness shares with Mormonism is as described by Tuck and Ree: “Settler colonialism is the management of those who have been made killable, once and future ghosts—those that had been destroyed, but also those that are generated in every generation” (Tuck and Ree 642). In this relationship, Tonganness is the ghost and “those who have been made killable” and yet, as I attempt to show, Tonganness, are the ghosts and the haunting, “that are generated in every generation” (Tuck and Ree 642).

**Tongan Mormon Family, a Legacy of Haunting: Patriarchy as an Organizing Principle**

When I was a young woman growing up in the small towns of Provo and Orem, Utah, I was often reminded in my early morning seminary classes and in various religious meetings that one of the Church’s most despicable enemies was a woman, a feminist, and her name was Sonia Johnson. We were taught to fear and despise her. Johnson’s name was evoked in Mormon spaces as a type of monster to keep Mormons, especially young Mormon women in “our place.” Many decades later here in my new life in California, I revisit Sonia Johnson’s courageous life dedicated to fighting patriarchal domination in the Mormon Church and I recognize that her work has and continues to inspire my work that critically examines the central role of patriarchy in Mormonism because like Johnson, Mormonism was also once my home.

Johnson is a white woman, a mother, and “devout Church member who played the organ...
and taught in Sunday School and Relief Society. A Utah-born Mormon with pioneer roots and a doctorate in education” (Johnson 66). She was adamantly against the Mormon Church’s organized political campaign to oppose the ratification of the (ERA) Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Thus, she organized a Mormon organization to fight for women’s rights and the ratification of the ERA Amendment. In 1975, the white and male leaders of the Mormon Church wrote an editorial in Church News, expressing “their concerns that the amendment would undermine traditional gender roles for men and women, roles that, according to the Church leaders, reflected the will of God” (Brooks 12).

Johnson identifies the central role of patriarchy as a “principle of organization” in the Mormon Church, “in the Mormon church, patriarchy is sacred; it is held to be the principle of organization by which a male God created and governs the world through other males like himself. It is the masculine glue that holds the world together” (Johnson 67). In addition, Johnson shares a narrative that elucidates the central role of violence against women that undergirds the Mormon patriarchal domination. She writes:

But we have other, more direct, ways of knowing how badly threatened and angry our brethren are by the existence of women who are not under their control. In April, we hired a plane to fly a banner over Temple Square in Salt Lake City during a break in the world-wide Conference of male leaders being held in the Tabernacle. The banner announced that MORMONS FOR ERA ARE EVERYWHERE. A reporter phoned the [press secretary] of the Church to ask how the Brethren were taking this little prank and was told that they found it ‘amusing.’ Then the [press secretary] suggested that the reporter put a cartoon in the next day’s paper showing our plane flying over the Angel Moroni atop the Temple (as the actual newspaper had) but instead of a trumpet, picture Moroni brandishing a machine gun. (75)

Johnson’s narrative allows us to view that patriarchal domination is contingent on the deployment of violence against women as well as the looming-threat or fear of violence against women as technologies for maintaining the Mormon status quo. Furthermore, it is also not surprising that, for her, resistance against patriarchal domination in the Church, Johnson was severely punished by the all-white patriarchal church leaders and “on November 14, 1979, Sonia Johnson was called to a church disciplinary court” and finally, “On December 1, 1979, Sonia Johnson received notice by letter that she had been excommunicated” (73). The trajectory of Johnson’s life in the Mormon Church that inevitably leads to her excommunication from the Church reveals the centrality of patriarchy as an “organizing principle” like she has argued and it also reveals the reality of patriarchal punishment that are deployed on women that refuse to comply to the status quo.

The centrality of the institution of patriarchy as “organizing principle” in the Mormon Church is highlighted in the work of Mormon Church leader, Eric B. Shumway, in his book Tongan Saints: Legacy of Faith, which is a compilation of Tongan “narratives of progress” and “stories of success” from “Saints of Tonga” (9). In the Introduction chapter of his book, Shumway notes that although the Tongan voices featured in the collection “Come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences spanning four generations.” They are however, “Bound by a common belief,” and he states, “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [Mormonism] is in very fact the only ‘true and living church’ on the face of the earth . . . the fullness of the gospel, with its priesthood authority, ordinances, organization, and keys to full salvation are vested only in one church” (8). Shumway’s statement unabashedly lays out a global hegemonic cartography of power stratifications that trace its center to the Mormon Church and this map
gives Mormonism unfettered authority as the only, “true and living church’ on the face of the earth” because, according to Shumway, what makes this Church exceptional is, as Sonja Johnson has pointed out, it is the Mormon Church’s “priesthood authority” (8). Although Johnson and Shumway inhabit vastly different positionalities of power in relation to the Mormon Church, they both, however, share a knowledge of the centrality of the institution of patriarchy as “organizing principle” in the Mormon Church.

Adding on to Johnson and Shumway’s discussion, I want to suggest that perhaps a more fitting term that describes the power, authority and centrality of the organizing principle, patriarchy, in the Mormon Church is “heteropatriarchy,” a system described by Arvin, Morrill and Tuck as, “by heteropatriarchy, we mean the social systems in which heterosexuality and patriarchy are perceived as normal and natural, and in which other configurations are perceived as abnormal, aberrant, and abhorrent” (Arwin et al. 13). I also offer a definition of heteropatriarchy that I posit in Chapter Two of this dissertation to this discussion that I hope can help with contextualizing the role that heteropatriarchy played in subjugating Tongans especially within the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. Here is my argument: I use the term “heteropatriarchy” to define a central organizing principle in the colonial “racialized projects” that were historically deployed by the European explorers, Christians and U.S. military and Mormon missionaries in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to colonize Tonganness. As M. Jacqui Alexander has argued, “heteropatriarchy functions in ways that supercede the sexual. At this historical moment, for instance, heteropatriarchy is useful in continuing to perpetuate a colonial inheritance” (24). In Chapter Two, I posit that heteropatriarchy is a colonially manufactured systems and economies of va, spatialities of intimacies and relationalities that traces its root to the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine. I use Frantz Fanon’s theory of “perverted logic” in my analysis to show that the colonial project aimed for “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native, by strategically reaching into the Native’s past and systemically “devaluing pre-colonial history” as a strategy for subjugating the native in the present moment and in the future. I further contextualize this theory in more detail in Chapter Two.

Contemporaneously, the Mormon Church’s commitment to heteropatriarchy is “Continuing to perpetuate a colonial inheritance” on Tonganness and although the Church shares these similarities with earlier “racialized projects” such as the early Christian colonial projects in Tonga, there are however, many differences between the ways that these disparate and respective religious institutions inhabit and exhibit power and authority over Tonganness (Alexander 24). Hence, I ask what are some of the historical and political phenomena that propel the Mormon Church, a Church that was once located on the margins in the nineteenth century, to the center of the Tongan political landscape in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries? For as Finau Fonua reports in the publication, Matangi Tonga, “Tonga is the world’s most Mormon Country, having a higher proportion of Mormons per capita than any other nation.” Matangi Tonga’s findings also elucidate the inextricable ties between Tongan conversions to Mormonism and the Tongan migrations to U.S. that are navigated through the Mormon Church.

The Church plays a heavy hand in shaping the political contours and desires of Tongan communities in the U.S: “The LDS Church is also predominant among the Tongan diaspora in the United States” (Fonua, Matangi Tonga). Some of the questions that loom in my mind are: What are some of the Mormon Church’s political networks and connections to power and authority that undergird their newly founded authority and heightened power in contemporaneous Tonganness? Recalling Eric B. Shumway’s earlier statement locating his Church as “exceptional” and “the only true and living church on the face of the earth,” what are
some comparisons with other Christian religious institutions that have colonized Tonganness? Furthermore, what are some of the historical exigencies that navigate and underpin Shumway’s voice giving him this type of authority and entitlement that is similar to and yet it surpasses the arrogance and the political goals for domination made by earlier European “racialized projects” in Tonga? Stuart Hall’s theory of articulation asserts “the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time” (Hall qtd. in Slack 115). I use Hall’s theory of articulation to help me with my examination of the Mormon Church and the new power hierarchies that it produces in Tonga. Thus, I examine the historical trajectories that navigate the “articulations” that shape and underpin the “settler-colonial relationship” shared between Tonganness and Mormonism. Stuart Hall asks, “Under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made?” (Hall qtd. in Slack 115). I am interested in tracing and naming some of the historical “circumstances” that produce, enable, and sustain the unprecedented “connection” between Tonganness and Mormonism in the last two centuries, and I propose some suggestions later in this dissertation.

Tongan Mormon Family & Following the Tracks of Tongan Nationalist Family

The spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family produces and manages the legacies of hungry ghosts and unrelenting hauntings. This contemporaneous institution is shaped by the values of U.S. settler colonialism that Tuck and Ree describe as, “the management of those who have been made killable, once and future ghosts—those that had been destroyed, but also those that are generated in every generation” (642). Glen Sean Coulthard identifies the “particular form of domination” that undergird the “settler-colonial relationship,” that he posits is “characterized by a particular form of domination; that is, it is a relationship where power . . . has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchal social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority (7).

Two Historical “Racialized Projects” and the Tongan Mormon Family

The Tongan Mormon Family traces its genealogies to two historical “racialized projects” with political intentions that are defined Omi and Winant in their foundational work on racialization, “the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed” and furthermore, they contend that racialized projects are “historically situated projects in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized” (55–56). The Tongan Mormon Family created in the twenty-first century traces its roots to two historical “racialized projects” that were produced through the deployment of relentless patriarchal violence on Tonganness and more specifically, these new forms of violence specifically targeted the bodies of Tongan women and Tongan girls. The first racialized project is in the nineteenth-century Tongan Nationalist Family. This colonial spatiality was produced and enabled by Christian missionizing projects through the unfettered deployment of patriarchal violence that aimed to ultimately desecrate the Tongan Sacred and to supplant the losses with the institutionalization of the new white male and Christian God.

The second “racialized project” that produce the Tongan Mormon Family is the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII. This is a historical moment that produces a legacy of
unprecedented and unceasing patriarchal violence on Tonganness and it drastically transforms the Tongan political landscape through the introduction of two phenomenon; the first is the relentless systemic deployment of militarized rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls that leads to the contemporaneous centering of the institution of heteropatriarchy in Tongan culture that include the normalization of rape and violence against Tongan women and girls. Second, this poignant historical moment produced unremitting violence on Tonganness and it profoundly marks the U.S. military and U.S. Empire as “White terror.” or as ghosts that relentlessly haunt the Tongan imagination.

Yet all the while, the nationalistic memories paint the war as the “good war” and the U.S. military are heralded as “liberators” and thus, these colonial messages complicate and silence the Tongan ancestral knowledges that remember and define the U.S. Empire as “White terror.” Ironically, I contend that the unprecedented and rampant Tongan conversions into the U.S.-based Mormon Church that took place after WWII allow us to view the veracity of the cycles of hauntings and destruction on Tonganness produced by U.S. Empire during WWII. In the timeline of “progress,” the Mormon Church is viewed as the “rescuer” and “savior” of Tonganness, harboring them from the violent legacies of U.S. Empire. At the same time, moreover, the Mormon Church’s inextricable connection to U.S. Empire offers Tongans a proximity to power that offers them a false sense of comfort from the violence of U.S. Empire. These are themes that I discuss in the following sections.

Tongan Nationalist Family and Christian Patriarchal Violence

This section briefly looks at the colonial spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family produced in the twentieth century that I posit is one of the official and major “racialized projects”. I show the role of Christianity in creating a legacy of patriarchal violence in Tonga that frames the boundaries of the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family. Furthermore, I argue that the Tongan Nationalist Family produces a new colonial genealogy that consolidates and “normalizes” heteropatriarchy symbolized and “united” under a new Tongan Christian monarchical nation. In turn, these new political changes and colonial values consolidated in the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family surveilled and disciplined Tonganness and the Tongan political landscape and it created political vulnerabilities that enable the political formation of the Tongan Mormon Family in the twenty-first century after the U.S. occupation of Tonga during WWII. In Chapters Three, Four, and Five of this dissertation, I trace the genealogy of colonial and/or what I often refer to as patriarchal violence and I show that the current preoccupation with patriarchal violence that pervades contemporaneous Tongan life is a legacy of European colonialism and it is a European import to Tonga. The Europeans are “the bringers of violence into the home and the mind of the native” (Fanon 91).

The arrival of the first Christian missionaries in 1797 led by Captain Wilson and sponsored by the London Missionary Society (LMS) was the continuation of a cycle of colonial violence in Tonga and it is one of the key historical moments that produced Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that I discuss in Chapter Three. European missionaries arrived on Tongan shores with their systems of racialization and heteropatriarchy symbolized by their new male Christian God. The Christians were armed with their political intentions to “convert” the “savages” at all costs. This is a colonial project driven by an insatiable hunger for power founded in their “perverted logic” that is a profound theory proposed by Frantz Fanon that I describe in more detail in Chapter Two and Chapter Four. This theory examines the psychology behind the
colonizer’s insatiable desire for domination that demands a systemic disavowal of the native’s past to ensure colonial domination over the native’s present and future. Furthermore, the Europeans legislated the systems of linear time described by Gloria Anzaldúa as, “this dichotomy is the root of all violence” (59). The Christians unrelenting deployed patriarchal violence to produce wars, massacres and the destruction of Tongan life lines, relationalities, economies and culture through the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the heartbeat of Tonganness. Before concluding my discussion on the heavy hand of Christian missionaries in producing a legacy of patriarchal violence on Tonganness that is consolidated and “naturalized” in the spatiality of The Tongan Nationalist Family, I also briefly share some of my research in Chapter Four that examines the new jurisdiction and prohibitions legislated in the Tongan Constitution of 1875 authored by British Christian missionary Shirley Baker that privilege the new colonial systems of heteropatriarchy and white supremacy under the new authority of the Tongan monarchy. The opening statement of the Constitution explicitly maps the contours of the new Tongan hierarchies and it unequivocally centers the white male Christian God at the top and it locates the new Tongan “kingdom” as the next step of this new hierarchal ladder:

Seeing it appears to be the Will of God for man to be free, as He has made of one blood all nations of men, therefore shall the people of Tonga be forever free, and all the people who reside or may reside in this kingdom. (252)

One of the major goals of the Constitution was the legislation of new laws for private land ownership that privilege Tongan men while it marginalizes Tongan women from this system. In addition, the Constitution also legislates the criminalization of Tongan women’s access to reproduction rights, abortion and heteropatriarchal marriage is legislated and this new form of relationality takes center stage throughout the pages of the new Constitution.5

In addition, I also argue in Chapters Three, Four, and Five that alongside the institutionalization of heteropatriarchy, violence against women is a central organizing principle that undergird the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family and the new social and cultural relationalities after the coming of the missionaries. The normalization of this violence that is shrouded in silence is as Tuck and Ree write, “an ongoing horror made invisible by its persistence—the snake in the flooded basement” (642). In fact, violence against women and the fear of impending patriarchal violence is the glue that maintains the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family and in turn, Tongan Nationalist Family is a microcosm of the larger spatiality of the Tongan nation. This earlier colonial familial spatiality is one of the two historical “racialized projects” that amalgamate to produce the contours of the contemporaneous Tongan Mormon Family produced in the twenty-first century.

U.S. Military Occupation of Tonga in WWII

The U.S. Military Occupation of Tonga during WWII is the second “racialized project” that is one of the two major building blocks that produce the Tongan Mormon Family. The U.S. militarization of Tonga and the Pacific during WWII drastically altered the Tongan political landscape that allowed for the proliferation of the relatively unknown U.S-based Mormon Church to grow to unprecedented prominence. What is unknown to most is that the Mormon Church, currently one of the wealthiest and most powerful institutions in the world, once held a marginal position in Tonga in the 1890s when their first missionaries settle Tonga. During the late-nineteenth century, Tongans overwhelmingly chose not to convert to this religious institution and thus, Mormon missionaries were forced to abandon their missions in Tonga and to
leave for Samoa because of their marginalization. As described by Eric Shumay:

The Friendly Islands [Tonga] were a less than fertile field for preaching the restored
gospel. Approximately twenty missionaries labored there for five years and nine months,
baptizing only fifteen persons, ordaining only one to the Aaronic Priesthood and none to
the Melchizedek Priesthood. (8)

Shumway further notes, “With heavy hearts and mixed feelings, the final team of Mormon
missionaries sailed back to Samoa in April 1897, closing, at least for the time being . . . .” (7).

And yet, after WWII, the Mormon Church quickly abandoned its status on the margins
and it moves into its current positionality at the center of the Tongan political landscape, “Tonga
is the world’s most Mormon Country” (Fonua, Matangi Tonga). As I’ve asked earlier in this
section using Stuart Hall’s theory of articulation “the connection that can make a unity of two
different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined,
absolute and essential for all time” (Hall qtd. in Slack 115). I examine the historical trajectories
that navigate the “connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain
conditions” and shapes the “settlor-colonial relationship” between Tonganness and Mormonism.
Stuart Hall asks, “You have to ask under what circumstances can a connection be forged or
made?” I use these critical queries to frame and shape the next sections.

U.S. Military and Patriarchal Violence in Tonga

This section looks at the U.S. military’s deployment of patriarchal violence as a
technology for centering and expanding the goals of U.S. Empire in Tonga. It is also a strategy
for building and maintaining long-term U.S. dominion over Tonganness. Lisa Koneyama writes,
about the dominant narrative defining our memories of the U.S. military’s role in WWII, “The
U.S. war against Japan is remembered as a “good war” (58) and the U.S. were also termed as
“liberators” (58). Shigemasu and Camacho posit, “This interplay of colonial legacies continues
to animate a sense of indebtedness to the United States as the ‘rescuer’ for many postcolonial
subjects” (xxi). The “interplay of colonial legacies” inform and shape the dominant Tongan
memories of WWII and as I show later, they also produce and enable the exorbitant growth of
the U.S.-based Mormon Church.

In his informative essay, The United States Occupation of Tonga, 1942–1945: The Social
and Economic Impact, historian Charles J. Weeks, Jr. documents the two phases of the U.S.
military occupation of Tonga during WWII: “The American occupation of Tonga can be roughly
dived into two phases; the first period, from the arrival of Task Force 51 on May 9, 1942…and
the second period lasting until the final evacuation of the American naval base in October 1945”
(405). Margaret Hixon describes the profound moment of the U.S. military’s arrival on Tongan
shores. The military operation was named “Operative BLEACHER” and it was a “highly
secretive” project. She documents:

On a May morning, United States Task Force 51 entered the turquoise waters of
Nuku’alofa harbor and dropped anchor. The highly secretive Operation BLEACHER was
scheduled to begin at approximately eight o’clock . . . . The number of ships in the
convoy is given . . . as ‘30 odd ships. The unloading of military personnel and equipment
comprised around 7,000 soldiers, 800 sailors, officers and nurses, and over 90,000 tons of
cargo. Thus began an occupation of Tongatapu that was to last three and a half years.
(123)
In “Haunting, Mormonism, and Patriarchal Violence,” I look at a historical narrative depicting the layered threads of U.S. military’s unrelenting deployment of patriarchal violence and authority in Tonga. I highlight a narrative often termed as the “Great Cigarette Raid” in this discussion.

**The Great Cigarette Raid**

In August 1944, it was alleged that Tongan thieves broke into the Navy warehouse at Ma’ufanga and they stole U.S. commodities that included gasoline, beer, other equipment and perhaps what was perhaps most memorable in this theft was the taking of “72 cases of cigarettes” (Wood-Ellem 19) and thus, the layers of violence that ensued after this incident was called, the “Great Cigarette Raid” (Weeks 419). Before proceeding with the narrative, I reveal that the historian Wood-Ellem states in her research that when investigations were finally conducted on this incident, it was discovered that “much of the property recovered had been ‘freely and openly given away’ by Americans at the time prior to the raid, some of it by servicemen participating in the raid” (Wood-Ellem 19). I mention this information because I want to highlight the U.S. military desires and intentions of producing and inflicting violence on Tonganness that takes place prior to the theft at the Navy warehouse. Furthermore its important to note that after the theft took place, the U.S. military refused to alert or notify the local Tongan police and authorities and instead, they took the matters into their own hands; they created martial law and they brought terror and destruction to Tonga. The U.S. military “Authorized road blocks to stop suspected vehicles” and “Navy men roamed the streets and countryside armed with revolvers and rifles” arbitrarily arresting and beating up Tongans they suspected participated in the crime (Wood-Ellem 19).

The U.S. military’s deployment of violence did not stop here and they deployed terror without end. For example, in another show of unfettered authority and force, in the early morning hours on August 15, 1944:

The armed navy vigilantes barged into the home of the Tongan Premier Ata and demanded informed about the stolen property. After lining the Prime Minister’s wife and family against a wall, the sailors made a perfunctory search of the house for beer and cigarettes. When they had finished the Prime Minister’s family, the naval task force proceeded to numerous houses in the vicinity, kicking down doors, firing revolvers into the air, and lining up elderly people against walls for search and interrogation. Later, when Ata requested an explanation for this outrage at a scheduled meeting with naval officials, American officers arrived late with located pistols and took over the meeting. (420)

In Glen Sean Coulthard’s definition of “settler-colonial relationship,” he posits that these relationships are “characterized by a particular form of domination; that is, it is a relationship where power . . . has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchal social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority” (7).

Coulthard’s theory of “settler-colonialism” allows us to better “read” the U.S. military’s deployment of violence and devastation in 1944 aimed to “facilitate the dispossession of” Tongan peoples “from their lands and their self-determining authority” (7). This historical moment of relentless U.S. military and patriarchal violence drastically alters the order of Tongan self-determination and these drastic changes as well as other changes to the Tongan political
landscape that I will discuss shortly produces and enables the exponential growth of the U.S. Mormon Church in Tonga after WWII. The spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family is founded on histories of U.S. military violence and the cycles of Tongan dispossession from their lands and self-determination through the relentless deployment of patriarchal violence on Tonganness. The Tongan Mormon Family is a spatiality that erases as well as it proliferates the production of these cycles of violence, contemporaneously. As Tuck and Ree write about settler-colonial relationships, “Social life, settler colonialism, and haunting are inextricably bound; each ensures there are always more ghosts to return” (642). The Tongan Mormon family is a colonial spatiality that ensures that “there are always more ghosts to return” (642).

**Tongan Women, U.S. Military and Sexual Violence**

In the various tellings that trace the monumental changes that U.S. occupation created in the Tongan political landscape after WWII, Tongan scholars identify the two biggest changes that transpired was a new Tongan economy created by the exorbitant supply of U.S. dollars and commodities and the second monumental change was Tongan women’s exponential participation in the prostitution trade that flourished during this historical moment. In everyday conversations that I’ve had with Tongan elders and family members while growing up in Tonga and here in the U.S. and in the process of conducting research for this dissertation, I was often heartbroken and alarmed by the misogynistic tone used by many Tongans and especially by Tongan men and many of them in my own family in their telling of narratives about Tongan women’s sexualities during WWII. Tongans recall this historical moment with ambiguity that on one hand, praised the U.S. dollars and commodities as imperative for “progress” and yet there is a gendered disdain that preoccupies our Tongan memory about this historical moment because of the, imagined, prodigious prostitution trade that employed the sexual services of many Tongan women during WWII.

Siosiua F. Pouvalu Lafitani writes about Tongan women’s rampant participation in the prostitution trade during WWII with U.S. soldiers. In his narration of his historical moment, he is uncritical of the role of U.S. soldiers and U.S. Empire in producing and enabling the prostitution trade in Tonga and he reserves his maligned criticism for those Tongans located on the margins of the nation: Tongan women and those that he terms as “homosexuals.” He deploys morality as weapons to argue that the prostitution trade was so prodigious that it included the participation of “unmarried and married” Tongan women: “Oral information has revealed situations where cash, material and food resources were given by the American armies to Tongan women as reciprocity for making love. There were stories of making love in a bedroom, under a tree, inside a truck and so on, and most of such stories pointed to both unmarried and married women” (79). In turn, in his analysis he paints all Tongan women as deviant sexualities and as “prostitutes”: “It has perhaps been more difficult to distinguish Tongan women that are behaving as prostitutes from those who are not” (80).

Interestingly, and tellingly, Lafitani classifies all Tongan women as deviant because of his judgmental and sanctimonious view of their sexuality under the hands of the U.S. military and thus, Lafitani continues his marginalization of Tongan women and he silences and down plays the issue of Tongan women and rape during this historical moment. He ardently declares, “Again, there were very few reports of rape and sexual harassment of women” (79). Lafitani’s heteropatriarchal preoccupation with Tongan women’s “deviant” sexualities traced to their role as prostitutes for U.S. soldiers during WWII shapes dominant Tongan memories about WWII
and his voice also reflect the trauma and violence of his historical moment and the difficulties of naming and remembering the suffering that defines this moment. These layers are issues that I examine later.

Next, I share a narrative offered by renowned Tongan male scholar, Futa Helu, telling about a Tongan woman’s sexuality during WWII under U.S. occupation. I briefly analyze some of its underlying meanings and what it tells us about the trajectories of violence that the U.S. military deployed during their occupation of Tonga. I’m also interested in tracing the ways that we Tongans have contemporaneously internalized the heinous violence and trauma committed by the U.S. military during this historical moment in Tonga. Similar to other Tongan male voices such as Lafitani, Futa Helu is preoccupied with Tongan women’s sexualities in his analysis of WWII. Helu writes about the prostitution trade in Tonga and its expeditious growth during the U.S. occupation, “but prostitution as a career, a strategy for gaining a livelihood, is certainly a World War II introduction” (30). Furthermore, he writes: “it quickly built up during the war years and in no time both declared and undeclared prostitutes became quite numerous” (29).

**Futa Helu and the Telling of Rape**

In his discussion on WWII, Futa Helu continues his preoccupation with Tongan women’s sexualities and he made a poignant statement made about the flourishing prostitution trade in Tonga during WWII and to illustrate his point, he shared a narrative about a Tongan woman that was a victim of a rape committed by a U.S. soldier. Yet, I want to point out that in Helu’s telling of this narrative, the horror of the violence is silenced. I am compelled by the glaring silences of his narrative and I bring this point up because of the layered meanings that silence reveals in this narrative and rather than glossing over the silence, I want to recognize it and use it as an apparatus for tracing circuits and stratifications of power. For as Tuck and Ree remind us, “Erasure and defacement concoct ghosts; I don’t want to haunt you, but I will” (643). Hence, it’s the silence, the ghosts and their “Erasure and defacement” that define the contours of this narrative and they haunt me and they bring me back to this table to contend with this narrative.

When I first read the narrative many years ago, I attempted to forget about it and move on with my life because of the many forms of suffering that the narrative revealed but the ghosts brought me back to the table to write about this narrative in this dissertation chapter, even after years of putting it in the backburner attempting to silence it.

Here is Futa Helu’s narrative, “A not too young woman was raped by an American soldier and she was beside herself with grief, but when the man threw down beside her a large bundle of dollars she stopped crying and said: ‘Soldier, if in the future you want a repeat performance, you know where I live’” (3). Helu’s telling of narrative elucidates a heteropatriarchal disavowal of the Tongan woman’s sexuality and her humanity. He is unable to distinguish the differences between the violence and horror of the rape from what he describes as “prostitution as a career.” There is a slippery slope for him in distinguishing the differences and with all due respect, I contend that this blurring is founded in an underlying belief that Tongan women’s sexualities are “deviant” in all its iterations regardless of whether its rape or prostitution. What is also offensive and heartbreaking in Helu’s telling is that the Tongan woman that is a rape victim is dehumanized and her pain and suffering that are the consequences of the horrific violence of rape is quickly dismissed because she is classified as a “prostitute” and thus, it is imagined that her intentions for having sex was motivated by her “agency” and her opportunistic desire for U.S. dollars.
In addition, the rape perpetrator, the U.S. soldier is not culpable nor is the U.S. military held accountable for the violence and the rapist and the U.S. military are dismissed of all accountability for this crime. In fact, in Helu’s telling of the narrative, the U.S. soldier’s act of offering a payment of U.S. dollars to the Tongan woman after he raped her, exonerates and absolves him of the crime that he committed. Furthermore, what is perhaps the most painful in Helu’s telling of this narrative is that he paints the soldier and rapist in a role of “rescuer” or “savior” because the soldier’s payment of U.S. dollars and currency places the Tongan woman on the trajectory of “progress” and upward mobility. In fact, in Helu’s narrative, the U.S. soldier is offering the Tongan woman a new and better life in his association with her and his payment of U.S. currency. In addition, in the overall tone of the narrative, the U.S. soldier’s deployment of violence and rape on the Tongan woman’s body is “normalized” because Helu tells us that the soldier was invited back for a “repeat performance” (3).

As a Tongan woman that is a survivor of histories of rape and sexual violence, like the woman in the narrative and like so many other Tongan women in this contemporaneous historical moment under the hand of countless and never-ending waves of “racialized projects, imperialisms, and colonialisms, how do we read this narrative with its matter-of-factly tone offered by one of our premiere Tongan scholars and one of the Fathers of Tongan Studies and go on with our normal every day Tongan lives as if we didn’t just see a ghost and as if we are not haunted by the violence? How do we contend with the legacies of hungry ghosts, of patriarchal violence deployed by colonial militaries and governments on our Tongan female bodies and yet, we also suffer from the patriarchal violence deployed by the hands and through the judgmental voices of our own beloved Fathers and brothers? What do we do with these histories of violence, and ghosts, insatiable and unrelenting in their hauntings?

U.S. Militarization and Sexual Violence

Mary Ann Tetreault writes, “Wartime rape is undertaken to implement strategies of genocide and terror” that describes the Tongan political landscape under U.S. military occupation during WWII (466). Scholars and activists Annie Fukushima and Gwyn Kirk write in their informative essay, “The Roots of the Military’s Rape Epidemic: An Empire Wrecking Havoc on Women Around the World,” that the recent surge of stories in the media covering the narratives of women soldiers being raped by fellow male soldiers are often treated as “sporadic scandals” or isolated incidents but these narratives, however, “spring from the mycelium of U.S. military culture and ideology” (Fukushima and Kirk). Fukushima and Kirk argue that the roots of the “routine incidents of military violence against civilians” are founded in the military’s systemic “othering” produced through race, class, and gender:

To locate the root of the problem means looking…to the routine incidents of military violence against civilians in combat situations and outside the fences surrounding U.S. bases overseas. Given their mission, soldiers are trained to kill. This means seeing “others” as foreign or less-than-human. Gender and masculinity are at play; so too are racism and national chauvinism.

Fukushima and Kirk also document the painful histories of Okinawan women that were victims of rape and sexual assault by U.S. troops that began during the war until the present. Furthermore, their research also reveals the preponderance of rape in communities that host U.S. bases throughout Asia such as “Okinawa, South Korea, and the Philippines” and thus, these
histories have inevitably created tensions between the local communities and the U.S. military as a consequence of the horror of the military violence against women (Fukushima and Kirk).

Okinawan women have documented the history of rape by U.S. troops in Okinawa (1945–present). This research shows how sexual violence is a factor in contemporary tensions surrounding U.S. basing agreements in Okinawa, South Korea, and the Philippines:

Militarized prostitution in Asia . . . is alive and well. Bar areas near the bases are thriving, and U.S. ships continue to make port calls in the Philippines and Thailand. In the past, Philippine women were called “little brown fucking machines powered by rice,” among other pejoratives: “Yankee whore,” “bar girl,” or “hostess,” reflecting U.S. soldiers’ expectations that women would provide sex. (Fukushima and Kirk)

Fukushima and Kirk also raise a point that I want to return to in my analysis of Futa Helu’s narrative about the Tongan woman rape victim that I shared earlier. Fukushima and Kirk raise the issue of “Militarized prostitution”—that are sites produced specifically for the sexual needs of U.S. military men that work in Asian countries and in countries all around the globe that host U.S. military bases. These various prostitution sites built in Asian countries for servicing U.S. military troops sexual desires are similar to the sites in Tonga that Helu termed as “prostitution as career.”

What was compelling in Fukushima and Kirk’s research is that they charted the pejorative and derogatory names that U.S. troops used to describe the Asian women working as prostitutes in these sites, “Philippine women were called ‘little brown fucking machines powered by rice,’ among other pejoratives: ‘Yankee whore,’” I bring this point up because the names that the military men used to describe the Asian women working as prostitutes because it allows us to view the layered forms of military violence and I want to show how this violence is gendered as well as racialized. In addition, Fukushima and Kirk allow us to view that even within spaces such as the “militarized prostitution,” sites where we imagine women have “agency,” the language and the names that the U.S. military men use to classify the women working as prostitutes however, tells us another story that asks us to rethink the issue of power and female “agency” in the relationship that the women share with the U.S. military. In fact, the names that the U.S. troops used to classify these women depict the systemic violence and degradation of women’s bodies and sexualities and it also highlights the always-looming threat of rape and sexual assault that shape women’s lives under the occupation of militarization.

Recalling Fukushima and Kirk’s argument, they remind us that there are no isolated incidents of rape by U.S. military men, because these isolated incidents “spring from the mycelium of U.S. military culture and ideology” (Fukushima and Kirk). Cynthia Enloe tells us, “Rape . . . is about power more than it is about sex” and Angela Davis identifies the layered power stratifications in men’s rape of women, “The present rape epidemic occurs at a time when the capitalist class is furiously reasserting its authority in face of global and internal challenges. Both racism and sexism, central to its domestic strategy of increased economic exploitation, are receiving unprecedented encouragement” (195, 200). Rape is a systemic violence that is inextricably driven by race, gender, and class. Thus, in the never-ending cycles of heteropatriarchal violence on women’s bodies and under the hand of U.S. militarization, I ask these questions with the intentions of attempting to locate women’s “agency” within these relationships. My questions are: When does rape start and prostitution ends and/or when does prostitution start and rape ends?

Returning to Futa Helu’s telling of the Tongan rape victim’s narrative that I shared earlier, Helu as well as many other scholars in Tongan Studies wrote about the monumental
changes that transpired in Tonga during WWII that included a new economy dependent on U.S. dollars and the flourishing and expanding trade that employed numerous Tongan women as “prostitution as career”: “It quickly built up during the war years and in no time both declared and undeclared prostitutes became quite numerous” (29). In Helu’s telling of the growing prostitution trade in Tonga, he takes a position that is similar to Lafitani, that I shared earlier, and he is uncritical of the role of the U.S. soldiers and U.S. Empire and instead, he casts a moral judgment on the Tongan woman because there is a belief that she had “agency” in this scenario and in addition, in his shaping of his telling, we are made to believe that the Tongan woman made the wrong “choice.”

I read Helu’s narrative about the Tongan woman that was raped under the hands of the U.S. soldier alongside the “Cigarette Raid” that I shared earlier documenting the layers of relentless and horrific U.S. military violence against Tonganness and I ask that we rethink Helu’s telling of the Tongan rape victim’s narrative so that we can help her ghost to finally rest. Thus, I raise the same questions and concerns that I shared earlier about women’s agency under the systems of U.S. militarization in Asian countries. In the never-ending cycles of violence on Tongan women’s bodies and under the prodigious hand of U.S. militarization in Tonga, I ask when does rape start and prostitution ends and/or when does prostitution start and rape ends? In Helu’s narrative, where is the Tongan women’s “agency” located because rape and prostitution are both presented as comparably dubious and problematic acts and thus, they are depicted as inextricably linked and the boundaries are blurred? How do we distinguish the differences? In her compelling research on militarized prostitution, Aida F. Santos writes, “Prostitution is the grossest form of sexual enslavement of women and its proliferation vs-a-vis militarism makes this especially evident. Wherever militarism goes in the world, so too goes prostitution” (40) and Santos documents the voice of a “prostituted woman,” “A common lament is heard in this quote from a prostituted woman: ‘We have to take drugs so we can forget our situation, and we drink so we can lose our inhibitions” (41). Using Santos’s research findings about militarized prostitution, and returning back to my analysis on Helu’s narrative, I continue to offer the question, when does rape start and prostitution ends and/or when does prostitution start and rape ends?

I also pose a few more questions to Futa Helu and Siosiu’a F. Pouvalu Lafiani if I may. Where are Tongan men located in this scenario of patriarchal violence and what role do they play in this historical moment? In her research on militarized prostitution, Cynthia Enloe writes about the various struggles that women working as sex workers encountered and were forced to negotiate, “The fact that local women working in brothels and discos mediate between two sets of men, foreign soldiers and local men. These two are rarely talked about simultaneously” (24). For example, Enloe elucidates, “These women detail how their relationships with local male lovers and husbands created the conditions that make them vulnerable . . . . Prostitution and fathering: the two are intimately connected in these women’s lives” (24). Enloe does not cast the blame of the First World systemic military violence at the foot of local and Indigenous men, but her point is important to consider in this discussion especially when the blame is centered entirely only at Tongan women. Thus, I pose a question to Tongan men, to my beloved brothers, what is your role in these cycles and productions of violence against Tongan women?

I continue to raise questions to the two male scholars. I ask if the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman, the victim of rape by a U.S. soldier, change the trajectories of the violence that was committed against her? Does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman rape victim delineate the boundaries between the spaces of what is “rape” and what is
“prostitution” and if so, does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman rape victim obliterate the horror of the violence that was committed on her body and does it erase and ameliorate the layers of historical trauma that the Tongan woman, her family and future generations of Tongans must suffer and carry as a consequence of this violence?

Furthermore, how much money is “enough” and “comparable” to compensate for the heinous crime of raping a Tongan woman and is the soldier’s payment of American dollars to his rape victim equal and can it compensate for the histories and legacies of Tongan suffering and trauma that he created? Returning to my earlier questions about power, I ask how do we determine which Tongan woman is an “agent” and which one is a “victim” under the hand of U.S. militarization? In this same line of questioning, I also offer some questions about how we Tongans often deploy moral judgment as weapons that continue to perpetuate colonial violence within our everyday lives and within the spatiotemporality of our Tongan communities and families. I ask how do we Tongans determine which Tongan woman among us is deemed as “good” and deserving of our acceptance and love and which Tongan woman is “bad” and she should be cast out as “other”? Whose guidelines, cultural norms and laws are we using to make our judgments of women? Conversely, are Tongan men judged by this same moral yard stick that we use to judge and “Other” Tongan women?

The silences that surround the Tongan rape victim’s narrative also beckons me ask other questions for consideration and I ask my Tongan brothers to listen up. Is it possible that what we have often termed as a flourishing prostitution trade or “prostitution as career” or what Helu has also described as a trade that is believed to have included the participation of numerous Tongan women, “both declared and undeclared prostitutes became quite numerous” was actually just a small part or perhaps even myths that silence a much larger and complicated narrative, a narrative that is perhaps difficult for us, Tongans, to hold? Is it possible that the flourishing prostitution trade that was “quite numerous” during the U.S. occupation of Tonga was a phenomenon that actually did not include Tongan women and Tongan girls’ “agency” and consent like the dominant narrative proclaims and instead the truth is the “prostitution as a career” that included the bodies of numerous Tongan women and girls was a phenomenon delineating the U.S. military’s systemic deployment of rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls?

Let us consider what the Tongan silences about this historical moment tells us. Can we read the indifferences and the antagonisms that shape the tone of our conversations and dominant memories about Tongan women’s sexualities during WWII as forms of silence? Is it possible that the silence that permeates this narrative are produced by the shame that we keep concealed about this historical moment? Let us consider for a moment that the predominance of silence and shame are archives that document the ancestral knowledges that we are unable to speak out loud and yet, we know, and our knowing about the violence and trauma of this historical moment will not erase, even after all the years. Our ancestral knowledges are kept alive in our Tongan silence and shame and instead of dissipating, the silence continues to haunt us today.

In this discussion, I also ask Tongan men to consider the ghosts and hauntings that they carry and to reconsider their definitions of Tongan manhood and the role that it plays and contributions to the contemporaneous perpetuation and normalization of the cycles of rape and sexual violence against Tongan women within our families and communities. The histories of systemic violence deployed by the U.S. military in WWII on Tonganness is a trauma that haunts both Tongan men and women. In her important work, *The Beginning and End of Rape: Confronting Sexual Violence in Native America*, Sarah Deer highlights the trauma that rape
created in Indian country by disrupting the balance of gender roles, “Widespread rape also threatened the balanced gender roles in tribal societies. Tribal social and economic structures were disrupted as a result of rape by outsiders” (50) and in her work on militarized sex work, Cynthia Enloe writes, “Sexual practice is one of the site of masculinity’s—and femininity’s—daily construction” (25).

Thus, I ask Tongan men to consider the many ways that the historical trauma recently produced by the hands of U.S. Empire and imperialisms disrupted the balance of our Tongan va, our systems and economies of intimate relationalities and in what ways does the U.S. Empire and the historical trauma it created seep its hands into our everyday Tongan lives through shaping and defining the laws and norms of contemporaneous Tongan masculinities? In his research on the U.S. military and sexual violence in Korea, Bruce Cumings asks a poignant question “Why should sexual exploitation be so obvious and so soundless?” and Cumings proceeds to answer, “Among the reasons is surely a tacit male code to maintain silence” (170). If as I have proposed before, our Tongan silence and shame are archives that house the ghosts, then our healing as a people depends on our resistance against silence as a means for remembering and acknowledging the ghosts and ending the cycles of relentless hauntings.

In closing this section, I share a moving statement made by Sarah Deer that helps to show the layered suffering and shame that Tongan people hold as a legacy of the histories of systemic violence and rape deployed by the U.S. military during WWII, “All of these events are attacks on the human soul; the destruction of indigenous culture and the rape of a woman connote a kind of spiritual death that is difficult to describe to those who have not experienced it. It is not only Native women who have been raped by Native nations as a whole” (Deer 12). The tone of indifferences, and antagonism towards Tongan women that shape our dominant memory about WWII are shaped by our collective Tongan anxieties, suffering and inexorable shame, “It is not only Native women who have been raped by Native nations as a whole” (12). This historical moment created collective wounds that all of us Tongans carry, both men and women, and these wounds are burdens that are disproportionately carried on the backs of Tongan women.

**Mormonism, Militarization and Terror in the Tongan Imagination**

This section looks at the history of U.S. Empire and militarization in Tonga during WWII that enables and sustains the unprecedented and prodigious growth of the U.S.-based Mormon Church in Tonga in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. I begin by looking at the dominant memories that define the war as the “good war” and the U.S. as “liberators” and the complicated legacies of these dominant trope for Tonganness especially because the Tongan ghosts and hauntings counter these dominant memories. The ghosts tell narratives of Tongan lived experiences and Tongan ancestral knowledges that counter these dominant tropes and remember this historical moment as marked by the trauma of relentless violence and terror. I posit that the histories of U.S. militarization in Tonga during WWII marks the U.S. as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination. Correspondingly, the image of the U.S. Empire as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination opens up the door for the U.S. Mormon Church as “rescuer” and “savior” of Tonganness and ironically, it is also the Mormon Church’s inextricable link to U.S. Empire that further enables Tongan conversions because of the imagined safety that this proximity to power offers Tongans living under crisis.

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Lisa Yoneyama writes about the dominant framing of U.S. militarization and imperialisms in WWII as the “good war,” by briefly examining the term “Americanization.” She posits, “If by ‘Americanization’ we refer to the U.S. government’s claims to power and authority with which it has defined and administered justice for the rest of the world, it is by no means a new phenomenon” (58). Yoneyama traces the phenomenon of “Americanization” to the role of the U.S. in the Cold War, “‘Americanization of world justice’ was constitutive of the Cold War strategy that posited the North Americans as the supreme defender of the ‘free world’” (59). Furthermore, Yoneyama connects the U.S. military’s role as “supreme defender of the ‘free world’” during the Cold War to the representation of their role in WWII, “It has been inseparably tied to prevailing American war memories in which the U.S. war against Japan is remembered as a ‘good war.’” In addition, she continues to argue that the “Americanization” of our memories of WWII as the “good war” is shaped by the dominant memory that paints the U.S. as “liberators.” This is a point that Shigematsu and Camacho further analyze, “This interplay of colonial legacies continues to animate a sense of indebtedness to the United States as the ‘rescuer’ for many postcolonial subjects” (xxi).

Cynthia Enloe examines the prominent hand of U.S. geographies of imperialisms and militarization in the Pacific and in the Asia region, “We might have imagined that the U.S. government’s war on terror was militarizing only those countries chosen for the headlines: Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan, along with Britain and the United States” (vii), and yet, “The wheels of militarization, in fact, are greased by such popular inattention. The militarizing processes going on in Asia and in the Pacific have been made easier to sustain by our distractedness and our inclination to look elsewhere” (vii). Thus, in their collection on militarization, Shigematsu and Camacho confront the histories of militarization in the Pacific and Asia region of the globe and they offer a definition for militarization that I use in my analysis:

While empire building takes on many forms, we recognize militarism as a constitutive institution and ideology of empire. Since militarism still persists in nation-states that are not historically expansive, empire-building nations, we seek to distinguish how current forms of militarization are linked to empire and the racialized gendered legacies of colonialisms. Shigematsu and Camacho’s definition of militarization helps me to better conceptualize the current maneuvers of empire in Tonga especially after WWII and to draw the connections of empire building to the growth and expansion of the Mormon Church and their continuation of the objectives of “racialized gendered legacies of colonialisms” after the end of the war in 1945.

In U.S. military occupation specialist, David M. Edelstein’s research, he lays out the stages of occupation and I lay out key points from his argument in this section because of its direction for my work, “Whereas an occupation is meant to be transient, the aims of the occupying powers are not. The primary objective of an occupation is to achieve long-term strategic interests, whether that be stabilizing a territory for strategic interests” (Edelstein qtd. in De Matos and Ward 2) Furthermore, Edelstein postulates, “occupiers must both maintain their own interest in a long occupation and convince an occupied population to accept extended control by a foreign power (Edelstein 51)

Edelstein’s arguments like Shigematsu and Camacho, confront the continued or “long-term strategic interests” and colonial legacy of empire that are the objectives of militarized
occupation such as the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII and it draws light on the role of a U.S. religious institution such as Mormonism in participating and furthering the goals of empire. Furthermore, in my analysis, I also utilize Teresia Teatiwa’s definition of “militourism” that is defined as a “phenomenon by which a military or paramilitary force ensures the running of a tourist industry, and that same tourist industry masks the military force behind it” (259), to guide me and to help me to draw the connections between empire building in Tonga to the burgeoning growth of Mormonism in Tonga in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries after the U.S. military’s “official” withdrawal. Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez, in her work examining U.S. militarization and its connection to the tourist industry in the Philippines writes, “While the United States has since officially left its former colony’s territories, a reterritorialization of these former military reservations within the new economic structure of tourism” (64) continues and expands the goals of militarization.

Thus, I borrow, Vicuna Gonzalez’s term “reterritorialization” to describe the geographies of empire and its expansion in Tonga and that is facilitated and maneuvered the U.S. Mormon Church currently occupies. Furthermore, Vicuna Gonzalez recounts the historical contributions made by Geoffrey M. White on the themes of tourism and militarism. Vicuna Gonzales writes about White’s term of “second invasion” that is a phenomenon that takes place after the military occupation, “The return of military veterans to commemorate the Battle of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands constituted a ‘second invasion’ that became a contested site of transnational memory making” (65). I raise White’s term of “second invasion,” in this discussion because it profoundly illustrates the role and political objectives of the U.S. Mormon missionary in Tonga after the “official” withdrawal of the U.S. military in 1945. Like the U.S. military, the U.S.-based Mormon Church’s objectives of “conversion” and “progress” is a project of expanding empire produced through a relentless invasion of Tonganness.

**US. Empire and the Legacy of White Terror**

In the Tongan imagination, the U.S.-based Mormon Church represents the always looming threat of U.S. military, U.S. Empire and patriarchal violence as well as these fears are also founded on historical events as I have shown earlier in this chapter. African American scholar bell hooks writes about the phenomenon of whiteness in the black imagination and she reveals the political dynamics behind the making of “seeing” whiteness, “I want to focus on that representation of whiteness that . . . emerges as a response to the traumatic pain and anguish that remains a consequence of white racist domination, a psychic state that informs and shapes the way black folks ‘see’ whiteness (169). Following hooks’s example, I focus on the “representation of whiteness [in the Tongan imagination] that . . . emerges as a response to the traumatic pain and anguish” of the legacies of white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and in most recently in the twentieth century, the tracks of the U.S. Empire in Tonga (169). Thus, I posit that in the contemporary Tongan imagination, the Mormon Church and its inextricable links to U.S. Empire that includes the histories of U.S. militarization, represents White terror.

In addition, and more specifically, I contend that it’s the legacies of the U.S. systemic rape of Tongan women and Tongan girls committed by the military that are perhaps the heaviest burdens carried in the Tongan heart and memory because the rape of the feminine is symbolic of the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine, that as I have argued throughout this dissertation project, the Sacred is the heartbeat of Tonganness. The desecration of the Sacred was the quintessential objective of the colonial project in Tonga. In Chapters Three and Four, I show
the genealogies of colonial and patriarchal violence introduced and produced by Europeans and Christians to Tonga in several notable historical moments or “racialized projects”. I argue that through the European deployment of unrelenting patriarchal violence on the bodies of Tongan women, these early historical moments produced the contemporaneous state of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that began in the seventeenth century. In turn, these early historical moments represent European violence and devastation on Tonganness, and they had a monumental impact on Tonganness such as producing Tongan “historical unresolved grief.” Here, I specifically focus on the impact of the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII.

The U.S. occupation of Tonga is a historical moment that is more pronounced and defined in the Tongan imagination because its vestiges are still fresh in the Tongan ancestral memory. In addition, I also posit that the Tongan perception of the U.S. Empire as “white terror” and the persistent Tongan fear of the threat of U.S. Empire and U.S. military violence, are some of the exigencies and excruciating factors that draw Tongan people into the Church especially at unprecedented and exponentially high rates after WWII. The histories of U.S. militarization in Tonga enables the Mormon Church to be represented as the benevolent “rescuers” and as “saviors” of Tonganness and yet it is also precisely the Mormon Church’s inextricable link to U.S. Empire that also continues to draw Tongan conversions because of the safety that is imagined that this close proximity to power offers to Tongan victims. It is the images of U.S. Empire as “white terror” and the Mormon Church’s complicated role as benevolent “rescuer” and yet, continuing this legacy of empire that cement the “setter-colonial relationship” shared between Tonganness and Mormonism. Furthermore, these are the foundational building blocks of the Tongan Mormon Family that I discuss in Chapter Two of the dissertation project.

Last, I recall Stuart Hall’s theory of “articulation” that I raised earlier in this chapter that asserts “the connection that can make a unity of two different elements, under certain conditions. It is a linkage which is not necessary, determined, absolute and essential for all time” (Hall qtd. in Slack 115). Furthermore, Stuart Hall asks, “You have to ask under what circumstances can a connection be forged or made?” and in addition, earlier in this chapter, I posed some questions in regards to statements made by Mormon Church leader Eric B. Shumway that I stated that I would return to here in the conclusion of the essay. Recalling Eric B. Shumway’s earlier statement locating his Mormon Church as “exceptional” and “the only true and living church’ on the face of the earth,” when compared to other Christian religious institutions that have also colonized Tonganness, I asked what are some of the historical exigencies that navigate and underpin Shumway’s voice giving him authority and an entitlement that is similar to but yet it surpasses the arrogance and the political goals for domination made by earlier Christian missionizing projects in Tonga? What are some of the Mormon Church’s political networks and connections to power and authority that undergird their newly founded authority and heightened power in contemporaneous Tonganness?

Using Hall’s theory, I hope that I was able to show that the historical “circumstances” that produce, enable and sustain the “connection” between Tonganness and Mormonism in the last two centuries is the indomitable authority of U.S. Empire and militarization. As I shared earlier in this essay, and I bring it up to help illustrate my point about the rapidly changing topographies of power stratifications in Tonga. The Mormon Church was once marginalized and their missionaries were forced to abandon their Tongan mission and to settle in Samoa in the late-nineteenth century because Tongans refused to convert into this religion. However and correspondingly, the Mormon Church’s newfound authority and dominion over Tonganness after WWII is a direct consequence and legacy of U.S. empire.
The Tongan Mormon Family, “Progress” and the Criminalization of Ghosts

In this last section of the chapter, I tell a narrative that recounts a specific historical moment in my Tongan Mormon Family’s trajectory of upward mobility and “progress.” The narrative is titled Tongan Ghost Story, The Haunted Chair and it retells an archival memory that took place many decades ago when I was eight years old in Nuku’alofa, Tonga and shortly after my baptism into the Mormon Church. The narrative recounts the new laws and prohibitions that are legislated to surveil my life and the lives of my family members after our conversion into the Mormon Church. In addition, the narrative traces the new forms of criminalizing Tongan cosmologies and ancestral knowledges and proliferating the colonial process of desecrating the Tongan Sacred. These new political changes transpire, as well as they are inculcated, within the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. The conclusion section of this chapter features a Journal Entry that is a response to the Tongan Ghost Story. In the process of mapping this last section of the chapter, I want to let the reader know that I humbly recognize that I’m a student at a prestigious U.S. academic institution and these forms of writing and storytelling are not the norm in academia.

I sincerely ask the reader to please bear with me as I analyze and confront the themes of colonialism, historical trauma and violence against women within the boundaries of intimate familial spaces with these creative responses. Although these creative responses are formatted differently from the traditional methods for writing a dissertation chapter and conclusion, I posit that these alternative forms of telling historical narratives are committed to critical analysis of Tongan histories and I also believe that these different forms of storytelling can offer new and important perspectives to the discourse. Lastly, I want to emphatically state that this chapter aims to contend with ghosts and hauntings and I deliberately chose this type of conclusion because it is not my goal to resolve anything. Indeed, I do not want the reader to leave with a feeling of resolution. As a Tongan storyteller, moreover, these are my commitments to the ghosts, specters, and weary spirits of ancestors that haunt me.

Tongan Ghost Story, The Haunted Chair

A few weeks after my eighth birthday and after my baptism into the Mormon Church, my mother Litia and I shared a mother daughter bonding moment, one afternoon in our small home in Kolomotu’a, a town located in the heart of the capital city of Nuku’alofa in Tongatapu. We spent the afternoon cleaning our small house. There was a new excitement in our home. I was recently baptized to the Mormon Church and my father, Tangata, had returned home and this time around, he was going to stay. We were a family, once again. Tangata recently started working a full-time job as a Tongan language translator for the Mormon Church in their new office in Ma’ufanga. Tangata’s life has changed and he now spends after-hours and weekends at home and not in the bars that lined downtown Nuku’alofa. Tangata was also recently converted and baptized into the Mormon Church. We were a family, once again.

That afternoon, Litia and I swept and dusted our small house with a broom made from the straw of the coconut leaves or tu’a niu. I arranged the children’s books in an upright row. Order was now very important in our home and I arranged the books into neat rows just like
Litia taught me. She learned about these new forms of order from the colorful magazines from America that were often distributed in her Mormon Relief Society classes and she learned these lessons from the young palangi peace corps volunteers visiting from America. The young palangi women often stopped by to talk and to eat New Zealand Arrowroot biscuits with us. They also taught Litia to crochet colorful ribbons out of yarn that Loa and I used to tie around our long hair braids.

Order was now very important in the arrangement of potted plants, books as well as everything else in our home, especially with us, the inhabitants of the home. Although Litia was a skilled mathematician and intellectual, our new lives as Mormons demanded that she make time to crochet colorful potted plant carriers, knit long ribbons for hair ornaments, and to cook new types of meals like the American white women, after working her full-time teaching job as a math teacher at the Mormon-owned high school, Liahona and after her new Church responsibility as the President of the Primary. The Primary is the Mormon organization for children under 12 years old. The role of Primary President are positions held only by adult female members of the Church.

On this particular afternoon, Litia and I also arranged chairs neatly and in a straight row with their backs resting on the wall. While I engaged in making the new arrangements, I recognized an Elder woman seated on one of the chairs. The Elder woman was a familiar ancestor and we shared an intimate va with each other. I called her by name and she also called me by name. The Elder woman was the spirit was an ancestor that had passed away many years before my birth.

Although acknowledging the spirits of the dead was criminalized by early British Christian missionaries during the nineteenth century as part of the systemic project to desecrate the Sacred, the practice of speaking with the spirits of the dead was however a practice that had not fully died out during the 1970s. Many Tongan relatives in my extended family, including our neighbors and others in our community spoke openly about dreams and conversations etc, etc, with spirits of ancestors that had passed away and these narratives were often recited in a matter-of-fact-manner because it was not yet outside of the norm. My conversation with my ancestor that afternoon was a Tongan cultural practice that I learned from observing the Elders and adults that surrounded me. My mother, Litia, was familiar with my frequent practices of speaking with the spirits of the dead and it was a practice that she didn’t encourage but she also certainly didn’t prohibit it in our home.

On this particular afternoon, however, surrounded by the unfolding excitement of the new changes in our lives, and all the laws of order, my mother looked at me with a new founded fear and abhorrence when she saw me engaged in a dialogue with our ancestor seated on the chair. She angrily and urgently prohibited me from speaking to the ancestor and she told me to immediately end it and to get back to work. Litia’s admonition was very new to me and I didn’t understand the utility or urgency behind her prohibition to immediately end a conversation with an ancestor, especially an elder ancestor woman. Litia’s orders didn’t make sense to me because of all the laws of Tongan protocol and va that I had been taught, therefore, I ignored her and I continued my conversation with my ancestor like we have often done so often in the past. But the political landscape in our home had changed. Thus, Litia furiously repeated her orders again and unfortunately for me, I continued my conversation with our ancestor. It was at this moment that Litia deployed another strategy to teach me to listen. She raised the palm of her hand and furiously slapped my young and tender face to mark her point. I was shocked and I didn’t understand the cause for her anger. My flesh burned and tears quickly fell. Litia looked at my
eyes with anger and she reminded me that our lives had now changed. She explicitly and unequivocally prohibited me from seeing and talking to the spirits of the dead ever again and she reminded me that afternoon and throughout many moments throughout our lives as Mormons in Tonga and here in the U.S, that the spirits of the dead were Tevolo or Devils. The tevolo represented a time of darkness that was relegated to the time before our conversion into the Church. We were Mormons now and everything had changed for the better. We were moving towards the light.

Litia also reminded me of the new trajectories of dreams and new possibilities that our lives as Mormons promised; my father returned back home, he had stopped drinking alcohol and he was employed as a Tongan language translator for the Mormon Church. We were a family, once again. Litia reminded me that my new role as a daughter in our Tongan Mormon Family was to betray my memory and to forget the spirits of our ancestors.

Conclusion

Dear Journal,

What happens to the spirits of our Tongan ancestors, our Tongan Sacred, once they are cast as criminal and forgotten? What happens to the spirits of our ancestors after we have severed va with them and cast them from our homes, the archives of our memories? Do the spirits sleep meekly like good Christians for the duration of centuries, inside the walls of our Tongan amnesia or do the spirits of the dead, our Tongan ancestors, grow wary of the loneliness, do they become angered by the cold and the long silence and do they steal the Mormon missionaries’ matches and kerosene and burn down these Mutha Fucken walls?
—Journal Entry, Huichin⁶⁹/Oakland, California, November 2018
Tongan Mormon Family, A Genealogy of Racialized Projects

This chapter examines the spatiality of *The Tongan Mormon Family*, a discussion that began in Chapter One. I trace the genealogy of this contemporaneous colonial familial spatiality to two historical “racialized projects” with political intentions that are defined by Omi and Winant in their foundational work on racialization: “...the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed” and furthermore, they contend that racialized projects are “historically situated projects in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized” (55–56). Heidi J. Nast’s work on the white supremacist family examines “how sexed and racialized landscapes ‘out there’ unconsciously and consciously impinge upon and structure interiorized anxieties, rage, and desire. In this sense, landscapes not only record conscious acts and intentions or articulable cultural beliefs and political ideologies” (219). The “landscape” of the colonial familial spatialities in Tonga that began with the arrival of Europeans “record conscious acts and intentions or articulable cultural beliefs and political ideologies” (219). Colin Dayan writes about the objectives of the racialized project and the role of colonial repositories for surveillance and “containment,” “objects of contagion, they had to be sealed off. They were subjected to an extrajudicial exhibition of containment that preceded their detention, abuse and torture” (26).

Ann Stoler articulates the role of surveilling sexualities as central to colonial “racialized projects” especially in intimate spatialities such as within the familial:

The notion of the intimate is a descriptive marker of the familiar and the essential and of relations grounded in sex...It is “sexual relations” and “familiarity” take as an “indirect sign” of what is racially “innermost” that locates intimacy so strategically in imperial politics and why colonial administrations worried over its consequence and course.

(Stoler 9)

Thus, the spatiality of the colonial familial is inaugurated with the aims for the “containment” of racialized bodies through the legislation and surveillance of Tongan sexualities as I show in my discussion of the spatiality of the colonial Tongan family, in its various historical iterations, is central for the inauguration and maintaining of the colonial project in Tonga.

The *Tongan Mormon Family* created in the twenty-first century traces its roots to two historical “racialized projects” that were produced through the deployment of unrelenting patriarchal violence on Tonganness as Fanon notes, the Europeans are “thebringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native” (91) and its imperative to note that the forms of violence deployed on Tonganness by Europeans targeted the bodies of Tongan women and Tongan girls as I show in this chapter and throughout this dissertation project. The first “racialized project” is the nineteenth-century *Tongan Nationalist Family*; a spatiality produced by the relentless patriarchal violence of European settlement and colonialism on Tonganness that began in the seventeenth century and culminates into the Christian missionizing projects and the production of the new Tongan nation in the nineteenth century that privileges new systems of relationalities that center the desecration of the Tongan Sacred. This new hegemony is symbolized by the centering of the new white and male God and thus, the new values of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy are privileged in Tonga. Under this new hegemony, violence against Tongan women becomes a necessary technology to maintain the new status quo. The spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family is central and it consolidates and *normalizes* these
new colonial jurisdictions, foreign values and economies of va that are contradictory and acrimonious to Tonganness within spatialities of the intimate and in everyday Tongan life. I discuss the historical production of this colonial spatiality in Chapters Three, Four, and Five.

_U.S Empire and World War II_

The second “racialized project” that produce the Tongan Mormon Family is the twentieth-century historical moment centering the hand of U.S. empire through the U.S military occupation of Tonga during WWII. This is a historical moment that produces a legacy of trauma and grief on Tonganness and it drastically transforms the Tongan political landscape by continuing the earlier colonial project of desecrating the Tongan Sacred legislated by earlier European colonial projects through the systemic and relentless deployment of U.S. militarized rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls. The U.S military occupation continued to reinforce the colonial values of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy like earlier colonial projects but this historical moment centered the hand of U.S. empire and thus, this militarization of Tonganness led to the exponential growth of the Mormon Church after the U.S. military “officially” left Tonga after the war in 1945. It is, in fact, the Mormon Church’s inextricable connection with U.S. empire and its new role as “reterritorialization” of the U.S. empire that lent itself to the rapid growth of the Church in Tonga after WWII and it is this entanglement of power and authority mediated and maintained through the production of violence and the threat of violence that has produced and cultivated the boundaries of the Tongan Mormon Family. These are themes that I examine in Chapters One and Two.

Toni Morrison and the Making of the “Debt”

In her compelling Introduction essay, “Friday on the Potomac,” in the anthology _Race-ing Justice, En-gendering Power: Essays on Anita Hill, Clarence Thomas and the Construction of Social Reality_, Toni Morrison documents the explosive 1991 historical moment that changed the American public’s understanding of sexual harassment and it also catapulted the issues of race, gender, sexuality into the purview of the American public, “Anita Hill was thrust into the national spotlight when she accused U.S. Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexually harassing her when she worked for him at the United States Dept. of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission” (Hill, Variety). As a consequence of speaking out against the sexual harassment and patriarchal violence inflicted on her, Hill was severely punished; she was publicly criticized and her private life was adamantly scrutinized by an all-white male senate judiciary committee during her televised public testimony during Clarence Thomas’s confirmation hearings in 1991. In addition, without impunity, Clarence Thomas was appointed a seat to the highest court in the land—the U.S. Supreme Court.

Morrison skillfully connects the 1991 historical moment with its saturated power hierarchies of white supremacy, patriarchal power, and unilateral power stratifications to the tropes represented in the widely-read eighteenth-century novel, _Robinson Crusoe_, that featured Crusoe as the white savior; it also shows a native character that Crusoe rescues and renames as Friday to memorialize the fact that Crusoe rescued him on a Friday. In Morrison’s telling, the analogy of comparing Clarence Thomas to the native character, Friday, is profoundly outlined.

On a Friday, Anita Hill graphically articulated points in her accusation of sexual misconduct. On the same Friday, Clarence Thomas answered, in a manner of speaking, those
charges. And it was on a Friday in 1709 when Alexander Selkirk found an “almost drowned Indian” on the shore of an island upon which he had been shipwrecked. Ten years later, Selkirk’s story would be immortalized by Daniel Defoe in *Robinson Crusoe*.

Morrison further points out that as the white protagonist and Savior, Crusoe’s narrative is culturally venerated and marked as a “success story” (xxiii) for the native character known as Friday. As Morrison specifically points out, the “success story” is encapsulated not only in Crusoe’s “rescuing” or preserving and saving Friday’s physical body, but the true “success” of this narrative is located in Friday’s conversion into the new values and belief systems of his European “savior” Crusoe:

Crusoe’s narrative is a success story, one in which a socially, culturally, and biologically handicapped black man is civilized and Christianized—taught, in other words, to be like a white one. From Friday’s point of view it is a success story... Not only is he alive; he is greatly enabled by his association with his savior. (xxiii)

Crusoe’s narrative is venerated as a great “success story” on the Western trajectory of “progress” however, Morrison asks us to consider the costs of being “rescued” and the cost of “progress” and what it asks and perhaps even demands of the “rescued”? This is a dilemma that she terms as “Friday’s real problem”? (xxiv). To help us to better understand what is at stake in the phenomenon of “Friday’s real problem,” Morrison revisits the novel and she traces the historical chronology of the character, Crusoe and she reminds us that he was isolated for twenty years and the only other voice he heard belonged to a parrot that he specifically trained to repeat his name. Thus, Morrison writes, “lucky for him [Crusoe] he discovers a refugee [Friday] escaping a certain slaughter” (xxiv). Crusoe’s discovery of the Native Friday is fortuitous and it drastically changes the course of his life, “Crusoe is in a position to have more than unopposed dominion; now he is able to acquire status, to demonstrate and confirm his superiority” (xxiv).

Morrison further outlines some important points about the political objectives that undergird Crusoe’s objectives of saving and rescuing Friday. The act of saving Friday is undergirded with political intentions for Crusoe because it offers him new opportunities for “unopposed dominion” over Friday (xxiv). Morrison’s analysis of the relationality shared by Crusoe and Friday allows us to view the vast differences in agency and power inhabited by each character, respectively. For example, Crusoe’s new role as “rescuer” offered him a prosperous new life where he was able “to demonstrate and confirm his superiority” over the Native. In addition, I want to emphatically state that Morrison reminds us that the price for saving Friday’s life was not offered freely as an altruistic gift from one human being to another; rather, it was a part of a colonial project that demanded the neverending cycles of the Native’s subjugation and obligatory payments.

Morrison further writes about the crisis or “Friday’s real problem” and the real cost or the price that he truly owes the white “Savior” for rescuing him and saving his life:

The problem of internalizing the master’s tongue is the problem of the rescued. Unlike the problems of survivors who may be lucky, fated, etc., the rescued have the problem of debt. If the rescuer gives you back your life, he shares in that life... if the rescuer saves your life by taking you away from the dangers, the complications, the confusion of home, he may very well expect the debt to be paid in full. Not ‘Go your own way and sin no more.’ Not here, take this boat and find your own adventure, in or out of your own tribe. But full payment, forever. (xxv)

I shorten Morrison’s statement and compose it into a theory that uses her words and arguments that I term “the debt” that I utilize in my various analysis in this chapter to trace the
systemic production of new forms of va that bound Tonganness to institutions such as U.S. empire and to the Mormon Church. I contend that the “the debt” that Tonganness owes Mormonism is the embodiment of heteropatriarchy. I discuss the contours of “the debt” of embodying or what I term is the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy in a later section in this chapter.

**Mormonism, Desecration of the Sacred, and the “Debt”**

I use the term “heteropatriarchy” to define a central organizing principle in the colonial “racialized projects” utilized by the European explorers, Christian missionizing project, U.S. military and Mormon missionaries in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries to colonize Tonganness. In addition, these “racialized projects” centralized the deployment of relentless violence that disproportionately targeted the bodies of Tongan women and girls. As M. Jacqui Alexander has argued, “heteropatriarchy functions in ways that supersedes the sexual. At this historical moment, for instance, heteropatriarchy is useful in continuing to perpetuate a colonial inheritance” (24). Scott L. Morgensen writes about heteropatriarchy as a “colonial inheritance” produced by settler colonialisms on Indigenous peoples, “Colonization produced the biopolitics of modern sexuality that I call “settler sexuality”: a white national heteronormativity that regulates Indigenous sexuality and gender by supplanting them with the sexual modernity of settler subjects” (Morgensen 105). In the next sections of this chapter, I show how the Tongan embodiment of heteropatriarchy or what I term as the internalization of heteropatriarchy is “the debt” that is carried by Tonganness but this is a burden that is disproportionately carried on the backs of Tongan women. The internalization of heteropatriarchy is the core organizing principle of the Tongan Mormon Family. I further discuss the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy in the next sections of this chapter.

The Mormon Church’s systemic centering of heteropatriarchy as an organizing principle is defined in the official 1908 “Priesthood Correlation,” that legislated “over the course of the twenty-first century brought all Church operations under the bureaucratic management of exclusively male priesthood offices” (Brooks 11). In addition, Mormon feminist scholar Joanna Brooks contends that the Mormon Church’s centering of patriarchy and aligning themselves with the political tenets of Christian fundamentalism and conservatives was a strategy meant to align them with the U.S. mainstream, “sought to redefine themselves as exemplars of conservative middle-class American ‘family’ values, placing extra stress on women’s roles as mothers, wives, and homemakers” (11). The Mormon Church’s systemic centering of the values of heteropatriarchy and connecting it to U.S. empire in the process of building the Mormon Church in Tonga are perhaps best articulated and reflected in the statements made by respected Mormon Church Leader Eric B. Shumway in the Introduction chapter in his collection, *Tongan Saints: Legacy of Faith*.

In particular, Shumway notes that although the various Tongan voices featured in the collection “Come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences spanning four generations.” They are however, “Bound by a common belief,” and Shumway unequivocally names these belief systems. Firstly, he locates the institution of the Mormon Church as exceptional and superior from all other European Christian churches and he locates it at the Center, “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints [Mormonism] is in very fact the only ‘true and living church’ on the face of the earth” and furthermore, Shumway highlights the institutional factors that produce the Mormon Church as exceptional and superior and by naming the new power
stratifications that undergird this new authority, “with its priesthood authority, ordinances, organization, and keys to full salvation are vested only in one church” (8). Shumway locates the institution of heteropatriarchy, a brand politically aligned with U.S. empire as the authority and power structure that legitimates the Mormon Church as exceptional and superior or “only ‘true and living church’ on the face of the earth.” As I show in Chapter One and in this chapter, Mormonism’s inextricable connection with U.S. Empire and militarization is the authority that locates the Church at the political center of contemporaneous Tonganness.

**Heteropatriarchy as an Organizing Principle**

In my analysis of Tongan historical narratives in this chapter and throughout the dissertation project, I posit that heteropatriarchy is a colonially manufactured systems and economies of va, spatialities of intimacies and relationalities that traces its root to the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine and the natural world that includes the fonua (land) and Moana (deep Ocean) and encompasses all the worlds in between. The systemic desecration of the Sacred is supplanted with the new white and male Christian God. Next, I use Frantz Fanon’s theory on the colonial methodology and psychology, “perverted logic” to help me set up my argument that the institutionalization of heteropatriarchy constituted through the desecration of the Sacred was the ultimate goal of the colonial project in Tonga and it strategically aimed to colonize the Tongan natives’ past as a strategy to ensure the subjugation of the Tongan natives’ present with aims to lay down roots to ensure the subjugation of the natives’ future. Heteropatriarchy is a colonial system that produces as well as it ensures the subjugation of Tonganness.

Frantz Fanon in his seminal work, *Wretched of the Earth*, astutely documents the various technologies that white colonizers strategically deployed to colonize the Third World. He deconstructs the white colonizer’s insatiable desire for power by identifying the psychological root of this desire that also serves as a colonial methodology that he terms, the colonizer’s “perverted logic” (210). Fanon reveals that the “perverted logic” of the colonizer that undergird the colonial project is unrelenting in its objectives for subjugating the Native, “Perhaps we have not sufficiently demonstrated that colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future” because this is not enough and to further demonstrate the insatiable appetite of European colonizers’ (210). Fanon writes, “Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native’s brain of all form and content” because, according to Fanon, the colonizers deployed a strategy that is methodical and strategic and it, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (210).

In Chapter Three of this dissertation, I examine the early histories of European colonialisms in Tonga and the respective “racialized projects” that each colonizer instituted on Tonganness through the deployment of various forms of patriarchal violence and dominion over Tonganness that began with the institutionalization of Western linear time, a colonial technology that Gloria Anzaldua terms as, “This dichotomy is the root of all violence” (59). The colonial severing of Tongan time and space is a harrowing process that ‘Epeli Hau‘ofa documents, the “past” or the time before the coming of Christians was criminalized and everything that existed within this spatiality was systemically denigrated, “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism” (28). Thus, the colonial project in Tonga follows the trajectory that Fanon has documented, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (210). The Tongan “past” was vehemently dichotomized against to the new spatialities of the
present that turned outward into the future and termed as “the era of light” and these new legitimate spatialities, present and future, reflected the new time line of progress and "civilization ushered in by Christianity” (28). The Tongan Sacred is located within the spatiality that the Christians designated as “past” and “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarism” (28).

Fanon continues his arguments by reminding us that the strategies and methodologies deployed by colonizers to subjugate the natives were strategic and not “left to chance” and in addition and perhaps most significantly, the colonial desires for domination born out of what he posits is the colonizer’s, “perverted logic” demanded unfettered dominion of “the total” scope, contour and interceding into every crevice of the Native’s life (210). The colonial project desired all of the Native, all sum and “total,” and they refused to settle even for just a partial dominion (211). In fact, the colonizers’ “perverted logic” desired dominion of everything that the Native owned, the past, the present and the future. Fanon poignantly contends:

When we consider the efforts made to carry out the cultural estrangements so characteristic of the colonial epoch, we realize that nothing has been left to chance and that the total (cite) result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness. The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarianism, degradation, and bestiality. (211) Fanon’s clearly points out one of the most potent weapons deployed in the colonial project that aimed for a “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native was “to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness.

Additionally, the effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarianism, degradation, and bestiality” (211). Nadine Gordimer points this out in her Introduction Chapter to Albert Memmi’s The Colonizer and the Colonized: “the colonizer justified his/her situation by asserting that the colonizers brought enlightenment, technical as well as religious, to the indigenous people living in the heart of darkness” (32).

The colonial project that aimed for “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native, strategically aimed to define the Native’s past by marginalizing it, “devaluing pre-colonial history” a colonial technology and process that Hau’ofa documents happened in Tonga and in the Pacific region that resulted in the severing of time and space into two dichotomous spatialities, “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism, and the era of light and civilization ushered in by Christianity” (28). The devaluing of “precolonial history” that included the systemic denigration and the criminalization of the “customs of the colonized people, their traditions, their myths...are the very sign of that poverty of spirit and of their constitutional depravity” (Fanon 42). In addition, and most significantly, the colonial project located the Tongan Sacred within “prehistory” or “era of darkness” and the new values of the Western linear timeline of “progress” saturated with the colonial values of heteropatriarchy demanded the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, or as I have argued throughout this dissertation project, the Sacred is the heart beat of Tonganness.

Thus, the strategy to desecrate the Sacred was the ultimate goal of the colonial project in Tonga, to sever the heartbeat of a people is to obliterate the lifeline of a people and to cut out a people’s heart, their very source of mana, is to guarantee that they will remain submissive not only in the present time but also in the future. The Christians systemically supplanted the losses
of the Tongan Sacred, with centering heteropatriarchy that is symbolized by the new white male Christian God.

The surveillance of the native’s relationalities is a theme that Ngugi wa Thiong’o documents in his important work, Detained: A Writer’s Prison Diary. Thiong’o critically documents his unlawful detainment under the authoritarian hand of Kenyan rulers at Kamiti Maximum security prison. Thiong’o documents the systemic surveillance of the prisoner’s relationalities to their pasts and to other prisoners as strategies to disempower the prisoner and to make them easier to manage:

[It] make[s] a detainee feel that he has been completely cut off from the people and hence from that group solidarity—that sense of being one with the people—which alone keeps men and women going even when minced by truncheons, nailed boots, tear-gas and deathly whistling bullets. (20)

Saidiya Hartmann in her compelling book Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route, documents the colonial strategy of eradicating the slave’s memory and surveilling relationalities as a strategy of “containing” the slave, “In every slave society, slave owners attempted to eradicate the slave memory, that is, to erase all the evidence of an existence before slavery…A slave without a past had no life to avenge. No time was wasted yearning for home” (155).

Furthermore, Hartmann profoundly documents how the slave’s severed relationality to the Sacred produced through the surveillance of the slave’s memory was a technology for producing disempowerment and erasing the slave’s propensity for resistance against their masters:

Expunged all memories of a natal land, and it robbed the slave of spiritual protection. Ignorant of her lineage, to whom could the slave appeal? No longer able to recall the shrines or sacred groves or water deities or ancestor spirits or fetishes that could exact revenge on her behalf, she was defenseless. No longer anybody’s child, the slave had no choice to be bear the visible marks of servitude and accept a new identity in the household of the owner. (156)

In closing this section of the chapter, I revisit an argument that I made earlier at the beginning of this section about the centrality of heteropatriarchy in the colonization of Tonganness. I posit that heteropatriarchy is a colonially manufactured systems and economies of va, spatialities of intimacies and relationalities that are rooted on the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine and the natural world that includes the fonua (land) and Moana (deep Ocean) and encompasses all the worlds in between. The systemic desecration of the Sacred is supplanted, centered, and symbolized by the new white and male Christian God.

Ultimately, the institutionalization of heteropatriarchy, produced through the desecration of the Sacred, was the ultimate goal of the colonial project in Tonga and it strategically aimed to criminalize the Tongan natives’ past as a strategy for ensuring the subjugation of the Tongan natives’ present and future. Heteropatriarchy is a colonial system that produces as well as it ensures the permanent subjugation of Tonganness. Thus, because of the centrality of heteropatriarchy in framing the scope of the colonialisms of Indigenous peoples such as Tongans, Indigenous scholar Leeann Simpson suggests, that we place, “the interrogation of heteropatriarchy at the center of our nation-building movements…It counters the continued violent attack on bodies, intimacies, sexualities, and gender as a disposessing force” (91).
U.S. Militarization, Empire Building, and Mormonism

The dominant hand of the U.S. Mormon Church in the Tongan political landscape and in shaping the contours of contemporaneous Tonganness is the continuation of a colonial legacy. Military occupation specialist, David M. Edelstein, argues “Whereas an occupation is meant to be transient, the aims of the occupying powers are not. The primacy objective of an occupation is to achieve long-term strategic interests, whether that be stabilizing a territory for strategic interests (comprehensive occupations)” (Edelstein qtd. in De Matos and Ward 2). Edelstein’s argument supports Vernadette Vicuna Gonzalez term “reterritorialization” described in her work examining the legacies of U.S. militarization and its central role in enabling and sustaining the contemporaneous tourist industry in Asian regional countries such as the Philippines.

Gonzalez writes, “While the United States has since officially left its former colony’s territories, a reterritorialization of these former military reservations within the new economic structure of tourism has rendered American military history solely within the ‘good liberation’ framework” (64) and thus revealing that “the ‘roots’ and ‘routes’ of the U.S. military presence and of tourist itineraries are mutually constitutive” (63) and in addition Gonzales argues, “the interrelationships between tourism and militarism need to be better unpacked in order to lay bare the complex connections between these two very gendered formations of domination” (64). These are themes addressed in Teresia Teaiwa’s definition of “militourism” defined as a “phenomenon by which a military or paramilitary force ensures the running of a tourist industry, and that same tourist industry masks the military force behind it” (259). Thus “reterritorialization” traces the genealogies of U.S. empire that enabled and currently facilitates the privileged contemporaneous role that the Mormon Church occupies in Tonga and in many other Pacific Island nations throughout Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia after 1945 and the goals of these respective U.S. institutions are as Gonzales argues in her work as “mutually constitutive.”

I also turn to Geoffrey M. White’s term the “second invasion” that is a historical phenomenon that takes place after the military occupation and the “official” military withdrawal, “The return of military veterans to commemorate the Battle of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands constituted a ‘second invasion’ that became a contested site of transnational memory making” (Gonzalez 65). I raise White’s term of “second invasion,” in this discussion because it is a term that also provides a visuality that profoundly illustrates the role and political objectives of the U.S. Mormon missionary in Tonga after the “official” withdrawal of the U.S. military in 1945. Like the U.S. military, the U.S.-based Mormon Church’s objectives of “rescuing” Tonganness through conversion are a “second invasion” that proliferates the goals of U.S. empire produced through the deployment of unrelenting violence on Tonganness and I mention the Mormon Church’s making of povertyization and economic dependency in Tonga although these are themes that I don’t discuss in this chapter. I trace the histories of U.S. empire in Tonga during WWII in the next sections of this chapter.

The “Debt” Tonganness Owes to Mormonism

The dominant hand of U.S. empire and the U.S occupation of Tonga during WWII is a historical moment that enables and sustains the U.S Mormon Church’s contemporaneous “reterritorialization” and “second invasion” of Tonganness and thus, produces and defines the boundaries of the “debt” that Tonganness owes to the U.S.-based Mormon Church. Historian
Charles J. Weeks, Jr. explicates the two phases of U.S. occupation of Tonga during WWII: “The American occupation of Tonga can be roughly divided into two phases; the first period, from the arrival of Task Force 51 on May 9, 1942…and the second period lasting until the final evacuation of the American naval base in October 1945” (405). Historian Margaret Hixon describes the arrival of the “highly secretive” U.S. military operation named “Operative BLEACHER” on Tongan shores in 1942:

On a May morning, United States Task Force 51 entered the turquoise waters of Nuku’alofa harbor and dropped anchor. The highly secretive Operation BLEACHER was scheduled to begin at approximately eight o’clock…The number of ships in the convoy is given…as ’30 odd ships. The unloading of military personnel and equipment comprised around 7,000 soldiers, 800 sailors, officers and nurses, and over 90,000 tons of cargo. Thus began an occupation of Tongatapu that was to last three and a half years. (123)

The making of “the debt” that Tonganness owes to Mormonism is a colonial production that began with the arrival of the first Europeans in the seventeenth century, but this chapter examines the contours of “the debt” that Tonganness owes Mormonism produced during WWII to the present moment.

For example, Lisa Yoneyama writes about the dominant framing of U.S. militarization and imperialisms in WWII as the “good war,” by briefly examining the term “Americanization.” She posits, “If by ‘Americanization’ we refer to the U.S. government’s claims to power and authority with which it has defined and administered justice for the rest of the world, it is by no means a new phenomenon” (58). Yoneyama traces the phenomenon of “Americanization” to the role of the U.S in the Cold War, “‘Americanization of world justice’ was constitutive of the Cold War strategy that posited the North Americans as the supreme defender of the ‘free world.’” (59) Thus, Yoneyama connects the U.S. military’s role as “supreme defender of the ‘free world’” during the Cold War to the representation of their role in WWII, “It has been inseparably tied to prevailing American war memories in which the U.S. war against Japan is remembered as a ‘good war.’” In addition, she continues to layout her argument that the “Americanization” of our memories of WWII as the “good war” is shaped by the dominant memory that paints the U.S. as “liberators:”

According to this dominant way of remembering, the U.S. war against Japan (1941–45) not only liberated Asians, including Japanese themselves, from Japan’s military fanaticism, but also rehabilitated them into free and prosperous citizens of the democratic world. Put differently, dominant American war memories are tied to what might be called an imperialist myth of “liberation and rehabilitation.” (58)

Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho write, “After WWII, Japan’s new geopolitical position and image was managed by U.S. imperial designs” (xxi) and they reiterate some of the key arguments posited by T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama in their collection, Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s).

Shigematsu and Camacho assert, “The United States presented itself as a ‘liberator’ of Japanese wartime colonialism…and strove to make invisible the multiplicity of experiences and remembrances of the war” (xxi). Furthermore, Shigematsu and Camacho highlight Lisa Yoneyama’s theory of “Already accrued debt” that Yoneyama outlines in her well-read essays, Traveling Memories, “The imperial myth of liberation create what Yoneyama calls an ‘already accrued debt’ to the United States, which continues to fashion the United States as a ‘liberator’ of Japanese colonialism rather than as a nation of war crimes associated with colonial takeovers and occupations.”
In addition, as Yoneyama writes about her theory of the “already accrued debt,” “Once marked as ‘the liberated’ and therefore ‘the in-debted,’ one can never enter into an evenly reciprocal relationship with the liberators. The notion of indebtedness thus disciplines those who are identified as the liberated” (Yoneyama 81). I use these theories that identify and grapple with the legacies of U.S. militarization and empire building in Tonga to guide me in my analysis of the politics of “the debt” that defines the va that Tonganness or the “indebtedness” owe to our “rescuers” the U.S.-based Mormon Church.

“The Debt” and the Tongan “Internalization of Heteropatriarchy”

In her definition of “already accrued debt,” Yoneyama lays out some of the obligations allocated to those classified as “the in-debted” or using Morrison’s term, those classified as “rescued.” I reiterate Yoneyama’s argument, “The notion of indebtedness thus disciplines those who are identified as the liberated” (81) is a statement that profoundly defines the laws outlining the boundaries of the historical “debt” that Tonganness owes the U.S.-based Mormon church, imagined as the liberators or “rescuers” of Tonganness. I argue that the Tongan “notion of indebtedness” that we owe Mormonism is an “already accrued debt” that “disciplines those who are identified as the liberated” such as Tonganness to embody the internalization of heteropatriarchy. Earlier in this chapter, I showed how the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy is a colonial project that is centered on the desecration of the Sacred; this is the quintessential goal of the colonial project in Tonga.

I return to Morrison’s theory of “the debt” to further contextualize the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy. Morrison writes “Friday’s real problem, however, was not to learn the language of repetition, easily, like the parrot, but to learn to internalize it” (Morrison xxv). Thus, it’s not enough for the “rescued” to perform repetition but “the debt” demands the “rescued” to “internalize” the terms of their colonialism or the laws of heteropatriarchy. Thus, I posit that the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy demands three performances from the “rescued”; gratitude, obedience and silence and furthermore, these new colonial laws are disproportionately burdens carried on the backs of Tongan women and girls. In addition, as I show in this chapter, the laws governing the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy are inculcated and surveilled through the deployment of violence against women within the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. I show examples of the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy and the layered and often salient ways that it disciplines Tongan women’s lives in my examination of the Tongan female character Lavinia from the Disney film and book of memoirs, The Other Side of Heaven and the role of the Tongan daughter in the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family documented in the achieve Letter To Tangata.

U.S. Militarization, “White Terror,” and “The Debt”

This next section reiterates some of the key themes that I shared in Chapter1 on the legacy of U.S empire as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination constituted through the military’s systemic deployment of unrelenting violence on Tonganness that transpired during the U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII. In addition, I argue that perhaps the most pernicious and poignant suffering that the U.S. military deployed on Tonganness during this historical moment was the systemic rape and sexual violence deployed on the bodies of Tongan women and girls because this gendered violence continues a colonial legacy of desecrating the
Sacred, the Feminine. I begin this section by sharing bell hooks theory of “white terror” and then I share some of the key historical narratives that I offered in Chapter 1 that illustrates the invidious violence the U.S. military deployed on Tonganness that paints the U.S. empire as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination and after sharing the key narratives, I highlight how this history of militarization enables the “reterritorialization” of the U.S. Mormon Church after 1945 after the “official” withdrawal. The histories of U.S. empire, trauma and relentless violence undergird the boundaries of “the debt” and “already accrued debt” that Tonganness owes to the U.S.-based Mormon Church.

In Chapter One, I shared historical narratives that delineated some of the terror and horror deployed on Tonganness produced by the hand of the U.S. military during their occupation of Tongan lands during WWII. I briefly outline some of the key historical moments and key themes that I shared earlier in this section. I begin with highlighting what is often termed as “Great Cigarette Raid” and then I briefly discuss the U.S. military’s systemic deployment of rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women. In August 1944, it was alleged that Tongan thieves broke into the navy warehouse at Ma’ufanga and they stole U.S. commodities that included gasoline, beer, other equipment and “72 cases of cigarettes” (Wood-Ellem 19). Thus, the massacre and violence that ensued after this incident was called, the “Great Cigarette Raid” (Weeks 419). It’s important to note that when investigations were finally conducted on this incident, it was discovered that “much of the property recovered had been ‘freely and openly given away’ by Americans at the time prior to the raid, some of it by servicemen participating in the raid” (Wood-Ellem 19).

When the theft occurred, the U.S. military refused to notify the local Tongan police and authorities and instead, they took the matters into their own hands and created martial law. The U.S. military “authorized road blocks to stop suspected vehicles” and “Navy men roamed the streets and countryside armed with revolvers and rifles” arbitrarily arresting and beating up Tongans they suspected participated in the crime (Wood-Ellem 19). The violent consequences from this incident didn’t end there and the devastation continued and on August 15, 1944:

> The armed navy vigilantes barged into the home of the Tongan Premier Ata and demanded informed about the stolen property. After lining the Prime Minister’s wife and family against a wall, the sailors made a perfunctory search of the house for beer and cigarettes. When they had finished the Prime Minister’s family, the naval task force proceeded to numerous houses in the vicinity, kicking down doors, firing revolvers into the air, and lining up elderly people against walls for search and interrogation…(Weeks 420)

“The Cigarette Raid” is a historical moment that memorializes the U.S. military’s systemic deployment of violence and terror on Tonganness and the layered violence of this moment coagulate to produce the representation of U.S. Empire in the Tongan imagination as “white terror.”

In her important work on rape in Native America, Sarah Deer poignantly defines rape and sexual violence as integral to the settler colonial project, “Rape is more than a metaphor for colonization, however; it is integral to colonization…Rape embodies the worst traits of colonization in its attack on the body, disrespect for physical boundaries, and disregard for humanity” (5) in addition, Deer documents the pernicious and often salient ways that rape and sexual violence wreaks havoc on the physical body and the human spirit “Sexual violence impinges on our spiritual selves, creating emotional wounds that fester and infect larger wells of community trauma” (Deer xxiv). I share Deer’s definition of rape and sexual because I want to
place emphasis on her argument that rape and sexual violence is “integral to colonization” as is demonstrated by the history of U.S. military occupation of Tonga during WWII. Furthermore, I share Deer’s statement because I want to draw on her argument on the heinous trauma and suffering that are the consequences of rape and sexual violence on individual victims, their families, communities and nations. I contend that the legacies of the U.S. systemic rape of Tongan women and Tongan girls committed by the military that are perhaps the heaviest burdens carried in the Tongan heart and memory because the rape of the feminine is symbolic of the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine, that as I have argued throughout this dissertation project is the heartbeat of Tonganness. The desecration of the Sacred was the ultimate objective of the colonial project in Tonga.

In Chapter 1, I posit that in the Tongan imagination, the U.S. empire is represented as “white terror” was historically produced by the U.S.’s systemic deployment of military violence on Tonganness and this image is profoundly defined by the U.S. military’s deployment of systemic rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and Tongan girls during WWII. These histories of harrowing and unrelenting violence defines the Tongan va to Mormonism and the boundaries defining the insatiable “debt” or the “already accrued debt” that Tonganness owes Mormonism that I have argued is the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy and this is a central building block of the Tongan Mormon Family a colonial spatiality that I discuss later.

In Chapter 1, I analyze renderings of Tongan cultural memories tracing the profound changes that transpired during and after the U.S. occupation of Tonga during WWII offered by Tongan male scholars Siosiua F. Pouvalu Lafitani and Futa Helu. I highlight their retelling of a paradigmatic Tongan memory of this historical moment that centers on a preoccupation with Tongan women’s sexualities and what is often imagined to be a prodigious prostitution trade that employed the bodies of copious Tongan women during WWII. Lafitani writes, “Oral information has revealed situations where cash, material and food resources were given by the American armies to Tongan women as reciprocity for making love. There were stories of making love in a bedroom, under a tree, inside a truck and so on, and most of such stories pointed to both unmarried and married women” (79) and furthermore, he paints all Tongan women as possessing what he believes is deviant sexualities or “prostitutes”: “It has perhaps been more difficult to distinguish Tongan women that are behaving as prostitutes from those who are not” (80).

Ultimately, Lafitani silences and shuts down any talk about the issues of Tongan women and rape. He ardentely declares, “Again, there were very few reports of rape and sexual harassment of women.” (79) The prominent Tongan scholar Futa Helu like Lafitani writes about the flourishing and prodigious prostitution trade that included the services and bodies of numerous Tongan women: “prostitution as a career, a strategy for gaining a livelihood, is certainly a World War II introduction” (30) and furthermore, “it quickly built up during the war years and in no time both declared and undeclared prostitutes became quite numerous” (Helu 29). Like Lafitani, Helu is preoccupied with Tongan women’s exponential participation in the prostitution trade during WWII. In the next sections, I unravel what this preoccupation and maligned judgment of Tongan women’s sexualities erases and reveals about power stratifications during this historical moment under the hand of U.S. occupation.

Futa Helu tells a narrative about a Tongan woman that was raped by a U.S. solider that I shared in Chapter 1 and I share the narrative in this chapter as well. My aim is to speak against the silence that frames this woman’s narrative so that perhaps her ghost can rest and perhaps we can also finally take a breath. In Chapter 1, I wrote that when I first encountered this narrative
many years ago, it profoundly broke my heart because of the Tongan woman’s invisibility in the patriarchal trope and because the normalization of rape and sexual violence on Tongan women’s bodies are historical wounds that we both shared and know intimately. Helu’s telling of the Tongan woman’s narrative, silences the horror of the violence of the rape and it criminalizes the Tongan woman while absolving the U.S soldier of his invidious crime. I am compelled by the glaring silences that shape this narrative and I want to recognize silence and use it as an apparatus for tracing the stratifications of power and domination. Here is Helu’s telling:

A not too young woman was raped by an American soldier and she was beside herself with grief, but when the man threw down beside her a large bundle of dollars she stopped crying and said: ‘Soldier, if in the future you want a repeat performance, you know where I live. (3)

The shape of Helu’s telling of this moment of terror, elucidates the privileging of heteropatriarchy and he depicts this institution, not as the colonial invention that it is, but he deploys it as a normalization of Tongan life and culture. Thus, Helu disavows the Tongan woman’s humanity, severs our familiarity, our va with her and invalidates her inhabitation of space within the span of Tonganness. He makes her invisible and unrecognizable to us. Helu’s privileging of heteropatriarchy, and concomitantly also the racialization that births it, makes him unable to distinguish the differences between the violence and horror of rape from what he has described earlier as “prostitution as a career.”

There is a slippery slope for him in distinguishing the differences and with all due respect, I contend that this blurring is founded in an underlying heteropatriarchal belief that all Tongan women’s sexualities are “deviant” in all its multiple iterations whether its rape or prostitution. What is at the core is that Tongan women, whether prostitutes or not, are all deviant. Furthermore, the heart break lies in the silencing of the woman’s suffering that are the consequences of the horror of rape because she is classified as a “prostitute” and it is imagined that she had “agency” in her relationship with the U.S. soldier. In addition, the rape perpetrator, or the rapist, the U.S. Soldier, the U.S. military is not held accountable for the crime and the U.S. military are dismissed of all accountability for the crime and trauma that they produced. The overall tone of the narrative sets the U.S. soldier’s deployment of violence and rape on the Tongan woman’s body as “normalized” and perhaps even desired because Helu tells us that the soldier was invited back for a “repeat performance” (3).

In my analysis of Helu’s narrative in Chapter 1, I “read” it alongside the “Cigarette Raid” that I shared earlier documenting the layers of terror and relentless U.S. military violence and domination over Tonganness. Thus, under the hand of U.S. military occupation and under First world dominion, I ask, when does rape start and prostitution ends and/or when does prostitution start and rape ends? I also think about the many narratives, I often heard when growing up, told by Tongan men about Tongan women’s sexualities that echo the misogynist tone and messages in Futa Helu’s narrative, and I ask, is it possible that what we have often termed in Tonga as a flourishing prostitution trade that Helu has also described as a trade that included the participation of countless Tongan women, “both declared and undeclared prostitutes became quite numerous” was actually just a small part of a much more complicated story, a story that is perhaps so pernicious and difficult for us, Tongans, to hold? Is it possible that the flourishing prostitution trade that Helu termed as “quite numerous” during the U.S. occupation of Tonga was a phenomenon that actually did not include Tongan women and Tongan girls’ “agency” and consent like we have been taught to believe and instead the reality is that most of the histories
that we have termed as “prostitution as career” describes the U.S. military’s systemic deployment of rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls?

Scholars and activists Annie Fukushima and Gwyn Kirk argue that the recent surge of stories in the media covering the narratives of women soldiers being raped by fellow male soldiers in the U.S. military are often treated as “sporadic scandals” or isolated incidents but these narratives, however, “spring from the mycelium of U.S. military culture and ideology.” Aida F. Santos writes, “Wherever militarism goes in the world, so too goes prostitution” (40) or in the case of Tonga during WWII under U.S. occupation, the so-called copious and flourishing “prostitution” trade was the U.S. military’s systemic rape and sexual assault of the bodies of Tongan women and girls. Furthermore, their research also reveals the preponderance of rape in communities that host U.S. bases throughout Asia such as “Okinawa, South Korea, and the Philippines” and thus, these histories have inevitably created tensions between the local communities and the U.S. military as a consequence of the horror of the military violence against local women. Okinawan women have documented the history of rape by U.S. troops in Okinawa (1945–present).

Fukushima and Kirk show how sexual violence is a factor in contemporary tensions surrounding U.S. basing agreements in Okinawa, South Korea, and the Philippines:

Militarized prostitution in Asia…is alive and well. Bar areas near the bases are thriving, and U.S. ships continue to make port calls in the Philippines and Thailand. In the past, Philippine women were called “little brown fucking machines powered by rice,” among other pejoratives: “Yankee whore,” “bar girl,” or "hostess," reflecting U.S. soldiers’ expectations that women would provide sex.

Fukushima and Kirk also raise a point that I want to return to in my analysis of Futa Helu’s narrative about the Tongan woman rape victim that I shared earlier. Fukushima and Kirk raise the issue of “Militarized prostitution”—that are sites produced specifically for the sexual needs of U.S. military men that work in Asian countries and in countries all around the globe that host U.S. military bases. These various prostitution sites built in Asian countries for servicing U.S. military troops sexual desires are similar to the sites in Tonga that Helu termed as “prostitution as career.”

What is compelling in Fukushima and Kirk’s research is that they charted the pejorative and derogatory names that U.S. troops used to describe the Asian women working as prostitutes in these sites, “Philippine women were called ‘little brown fucking machines powered by rice,’ among other pejoratives: ‘Yankee whore,’” I bring this point up because the names that the military men used to describe the Asian women working as prostitutes allow us to view the layered forms of military violence and I want to show how this violence is gendered as well as racialized. In addition, Fukushima and Kirk allow us to view that even within spaces such as the “militarized prostitution,” sites where we imagine women have “agency,” the language and the names that the U.S. military men use to classify the women working as prostitutes however, tells us another story that asks us to rethink the issue of power and female “agency” in the relationship that women of color share with the U.S. military. In fact, the names that the U.S. troops used to classify these women of color depict the systemic rape, sexual violence and degradation of their bodies and it also highlights the always looming threat of rape and sexual assault that shape women of color’s lives under the occupation of militarization.

Recalling Fukushima and Kirk’s argument, they remind us that there are no isolated incidents of rape by U.S. military men, because these isolated incidents “spring from the mycelium of U.S. military culture and ideology” (Fukushima and Kirk). Cynthia Enloe tells us,
“Rape…is about power more than it is about sex” and Angela Davis identifies the layered power stratifications in men’s rape of women, “The present rape epidemic occurs at a time when the capitalist class is furiously reasserting its authority in face of global and internal challenges. Both racism and sexism, central to its domestic strategy of increased economic exploitation, are receiving unprecedented encouragement” (195, 200). Rape is a systemic violence that is inextricably driven by race, gender and class. Thus, in the never-ending cycles of heteropatriarchal violence on women’s bodies and under the hand of U.S militarization, I ask these questions with the intentions of attempting to locate women’s “agency” within these relationships. My questions are: when does rape start and prostitution ends and/or when does prostitution start and rape ends?

Returning to Futa Helu’s telling of the Tongan rape victim’s narrative that I shared earlier, where he centers heteropatriarchy like Lafitani, and he casts a disparaging and moral judgment on the Tongan woman and erases the violence of her rape by a U.S. solider because he imagines that she had “agency” in her role as a prostitute and we are made to believe that with her “agency” the Tongan woman made the morally wrong “choice” As I mentioned earlier, I read Helu and Lafitani’s analysis of Tongan women’s copious participation in the prostitution trade alongside the “Cigarette Raid” that I shared earlier documenting the layers of relentless and innumerable U.S. military violence against Tonganness and I ask some questions and concerns. Under the prodigious hand of U.S militarization in Tonga, and under the new laws of heteropatriarchy that so many Tongan men have internalized as norms, I ask on behalf of the Tongan woman that was raped by the U.S. solider, when does rape start and prostitution ends and/or when does prostitution start and rape ends?

In Helu’s narrative, where is the Tongan woman’s “agency” located because rape and prostitution are depicted as inextricably linked and the boundaries are blurred? How do we distinguish the differences? Does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman, the victim of rape, change the trajectories of the violence that was committed against her? Does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman rape victim delineate the boundaries between the spaces of what is “rape” and what is “prostitution” and if so, does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman rape victim obliterate the horror of the violence that was committed on her body and does it erase and ameliorate the layers of historical trauma that the Tongan woman, her family and future generations of Tongans must suffer and carry as a consequence of this violence? Earlier I shared Sarah Deer’s statement about the wounds of rape and sexual violence on Indigenous peoples, “Sexual violence impinges on our spiritual selves, creating emotional wounds that fester and infect larger wells of community trauma (Deer, xxiv).

Hence, I ask how much money is “enough” and “comparable” to compensate for the heinous crime of raping a Tongan woman and “impinging on our spiritual selves, creating emotional wounds that fester and infect later wells of community trauma) (xxiv) ? How much money is “enough”? Is the soldier’s payment of American dollars after committing the crime of rape equal to the crime and can it compensate for the histories and legacies of Tongan suffering and trauma that rape unfolds? I ask if the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman, the victim of rape by a U.S soldier, change the trajectories of the violence that was committed against her? Does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman rape victim delineate the boundaries between the spaces of what is “rape” and what is “prostitution” and if so, does the payment of American dollars to the Tongan woman rape victim obliterate the horror of the violence that was committed?
Earlier I shared Sarah Deer’s profound statement about the wounds of rape and sexual violence as a collective wound shared by Indigenous communities, “Sexual violence impinges on our spiritual selves, creating emotional wounds that fester and infect larger wells of community trauma (Deer, xxiv). Hence, I ask how much money is “enough” and “comparable” to compensate for the heinous crime of raping a Tongan woman, a crime that impinges on her spirit and it doesn’t just end there and it produces “emotional wounds that fester and infect later wells of community trauma) (xxiv)? How much money is “enough” to compensate for the historical trauma carried by the Tongan woman victim, her family, and a long line of the next generation of Tongans that carry the weight of this wound? Is the soldier’s payment of American dollars to his victim equal and can it compensate for the histories and legacies of Tongan suffering and trauma that he created?

The systemic silencing of this historical trauma, grief and “white terror” is produced by the very perpetrators of the irreparable violence. As I have mentioned earlier, the dominant memory representing the U.S. military’s participation in WWII as the “good war” erases and silences the histories of “white terror” that the U.S. represents in the Tongan imagination and furthermore, the Mormon Church’s “reterritorialization” of Tonganness after the U.S. military’s withdrawal in 1945 further perpetuates the systemic silence of “white terror” and the normalization of violence against Tongan women as the goals of these two respective institutions are inextricably connected in their commitment to expanding U.S. empire.

Furthermore and interestingly, the U.S. military’s historical representation as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination enables the Mormon Church’s exponential growth after WWII because this historical moment paints the Mormon Church and its missionaries as the benevolent “rescuers” and “liberators” of Tonganness offering them U.S. dollars as well as salvation. In addition, the representations of U.S. empire as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination produced by the U.S. military’s relentless and systemic rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls shape the boundaries of the “debt” and the phenomenon of the “already accrued debt” that Tonganness owes to Mormonism that I argue is the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy, a phenomenon that I examine in the next few sections of this chapter.

**The White Male Mormon Missionary as “Rescuer” of Tonganness**

I examine the portrayal of a Tongan female character, Lavinia, in the 2001 Disney film, *The Other Side of Heaven*, based on the book, *The Memoirs of John H. Groberg*, examines the respected Mormon Church leader John H. Groberg’s during his mission for the Mormon Church to Tonga in the 1950s after WWII. I briefly trace the trajectory of Lavinia’s “story of success,” as Morrison terms it, that is navigated by the white American and male missionary, Groberg and I trace the burden that defines Lavinia’s life to attempt to pay “the debt” or the demands of the “already accrued debt” that she owes her “rescuers” the U.S.-based Mormon Church through the discipline of internalization of heteropatriarchy.

In the book of memoirs as well as in the film, the crisis of Tongan women’s “deviant” sexuality immediately takes center stage in the section titled “Girl Troubles” that feature the Tongan female character, Lavinia. This theme is a familiar colonial trope that recalls the objectives of the early Christian colonial projects that centered on disciplining Tongan women’s sexualities, “One of the major justifications presented by the first missionaries for their activities in Polynesia was the ‘depravity’ of ‘degradation’ of the women” (Ward Gailey 153). As I also mentioned earlier in this Chapter and in Chapter 1, the surveillance and domination of Tongan
women’s sexualities through rape and sexual violence are definitive histories that paint the U.S. empire as “white terror” in the Tongan imagination and the Mormon Church’s contemporaneous role as “reterritorialization” of empire erases and silences this historical trauma and yet, as Groberg’s narrative highlights, the disciplining of Tongan women’s sexualities are at the center of the colonial project. Thus, as the title of the section “Girl Troubles,” suggests and elucidates, Groberg has “trouble” on his hands. He is not only required to convert Lavinia, a Tongan native and place her on the trajectory of “progress” but Lavinia is marked by her multiple “other” that include her race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. Lavinia, represents “trouble” for Groberg and her conversion into Mormonism lies at the crux of the missionizing project in Tonga.

At the beginning of the section “Girl Troubles,” Groberg unabashedly locates himself at the center of Tonganness and he is immediately imbued with unfettered authority and power to dictate the direction of the Tongan natives’ lives towards “progress.” Thus, Groberg represents what Geoffrey M. White terms, “second invasion,” (Gonzalez 69) following in footsteps of the recently departed U.S. military: “I felt wonderful about the prospects of baptizing the whole family, but one thing bothered me. For some time, I had sensed that their eighteen-year old daughter was ‘making eyes’ at me” (80). Recalling Toni Morrison’s telling of Crusoe and the native, Friday, Morrison posits that Crusoe’s discovery of the Native Friday is fortuitous and it drastically changes and enhances the course of his life, “Crusoe is in a position to have more than unopposed dominion; now he is able to acquire status, to demonstrate and confirm his superiority” (xxiv). Groberg’s “discovery” of Tongans that include Lavinia, her family, and her Tongan community drastically changes the course of Groberg’s life.

Before his mission to Tonga, Groberg is a naïve, nondescript 22-year-old white farm boy from the state of Idaho living an uneventful and monotonous life without any unique life experiences, expertise or knowledge of the world and yet, because of his race, gender and First world privileges, Groberg is given immediate authority over Tonganness and like the colonizer Crusoe, Groberg, “Is in a position to have more than unopposed dominion; now he is able to acquire status, to demonstrate and confirm his superiority” (xxiv). Thus, it is therefore urgent for Groberg to convert Lavinia to Mormonism and to a heteropatriarchal life to “rescue” her from her “deviant” Tonganness but also because her conversion to “progress” allows Groberg to not only “acquire status” but it also allows him to “confirm his superiority” and to reassert himself and the Mormon Church as the quintessential “rescuers” of Lavinia and Tonganness.

In the beginning of the section “Girl Troubles,” Groberg recounts a memory telling of a moment when Lavinia attempted to seduce him into participating in premarital or “deviant” sex acts while he was proselyting in one of Tonga’s smaller outer islands called Ha’apai. Groberg defines “deviant” sexual acts as intimacies that lie outside of the Mormon heteropatriarchal-sanctioned marriage between a man and a woman and officiated by male Church leaders that have the authority of the priesthood. In the Mormon Church, the top leadership roles are only allocated to men that hold the priesthood authority and women are denied the privileges of the priesthood. In the next scene, spectators are shown two dichotomous images of womanhood. Lavinia’s image is contrasted to Jean, the image of the “good white woman” that is abstaining from engaging in non-heteropatriarchal sex because she is waiting patiently in the U.S. for Groberg’s return back home.

In the book and the film, Groberg faces Lavinia and he explicates the vast differences that separate her and his girlfriend, Jean, “I would not have sex with anyone and neither would she” (88). In the scene, Groberg ardently resists Lavinia’s sexual advances and he uses this moment of crisis to inculcate the core values of the Mormon church; white supremacy and heteropatriarchy
which are the core values of the Tongan Mormon Family “I said ‘Listen, put your clothes back on. …I promise I’ll talk to you about marriage, family and what love really means.’ …She put her clothes back on and followed without a word” (Groberg 81). Groberg also documents a much longer conversation that he shared with Lavinia to inculcate her on the norms of heteropatriarchy:

I explained about the priesthood, temples, and the eternal marriage covenant…I explained that it was His will that the act of procreation take place only after marriage in the temple. In this way He can ensure the greatest joy and fulfillment possible to those who obey Him. (81)

Lavinia’s “success” in this story lies in the fact that the Mormon Church “rescues” her and converts her into Mormonism and thus, the trajectory of Lavinia’s life after her conversion centers on “the debt” that she owes to her “rescer.”

Lavinia’s efforts at paying “the debt” or the “already accrued debt” is a surveillance that demands her internalization of heteropatriarchy constituted through three disciplines that include; gratitude, obedience and silence. Lavinia’s new life is a map depicting “the debt” ; Lavinia recognizes her “deviance” early in the narrative that is entangled in her multiple “Other” that include her sexuality, gender, race and class and viewers are shown evidence of this through her feeble attempts to sexually seduce the white Mormon missionary. Thus, the next part of Lavinia’s life show her acquiescing to the new laws on gender, sexuality and race that the white Mormon missionary legislates and next, she undergoes conversion and baptism to the Mormon Church, and she participates in a heterosexual marriage with a Tongan man that is also baptized and becomes a member of the Mormon Church. Their marriage is sanctioned by the Mormon Church leaders that hold the authority of the priesthood and these changes gives Lavinia the opportunity to play the role of a “good mother” in the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family by bearing many children and the new trajectories of her life centers on her preoccupation with supporting her husband so that he can fulfill his priesthood obligations and responsibilities.

In addition, Lavinia’s timeline of “progress” continues to unravel and the Mormon Church rewards Lavinia and her family with a migration and new life in the U.S. As the trajectory of “progress” delineates, Lavinia’s internalization of heteropatriarchy is a discipline that requires three surveillances. First, Lavinia’s performance of gratitude shown to the white Mormon missionary for “rescuing” and liberating her from her Tonganness that is defined by her “deviant” and non-heteropatriarchal sexuality shown at the beginning of the narrative to her transformation as the “good mother” in the Tongan Mormon Family are evidence of “progress” and attempting to pay back the “debt.” Groberg explicates, “She later joined the Church, married a faithful man, and was sealed in the temple. She became a good mother of several children and a faithful wife and supporter of her husband, who served in many positions” (Groberg 84). Furthermore, Lavinia’s continued internalization of heteropatriarchy depicted through her performances of obedience and silence is central to her “progress” because it maintains the new status quo.

Furthermore, Lavinia and her family are dependent on the Mormon Church’s payments of U.S. dollars and promises of economic opportunities symbolized by her migration to the U.S. navigated by the hand of the Church. Lavinia’s trajectory of “progress” is produced and maintained by the “debt” to those that “rescued” her or Mormonism and her internalization of heteropatriarchy maintains this status quo not only for herself and her family but it also serves as a surveillance that includes future generations. As I have stated earlier, Tonga is “The most Mormon nation” but also most Tongans living in the U.S. are members of the Mormon Church.
(Fonua, Matangi Tonga). Thus, Lavinia’s internalization of heteropatriarchy continues to discipline future generations of Tongans in the U.S. diaspora because it is shrouded in the myth that heteropatriarchy is a Tongan “tradition” and “authentic” Tongan core value rather than the colonial import that it is.

**Letter to Tangata, Va ‘Ofi in the Tongan Mormon Family**

Next, I share an archive titled *Letter to Tangata* that includes a photo that memorializes my Mormon Baptism Ceremony that took place at the Matavai Mou’i Mormon Chapel located in Ma’ufanga, a town that lies in Nuku‘alofa, the capital city of Tonga. I was baptized shortly after my eighth birthday during the 1970s. The second and corresponding text is titled, *Letter to Tangata,* and as the title suggests, the text is written in a first-person voice in the format of a letter addressed to my father, Tangata. It looks at my family’s conversion into the Mormon Church after my father returned back home after an absence. I underscore the “progress” that transpires in the spatiality of our Tongan Mormon Family that center the new values of heteropatriarchy. I show Tangata’s role in the center of the family as the Patriarch and imbued with the new founded authority of the Melchizedek Priesthood bestowed by the Mormon Church.

The authority of the Priesthood allowed Tangata to offer me a “father’s blessing” at the “Ordinance of Confirmation Ceremony” at my Mormon Baptism Ceremony. Within the Tongan Mormon Family, the technology of violence against women is not only necessary but it is normalized to maintain the new status quo legislated by the Mormon Church. Thus, violence shapes the contours of the intimate relationality va ‘ofi. Va ‘ofi is a relationality often termed by scholars as “tender ties” like a connection often shared between a father and daughter within a family. Thus, I document the intimate routes that the father inculcates and surveils the daughter to perform the internalization of heteropatriarchy and its three disciplines; gratitude, obedience and silence within their shared intimacy of va ‘ofi.
Figure 1. Personal Collection.
Dear Tangata,

Remember that photograph taken shortly after you came back home? Our patchwork of dreams had come true. Tangata, we were a family, once again. The photograph memorializes my Mormon baptism that took place shortly after my eighth birthday at the Mormon chapel located in Ma‘ufanga. In the photo, I am wearing a white dress with blue polka dots that was sewed specifically for this important day. I am sitting on a metal foldout chair with my eyes closed and my small head fervently bowed in prayer.

I am surrounded by a circle, a formidable circle that consisted of Tongan men, Tongan patriarchs that held the authority of the Mormon Melchizedek Priesthood. You and three other Tongan men encircle me with your large brown bodies and your hands nestled gently on my small head. Three uncles; one, two, three, and there you are, my beloved father, Tangata, standing behind me offering a “father’s blessing.” A few days earlier, Litia, my mother, told me the good news and we waited to tell you until you got back home from your new job as a Tongan language translator for the Mormon Church. You were overwhelmed and you had to sit down. You were recently bestowed to the office of the Melchizedek Priesthood. This new authority allowed you to participate in the circle of men and to offer me, your first-born daughter, a father’s blessing at “the ordinance of confirmation” ceremony at my baptism into the Mormon Church.

My baptism symbolized the many new changes in our home and it also revealed the promises and new dreams that the future held for our family. Joy swept over our home like warm tides of salt water. That night all of us; you, Litia, Loa, baby ‘Amelia and me, participated in rituals that were previously unknown to us. We laughed together and we held each other and cried, grateful for the many new blessings in our lives and the promises that they offered. We were a family once again. We ate sapa, as we called the evening meal as kids in Tonga, and Loa and I sang along to our favorite ballad, Linda Rondstandt’s “Blue Bayou” on A3Z radio, “I’ll never be blue, my dreams come true on Blue Bayou.”

It was only a few months ago, Loa and I wept when we saw you nestled in the small bed at Vaiola Hospital with needles, pipelines and sharp wires prodding endlessly into the veins of your frail body. Your Alcoholism had stolen everything except for the raging fevers brought by the tuberculosis. It was at that moment when you tasted the veracity of death that you made a commitment to stay alive. When Litia introduced you to the smiling missionaries with white button up shirts touting their Book of Mormon and the Mormon church offered you a lucrative new job as a Tongan language translator at their new office in Ma‘ufanga, you reluctantly accepted and agreed to conversion and baptism. Your choices were limited, Tangata. You lost your coveted government job as a Tongan language translator for the Tongan courts and the circle of Hou’eiki (footnote) family and friends that had once embraced you, now remember you with pity.

But the Mormon Gods picked you up and they breathed a new life into your lungs and in return, you vowed never to forget. You spent your new life effusively thanking and praising the Mormon Church and their new Mormon God for saving your life and bringing you salvation. You were the Prodigal Son and the White Mormon Father welcomed you back home. You sang praises to the Mormon God for many, many years.
until they forced you into early retirement from your Tongan language translation job at the Mormon Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah many decades later after our family moved our lives from our home and relatives in Tongatatapu to the small, xenophobic and working-class town, Orem, located in the state of Utah. Your early and unexpected retirement from your translation job broke your heart. It was yet another institutional reminder of your “smallness” in their eyes, but you kept your promise to them and although you never explicitly criticized the Mormon Church, you were not as grateful and obedient as you once were.

Tangata, when I was a child, I was often awakened by a recurring nightmare of a heinous giant like the one in the children’s story, Jack and the Bean Stalk that Litia often read to us before bed. In the threads of my nightmare, the Giant threatened to break down the walls of our Kolomotu’a home and he aimed to tear Loa and me into pieces. But just before the giant’s gigantic fingers caught us, you lifted us up to safety then I abruptly woke up and I immediately began embarking on another arduous task that I did often during that time in our lives. I always searched for you, scanning the darkness for clues that will lead me to you. Searching for you like I often did on those monsoon cold nights when Litia packed Loa and I in our small brown car and drove us to the front door of the Tongan Klub in downtown Nuku’alofa.

Wives were not allowed at the Tongan Klub. The stories circulated around Nuku’alofa telling about the “bad” Tongan wives that dared to enter the doors of the Tonga Klub to lure their husbands back home. As the stories tell, these wives were publicly beaten inside the Tongan Klub by the hands of their husbands until their faces were maimed by bruises and cuts and were often unrecognizable to their young children waiting at home. It was one of the many reminders that Tongan women must always remember “their place.”

Tangata, but I was a child and not easily detected in the darkness and as the saying goes, even drunk men can feel a sliver of mercy for a crying child. It was often my responsibility to enter through the front door of the Tonga Klub and to bring you back home. I often entered the front door, past the surprised faces and gasps and with wide open eyes, I scanned the darkness, looking past the long rows of inebriated men, many of whom were palangi expats and diplomats, or Tongan men, some Hou’eiki and many with Tongan government jobs. Many of the men were familiar, either relatives or uncles. Most of the men at the Tonga Klub were fathers, just like you, with tired wives and young children just like me, holding their breaths and waiting, waiting, for their fathers to return back home.

Yes, Tangata, but that was a past and why cry over the past when this present space and time was different and we all dreamt a new future far away from the past. My eyes scan the acres of darkness but this time around, I am able to quickly find you, locate you, yes there you are, snoring and deep in sleep next to my mother, Litia, in our small one bedroom home on Hala Sipu in Kolomotu’a. The house is quiet. Everyone is asleep and we will wake up early to go to Church services at the Mormon Church located in Kolomotu’a tomorrow morning. I was able to find my breath again; the heinous Giant will never hurt Loa or me again. You have returned home.

Tangata, in the photograph, you surround me. I am a young girl with a bowed head and your large hand surrounds me, you are a circle that envelope me, a formidable circle of Tongan men bestowed with the Priesthood. You are a part of a circle of Tongan patriarchs, a Tongan Mormon patriarchal circle, there are four of you, familiar, and
related to me, uncles on your side and/or through Litia’s side, one, two, three and yes, there you are my beloved father, Tangata, with your head bowed in prayer, offering a “father’s blessing.”

Tangata, in the Tongan Mormon patriarchal circle, you began the blessing by calling out my full names, the many names, old Tongan names that remember and trace the cycles of ancestral va from Ha’apai, Vava’u circling to embrace our relatives in Havaiki and then back to our current home in Hala Sipu. And yet in the Mormon patriarchal circle that surround me, my name, the old names, the names of our beloved Tongan ancestors, titles of powerful women leaders, women that were heads of families, Tongan female warriors, beloved sisters and mothers, stumble out of your mouth and they fall out of place, tangled, like catching the past on a new global map that only turns its face forward. Our Tongan names fall out of place, tangled, they become Other. Like when we migrated to the predominantly white and Mormon town, Provo, Utah after our baptism into the Mormon Church so that you and Litia could attend the Mormon-owned, Brigham Young University. It was my first day at Ferrer Jr High School in Provo, Utah and after a long day of filling out paper work, paying fees with money we didn’t have and after hours of being stared-at by white faces reminding us of our second class status, you quietly took me aside and asked me if I wanted to change my name to Francis, Fran, Frannie or something that was more familiar for the palangi and easier for them to pronounce. We shortened my first name Fuifui to Lupe. Lupe is the Tongan word for dove. Lining up my names and slicing them into compartments was like severing the left wing of a still breathing bird. Lupe was designated as my new school name because you believed it was going to be much easier on the palangi tongue and in return for our sacrifice, you hoped that the palangi would go easy on their treatment of us.

Our old Tongan names stumble and fall as if out of place, tangled, like catching the past on a new global map that only turns its face forward.

Tangata, standing in the Tongan Mormon patriarchal circle, you taught me the politics of desire. You taught me how and what to desire. You reminded me that my role was to marry a man with the Priesthood and to become a good wife. Your deep voice was filled with hope and dreams for the future of our family and with your new Priesthood authority, you confirm me as a member of the Mormon Church. You relayed the laws and its promises, the promises were the dreams we shared. If I obeyed and followed the laws of the Mormon Church, happiness would ensue.

I was committed to the dreams. I vowed to be a good daughter in our family and to do my part to make the dreams come true. I vowed to obey all the laws of the Mormon Church so that this time you would stay, so that this time around, you would choose us—Loa, Baby ‘Amelia, Litia and me—so that we would be a family, once again, and like the Mormon church promised us, we would be a family, forever for time and for all eternity.

My beloved father, the photo was taken four decades ago and it’s been five years since your death. Your legacy is one that I attempt to confront, hold and mourn here in the space of this dissertation project. I still remember the panic that struck me when Loa came to give me the news of your death. I knew the news before she said anything. Loa and I were in a crowded room and I began running in circles away from her reach, as if we were children, once again, at Tonga Side School playing a game of hide-go-seek after school with the rich half-caste palangi kids while waiting for you, Tangata, to pick us from school like you often did when you first returned back home. But on that afternoon
in Berkeley, California, Loa caught me, abruptly. “Fui, stop. You already know what I’m going to tell you. Stop.” You passed away in your sleep in your own bed in Sandy, Utah in the Summer of June, 2013. Although I had prepared myself for this news for many years after first hearing about your cancer diagnosis, the shock was still sharp as if I was hearing it for the first time.

I had just finished giving a presentation in a conference panel on political activism. I talked about the work that Loa and I do with Pacific Islander queer communities in the Bay Area, California. Loa and I helped to found a Pacific Islander queer women’s organization called OLO; One Love Oceania, an Indigenous Pacific Islander feminist response to the mainstream Pacific Islander Community’s ardent support for California’s Prop 8.

Most of the support for Prop 8 was orchestrated by white Mormon Church leaders from their privileged positions in Salt Lake City. OLO’s aim was to speak out against homophobia in our Pacific Islander families and communities and furthermore, we denounced the mainstream’s racist representations of Pacific Islander communities as “essentially” homophobic and misogynist. The mainstream media’s imagery of Tonganness was enticing. The big brown bodies of our Tongan men were militarized and used as weapons to police Mormon temples from Oakland, San Diego reaching all the way to LA. Tongan male bodies were deployed as borders to draw lines of separation from the crowds of gay rights activists. The images were depicted matter-of-factly as if they were true. As if Tonganness is a spatiality devoid of gay or queer. The mainstream media fed us endless images but one in particular still haunts me. The image portrayed in the LA Times depicts volatile Tongan male rage vying on a national stage against a small and white lesbian woman. This image still breaks my heart. What was not shown was the wealthy white male Mormon Church leaders issuing the orders while sitting behind desks in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Yes, Tangata, my life here in Huichin, the Ohlone name for the East Bay, California, is far from my life growing up under your heavy hand and the oppressive hand of the Mormon Church in Tonga, Hawai‘i, and Utah.

How do I stop all this running so that I can identify and count the losses, touch the broken pieces, the dreams, oh the many dreams with edges that never coalesced? How can I finally tell the stories and complete this dissertation and move on with my life? In the photograph, we are a family, once again. You’ve returned back home Tangata.

Your large hands nestled on my young 8-year-old head used to offer the “father’s blessing” in the Mormon patriarchal circle are the same hands that I feared because you used them as weapons to terrorize me throughout my lifetime. You used your hands and your new Priesthood authority to create a landscape dominated by violence and fear and to enforce the new laws of heteropatriarchy in our home. I was always reminded through violence or the threat of violence that as your daughter and as a woman in our family, my only options were obedience to the laws of the Priesthood.

Tangata, as you know well, I worked hard to be obedient and to be the “good Tongan Mormon daughter” in our family, the many scholarships, academic and community awards and recognition, the numerous church callings, the heterosexual marriage, etc., but my contributions were never enough. Tell me what does a Tongan Mormon daughter do when obedience fails her? What does a Tongan Mormon daughter do when obedience can no longer sustain her?
Tangata, I spent my life searching for you. I looked for acceptance, warmth, and for renditions of what I thought was love in the hands of men that were familiar for they resembled the Tongan Mormon patriarchal circle. Many of them were Priesthood holders and just like you, they used their large hands not only to show generous acts of compassion but their hands were used as weapons to create multiple forms of violence on my body and spirit to remind me that my role as a woman was submission. These men, many of them lovers, followed cycles of the familiar; they followed the examples of violence against women passed down from father to son that they witnessed within the spatiality of their respective Tongan Mormon Families and Tongan community. The familiarity of violence shaped the intimacy we shared, the ways that we cared, desired and loved each other as Tongans.

It’s been five years since you passed away Tangata, and I still mourn your loss every day. Your spirit visits me, awakens me at night, tells me funny jokes and we laugh and laugh and eat chocolates until morning. You sit with me as I weep and unravel the painful narratives on the table. You listen as I shout and yell at you and slam my laptop and vow again and again to drop out of the PhD program because I will never finish this God damned dissertation. But you tell me, “Si’i Fuifuilupe, please tell the stories. Tell the stories so that you can heal, tell the stories so that we can both heal. Tell the stories so that we can be free.”

Yes, ours is a complicated and often painful history. Yet, you have always been my hero, my beloved father, Tangata.

Tangata, thank you for embarking on a different type of homecoming this time around. Thank you for returning back home to mentor me so that I can attempt to tell these stories that we hold, collectively, because ours is a va that continues to breathe and thrive even after death. Ours is a va that is invariably connected to a commitment and love for each other and for healing the wounds of our Tonganness.

‘ofa lahi atu from your loving daughter,
Fuifuilupe ‘Alilia

In this last section, I highlight the centrality of the technology of violence against women for producing and maintaining the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy within the Tongan Mormon Family. I examine how the internalization of heteropatriarchy is inculcated and adjudicated within the spatiality of va ‘ofi that I shared with my father, Tangata, within the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. As I have argued earlier, the Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy is an attempt to pay the “debt” and the “already accrued debt” (Yoneyama 81) described as “The notion of indebtedness thus disciplines those who are identified as the liberated” (Yoneyama 81) to our “rescuers” the Mormon Church. The internalization of heteropatriarchy is a form of surveillance that requires the Tongan Native to perform three disciplines; gratitude, obedience and silence and as I show in Letter To Tangata, this burden is disproportionately carried on the backs of Tongan women and girls.

Regina Kunzel on sexualities and incarceration documents the prominent hand that religious institutions have historically played in the production of criminality and carceral spaces;

The idea of incarceration as a way to redeem as well as to punish criminals was the invention of the early nineteenth century and of a Christian, reformist, and even utopian
imagination. Many of the earliest prison reformers were closely affiliated with churches, some as ministers. The world “penitentiary,” of course, derives from an understanding of the prison as a place of penitence, atonement, and self-transformation, and these goals were central to the earliest conception of the carceral mission. (15)

I also turn my discussion to California because this is the new land that I call home and I share many examples from California histories throughout my dissertation and in this section because of its relevance to Tonganness under the regime of Mormonism.

The California histories delineating the primary role of colonial religious institutions in the productions of carceral spaces, criminalization and the genocide of Indigenous peoples, that target the bodies of Indigenous women are themes that California Indian activist, scholar and former prisoner, Stormy Ogden examines in her essay, “The Prison Industrial Complex in Indigenous California.” Ogden asserts, “At the beginning of the colonization process two tools of genocide were forced upon Native people: the bottle and the bible” (57) and alongside these colonialisms, the Christian missionizing project birthed a new penal system of policing and criminalization of California Indian bodies, “traditions” and cultures, “along with these tools the traditional ways of behavior and conduct of Native people were criminalized” (57). The criminalization and incarceration of California Indian peoples, lands and cultural traditions is traced to the authoritarian rule of renowned Catholic priest Father Junipero Serra and the building of the mission system. “Although today these buildings are seen as quaint historic landmarks, for Native people they symbolize terror and death. California Indians were forced off their land, hunted down, and brought to the missions, where they were used as slave labor. Those who resisted were tortured or killed, and the rape of Native women was commonplace. (58) The production and maintaining of these new systems of policing and carcerality are dependent on violence and more specifically violence against women, as Cutcha Risling Baldy writes, “One of the first acts recorded by Father Junipero Serra in his account of the missions in California was the rape of Native women by Spanish soldiers” (55).

The spatiality of va ‘ofi or the “tender ties” shared between father and daughter is a relationality that is maintained by violence that Hussein Bulhanas defines as “violence is not an isolated physical act or a discrete random event. It is a relation…” (Bulthan qut Kirk and Okazawa-Rey 267). Dylan Rodriquez’s term “Prison regime” astutely points to the important role of “gratuitous violence” in the productions of carceral spaces or “the prison site”, “a production of the prison site as the organized ritualization of gratuitous violence” (11). The centrality of “gratuitous violence” in the production and maintaining of the spatiality of va ‘ofi shared between father and daughter aims to make the daughter “docile” defined by Michel Foucault as, “A body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved” and a “docile” body is more compliant to internalizing heteropatriarchy and performing the disciplines; gratitude, obedience and silence; these are the regulations and obligations of “the debt” that Tonganness owes Mormonism. The Tongan daughter’s body is made “docile” through her father’s deployment of his patriarchal authority to produce physical violence and punishment on her body and/or he also solicits the threat of punishment to produce fear. Patriarchal violence and violence against women, both physical violence and or the threat of violence, is the thread that intricately binds the tender ties of va ‘ofi shared between father and daughter.

the earliest conception of the carceral mission (15).
In their important work on the role of punishment, carceral spaces and the production of “docile” bodies, scholars Julia Sudbury—now known as Chinere Aparah, but referred to here by their surname Sudbury in past publications—and Beth E. Richie theorize about the state’s hyper surveillance and punishment, “extra penological function” of marginalized populations and especially in the lives of women of color (Sudbury xii). I use Sudbury and Richie’s work in this section to help me to contextualize the various forms that role of violence against women is utilized to enforce the daughter’s performance of internalization of heteropatriarchy to pay “the debt” that Tonganness owes to the Mormon Church. The father’s deployment of patriarchal violence and the impending threat of violence and the fear that he creates in the daughter’s psyche on a day-to-day basis within the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family produces and maintains the daughter’s “docility” and the boundaries of the relationality as a carceral spatiality. Here is Julia Sudbury’s theory of “lockdown:”

Refer to the repressive confinement of human beings as punishment for deviating from normative behaviors. Although prisons and jails are the most visible lockdown, the term encourages us to think about connections with other spaces of confinement such as immigration detention centers, psychiatric hospitals, juvenile halls, refugee camps, or Indian boarding schools. (xii)

Some of the points that I want to draw from Sudbury’s theory “lockdown” is firstly, that she asks us to reconsider what we have imagined as carceral spatialities, “although prisons and jails are the most visible lockdown,” she however “encourages us to think about connections with other spaces of confinement” (xii).

Sudbury’s suggestion pushes us to consider that perhaps the spaces that some of us might imagine as “unthinkable” because of its connections to our emotions, privacy and intimacies such as our close relationalities shared with parents and other loved ones, including the spatiality of our families, religious space and places of worship may also serve as spatialities of carcerality and “lockdown” for marginalized populations, such as women of color, and these spaces are carceral or are utilized for the “confinement of human beings deviating from normative behaviors” (xii). Sudbury’s suggestion also beckons us to consider how punishment and spatialities of “lockdowns” are made invisible because of the close intimacies and emotional relationalities that we have invested in these spatialities.

Sudbury’s theory of “lockdown” is especially fitting in my analysis of the “tender ties” of va ‘ofi and she allows me to unravel the complexities and perhaps to touch the most painful realities of this very emotional and close relationality that I share with my father. This is a relationality that I yearned for because my father was often absent for many years, but when he finally returned back home and baptized into the Mormon Church, the va ‘ofi that we share is, for the most part, governed with new laws and regulations adjudicated by the Mormon Church and thus, for most of our lives together, the va ‘ofi that we shared was a “lockdown” for me or a spatiality of “confinement” and my father often played the role of the jailer (xii). In their informative collection, Captive Genders, Stanley and Smith define the term “prison industrial complex,” as sets of relationships, “understanding the PIC as a set of relations makes visible the connections among capitalism, globalization, and corporations” (12) and furthermore, they write, “The PIC also helps us to think about the practices of surveillance, policing, screening, profiling, and other technologies to partition people and produce ‘populations’ that often occur far beyond the walls of the prison” (12).
Like many other Tongan daughters, while growing up, I always believed that the excessive punishment and surveillance that I received from my father was well-deserved because of my “deviating from normative behaviors” such as being the first-born daughter instead of being the first-born son. In Letter, the daughter inculcates all the messages around her about gender and race and she knows that within the spatiality of va ‘ofi, her female gender and sexuality mark her as never “good enough.” Within the spatiality of va ‘ofi, the daughter is always reminded that she represents “lack” and loss in the eyes of her Tongan father. The daughter’s suffering from her father’s rejection is perhaps the most cruel and painful forms of punishment within the spatiality of va ‘ofi. Thus, the daughter’s performance of the internalization of heteropatriarchy and the disciplines of gratitude, obedience and silence is a phenomenon that Mark Rifkin terms as “bribes of straightness” defined as “Marginalized persons and groups to play aspects of normality…distinguishing themselves from other, more stigmatized modes of deviance” (23). Thus, the daughter’s performances of “bribes of straightness” are found in her attempts to pay the “the debt” not just to the Mormon Church but within this spatiality, the daughter’s performance of the internalization of heteropatriarchy attempts to make amends to her father for the losses and disappointments that she represents and for the very fact that she was born a daughter and not a son.

In their important work on the role of punishment, carceral spaces and the production of “docile” bodies, scholars Julia Sudbury and Beth E. Richie theorize about the state’s hyper surveillance and punishment, “extra penalogical function” of marginalized populations and especially in the lives of women of color (Sudbury xii). I use Sudbury and Richie’s work in this section to help me to contextualize the important role of patriarchal violence and punishment to discipline the daughter to internalization of heteropatriarchy to pay “the debt” that Tonganness owes to the Mormon Church (Sudbury xii). This is perhaps the most important objective that motivates as well as they shape the spatiality of va ‘ofi that the daughter shares with her father. The father’s deployment of patriarchal punishment and the impending threat of violence and the fear that he creates in the daughter’s psyche on a day-to-day basis within the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family produces and maintains these carceral spaces.

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Refer to the repressive confinement of human beings as punishment for deviating from normative behaviors. Although prisons and jails are the most visible lockdown, the term encourages us to think about connections with other spaces of confinement such as immigration detention centers, psychiatric hospitals, juvenile halls, refugee camps, or Indian boarding schools. (xii)

Some of the points that I want to draw from Sudbury’s theory “lockdown” is firstly, that she asks us to reconsider what we have imagined as carceral spatialities, “although prisons and jails are the most visible lockdown,” she however “encourages us to think about connections with other spaces of confinement” (xii). Her suggestion pushes us to consider that perhaps what many of us might think of as “unthinkable” and to consider that perhaps some of our most intimate and most cherished spatialities in our lives such as our close relationalities shared with parents and other loved ones, including the spatiality of our families, religious space and places of worship may also serve as spatialities of punishment and “lockdown” for marginalized populations, such as women of color, and these spaces are carceral or are utilized for the “confinement of human beings deviating from normative behaviors” (xii). Sudbury’s suggestion also beckons us to consider how punishment and spatialities of “lockdowns” are made invisible and perhaps even palpable because of the close intimacies and emotional relationalities that we have invested in
these spatialities.

Furthermore, Sudbury’s theory of “lockdown” is especially fitting in my analysis of the “tender ties” of va ‘ofi and she allows me to unravel the complexities and perhaps to touch the most painful realities of this very emotional and close relationality that I share with my father, is a relationality that I yearned for because my father was absent for many years, but when he finally returned back home and baptized into the Mormon Church, the va ‘ofi that we share is, for the most part, governed with new laws and regulations adjudicated by the Mormon Church and thus, for most of our lives together, the va ‘ofi that we shared was a “lockdown” for me or a spatiality of “confinement” and my father often played the role of the jailer (xii). In their informative collection, Captive Genders, Stanley and Smith define the term “prison industrial complex,” “as sets of relationships” that map the inextricable connection between various and respective institutions. They write, “The PIC also helps us to think about the practices of surveillance, policing, screening, profiling, and other technologies to partition people and produce ‘populations’ that often occur far beyond the walls of the prison” (12) and thus, as I show in this section, “the practices of surveillance, policing, screening, profiling, and other technologies to partition people” transpires “beyond the walls of the prison” and extends to the family and to the very intimate relationalities within this spatiality.

While growing up, like many other Tongan daughters I always believed that the excessive punishment and surveillance that I received from my father was well-deserved because of my “deviating from normative behaviors” such as being the first-born daughter instead of being the first-born son. In Letter, the daughter inculcates all the messages around her about gender and race and she knows that within the spatiality of va ‘ofi, her female gender and sexuality mark her as never “good enough.” The spatiality of va ‘ofi serves as a reminder to the daughter that she represents “lack” and loss in the eyes of her Tongan father. The daughter’s suffering from her father’s rejection is perhaps the most cruel and painful forms of punishment within the spatiality of va ‘ofi. Thus, the daughter’s performance of “obedience” and compliance to the obligations of “the debt” of heteropatriarchy are what Mark Rifkin terms as “bribes of straightness” defined as “Marginalized persons and groups to play aspects of normality…distinguishing themselves from other, more stigmatized modes of deviance” (23). The daughter’s performances of “bribes of straightness” are often founded in her attempts to compensate and to make amends to her father for the losses and disappointments that she represents and for the very fact that she was born a daughter and not a son.

_Prison Nation and Va ‘Ofi_

Beth Richie defines the theory of “prison nation,” as “reflects the ideological and public policy shifts that have led to the increased criminalization of disenfranchised communities of color, more aggressive law enforcement strategies for norm-violating behavior...” (3). She further documents, “The political apparatus that goes into building a prison nation” and I use some of her points to help me to further flesh out the nuances of the spatiality of va ‘ofi and its many layers of punishment and carcerality that confine the Tongan daughter (3). The first point she offers, “practices that increasingly punish or disadvantage norm violations;” the second is “institutional regulations designed to intimidate people without power into conforming with dominant cultural expectation” and I jump to Ritchie’s last point she makes regarding the primacy of fear. I include Ritchie’s “Prison nation” theory in this discussion because I want to use it to guide me to unpack the role of fear in “maintaining” the daughter’s “internalization” of
“the debt” of heteropatriarchy or the phenomenon that I have termed as internalization of heteropatriarchy that underpins her role as a daughter in the Tongan Mormon Family as well as the relationality, va ‘ofi, she shares with her father. Furthermore, Richie’s “Prison nation” also calls into question the role of the Mormon Church in producing and maintaining fear as a means of sustaining the status quo within its networks and relationalities with Tongan families and individuals. After all, the institution of the Tongan Mormon Family is not “natural” nor is this institution a Tongan tradition and its new networks of relationalities are an invention that the Church, specifically, produced for their own aggrandizement.

Ritchie’s theory of “Prison nation” lays out the political landscape that produce a “Prison nation” and I reiterate some of her points here that I want to connect to my work; the increased and aggressive deployment of law enforcement to punish those who perform “norm-violating behaviors,” the increased punitive and punishment of “disenfranchised communities of color,” new systemic laws and regulations to make marginalized populations conform. What is also important to note that is Richie delineates that the “Prison nation” is “managed” and “maintained” through fear. “A prison nation depends on the ability of leaders to create fear…” (3). Richie’s definition of “Prison nation” defines the political landscape of the spatiality of va ‘ofi shared between father and daughter and “Prison nation” also defines the new aggressive policing and surveillances of gender and sexualities that govern the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. Furthermore, Richie’s theory helps us to view that the glue of carceral spaces as evident in the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family, is the primacy of fear for “maintaining” the status quo, “a prison nation depends on the ability of leaders to create fear…” (3).

**Conclusion:** Contemporary Fear and the Legacy of “White Terror”

In Chapter I, I posit that the Tongan perception of the Mormon Church and its inextricable connection to U.S. Empire as “white terror” was historically produced by the U.S.’s systemic deployment of relentless military violence and authority on Tongan lands and peoples and perhaps what is the most painful part of this history on the Tongan heart and memory is the U.S. military’s deployment of systemic rape and sexual violence on the bodies of Tongan women and Tongan girls during the U.S. occupation of Tonga during WWII. This historical moment continues to shape Tongan contemporary life and furthermore, the contemporaneous role of the Mormon Church in continuing the colonial legacy of U.S. Empire and “reterritorializing” Tonganness erases and silences the histories of U.S. “white terror” and yet, its these very histories that enable the recent exponential and unprecedented growth of the U.S. Mormon Church and they are painted as the “rescuers” of Tonganness and thus, for many Tongans there is an imagined safety in their relationship to the Mormon Church. Victims of systemic violence often believe that there is an imagined safety when in close proximity to power structures such as the U.S.-based Mormon Church. Tongan conversions to Mormonism are a form of assuaging the violent offender so that the violence they commit is minimal and the consequences and suffering are not as painful.

The legacy of “White terror” are also replicated in the everyday lives of Tongans in their daily struggles to pay back “the debt” that Tonganness owes to Mormonism for “rescuing” us that I argue is articulated in the fervent Tongan internalization of heteropatriarchy. Thus, the looming threat of “White terror” undergirds the Tongan natives’ commitment to the internalization of heteropatriarchy that demands ownership of all of us, our body and spirit and
this “debt” knows no ending. Furthermore, the legacies of “White terror” continues to shape the contours and crevices of the unique and complex ways that Tongans attempt to pay “the debt” within their intimate relationalities such as the spatiality of va ‘ofi or “tender ties” shared between father and daughter in the spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. For as Ann Laura Stoler articulates, “The politics of intimacy is where colonial regimes of truth were imposed, worked around and worked out” (36). This contemporaneous colonial legacy inaugurated by U.S. empire is yet another burden that are disproportionately carried on the backs of Tongan women and girls.
Chapter Three: Remembering and Honoring Feifafa and Contending with Our Tongan “Soul Wound”

Letter to Feifafa (on the origin of kava)

it hurts me
to remember
  how she went
to be offered back to the land
how you helped her
to live and die
  how you tried to see
her beauty in death
green radiance
of a forgotten dawn
tear-stained tapa
soaked in blood
continue to flow
  from the over-filled kava bowl
of our rulers
their quick acceptance
  of your sacrifice
still bleeding
at the cutting edge
of time
I have been thinking
over what you did
  that dark day long ago
  i still don’t believe that a king was worth it.
-Konai Helu Thaman

Introduction

This chapter examines the Tongan archetype of womanhood, Feifafa, the protagonist of the Tongan nationalist narrative, “The Origin of Kava,” as a representative of the contemporaneous and festering Tongan “soul wound” that is a consequence of the colonial project’s systemic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine. Feifafa represents colonial gender; she is not only the “good daughter,” but she manifests the desires that produce the “good wife” and ultimately, the role of the “good mother” in the spatiality of the first organized “racialized project” that I term as the Tongan Nationalistic Family; a colonial familial spatiality that I examine in Chapter Four, produced in the nineteenth century and central in the historical production of the nation and in the processes of institutionalizing and normalizing the new Western values of heteropatriarchy and violence against women within the new fabric of Tongan culture and within the intimate folds of the home and every day Tongan life. In the larger nation,
Feifafa’s image is crucial and she represents the desires and trajectories of “progress.”

In turn, Feifafa silences as well as reveals the histories of past and contemporaneous Tongan suffering or the phenomenon that scholars term as “historical unrecognized grief” produced through the histories of Western colonialism’s systemic deployment of unrelenting violence on Tonganness (Braveheart et al.). And yet, within the trajectories of “progress” that are transformations organized by European violence, Tonganness is denied the opportunities to grieve and mourn for the innumerable losses at the hands of past and present colonialisms and the Tongan native’s only legitimate responses to “progress” are surveilled in a phenomenon termed as the internalization of heteropatriarchy that disciplines Tongans to gratitude, obedience, and silence. I discuss these technologies in Chapter Two.

In addition, it is imperative to note that the violence deployed by European colonizers disproportionately targets the bodies of Tongan women and girls and this is why I often refer to the violence as patriarchal violence because this phenomenon illuminates not only its heinous racialization but it highlights the inextricable and centrality of gender and sexualities in the productions of violence that Europeans deployed on Tonganness. In this chapter, I share paradigmatic Tongan historical narratives tracing the maneuvers of early Western colonial projects of “progress” and in my telling of the narratives, I contend with the pain of Tongan “historical unrecognized grief” through participating in struggles that Homi Bhabha terms as “painful remembering” and the respected Tongan scholar and poet, Konai Helu Thaman terms as “it hurts me to remember.” Furthermore, I look closely at the origin of kava narrative as told by Tongan scholar, Futa Helu. In addition, I examine Indigenous scholar Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart and Lemyra M. DeBruyn’s theory of “historical unresolved grief” and Eduardo Duran’s theory of the “soul wound.” In particular, throughout the chapter I analyze the representation of Feifafa in the Tongan imaginary and I also use these theories to help me trace three Tongan historical narratives that are often venerated on the Western trajectory of “progress.”

I assert that the earliest historical moments that produced Tongan “historical unresolved grief” is produced by the renowned British Captain James Cook’s historical naming of Tonga as the “Friendly Islands” during his third voyage in 1777. The second historical moment that produces Tongan “historical unresolved grief” is the arrival of the first Christian missionaries in 1797 led by Captain Wilson and sponsored by the London Missionary Society (LMS). The Christian missionaries implemented a prodigious colonial project that harvested implacable violence on the past, present and future of Tonganness through the institutionalization of the technology of linear time that in turn, severed Tongan va to the heart beat of Tonganness, that is the Sacred. Third, I examine a Tongan “origin narrative” that privileges Taufa’ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Sacred, that is materially represented through the body of a Elder woman that is the caretaker of a Sacred temple located on Sacred land. Lastly and correspondingly, I examine the Tongan nationalist trope claiming that “Tonga was never formally colonized” that revisits the “origin narrative” that I examined earlier memorializing Taufa’ahau’s desecration of the Sacred. I use these narratives as a map to help me unpack the Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and the Tongan “soul wound” that Feifafa contemporaneously represents in the Tongan imaginary.

Nationalistic Narrative On The Origin of Kava

The root of the kava plant, Piper methysticum, is a sacred plant used in Tongan kava ceremonies in the past and contemporaneously. The Tongan scholar, Futa Helu, identifies kava’s
significant role in Tonganness, “Kava is the national, cultural drink of Tonga.” (20). Furthermore, Helu writes:

Kava is the traditional symbol par excellence of Tongan society because it was organized in our early prehistory into a ritual which shows in a most visible way---the positioning of people in the kava circle, for example, how rank and power are distributed among social groups... (20)

Thus, the kava plant and the kava ceremony are central to the production and maintaining of Tonganness. In this chapter, I share a rendition of the origin of kava narrative that is familiar and I often heard it recited while growing up in Tonga and in the U.S. Here is Helu’s retelling of the narrative on the origin of kava:

Once upon a time an ancient king of Tonga was on a sea voyage. His vessel was hit by an angry storm which blew it off course and he landed on a small island. There lived on the island only two people - a man and his wife - and their child who was afflicted with, and wasted by, leprosy. An important custom of Tonga is that a visiting chief is given a food presentation (usually in the form of a huge baked pig or fish). The couple had none of these things and they resorted to slaughtering their sick child, baked her in an ’umu (earth oven) and presented her in that condition to the king. The king was moved by this show of allegiance from the parents. He ordered them to take the cooked girl and bury her in a grave. He then prophesied that in due time two plants would grow out of her body...The king’s prophecy came to pass and the plants which appeared on the leper’s grave were the kava and to, sugar cane. When these were brought to the king he then created the kava ritual which is the symbol par excellence of Tongan culture. (49)

The Modern Making of Tongan Historical Unresolved Grief and the Soul Wound

Tongan grief and mourning for our severed va with the Sacred; the Feminine, have been historically denied and criminalized throughout four distinctive but inextricably connected historical moments that are often celebrated as “stories of success” and narratives highlighting Tongan “progress.” Thus, as narratives delineating the efficacy of Western “progress,” the four historical narratives that I examine are thus, inevitably “racialized projects” described by Omi and Winant in their foundational work on racialization as “the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed” (56) in addition they contend that “racialized projects” are “historically situated projects in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized” (Omi and Winant 56). In turn, these historical narratives comprise a map that can help me better unpack the Tongan “soul wound” that Feifafa contemporaneously represents in the Tongan imaginary.

Four historical moments produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief”: first, produced by the renowned British Captain James Cook’s historical naming of Tonga as the “Friendly Islands” during his third voyage in 1777; and second, the arrival of the British Christian missionaries in 1797 and their institutionalization of linear time that demands the desecration of the Sacred. The losses are strategically supplanted with the new white and male Christian God at the center of the new Tongan imaginary. Third, I examine a Tongan “origin narrative” that privileges Taufa‘ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate and to sever va with the Tongan Sacred. Lastly and correspondingly, I examine the Tongan nationalist trope claiming that “Tonga was never formally colonized.” This is a trope that aims to silence the histories of past and present colonial violence in the Tongan imaginary. These four historical moments are,
respectively, bounded through their privileging of the new Western colonial systems of White supremacy and heteropatriarchy that are maintained through the normalization of the technology of violence against Tongan women. These narratives produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and the contemporaneous “soul wound” that Feifa represents in the Tongan imagination.

**Historical Unresolved Grief**

Before I proceed to my analysis of the four historical moments, I look at the important research of Indigenous scholars, Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart and Lemyra M. DeBruyn on Native American communities and healing the wounds of historical trauma. I am compelled by their work that describes the phenomenon of “disenfranchised grief,” as “When a society disenfranchises the legitimacy of grief among any group” (67). Brave Heart and DeBruyn draw the connections between the cycles of “disenfranchised grief” and connect it to their main theory “historical unresolved grief,” that they describe as, “We suggest the concept of disenfranchised grief facilitates the explanation of historical unresolved grief among American Indians” (67). Historical unresolved grief is, “The profound unsettled bereavement resulting from cumulative devastating losses, compounded by the prohibition and interruption of Indigenous burial practices and ceremonies” (252).

In addition, the scholars define the significant role that “historical unresolved grief” plays in shaping the contours of contemporaneous Native American lives, “historical unresolved grief, contributes to the current social pathology, originating from the loss of lives, land and vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by European conquest of the Americas” (60). Later on in this chapter, I look at the contemporaneous Tongan political landscape and I use Brave Heart and DeBruyn’s work as well as other scholars to help me draw the connections between the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” to the preponderance and normalization of violence against women within contemporary Tongan communities and especially within the fabric of intimate spatialities such as the colonial spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family.

**Soul Wound**

In his influential work delineating the legacies of historical trauma on Indigenous peoples and communities, psychologist Eduardo Duran recalls his early clinical work with Native American communities in central California and he documents a phenomenon that he observed in the many conversations with community members, “When asked about the problems in the community, people did not mention the expected symptom-oriented problems. They began to mention things such as spiritual injury, soul sickness and soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” (15). Duran attempts to examine the phenomenon of “spiritual injury, soul sickness, soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” that these Indigenous California community members reported in their conversations and he traces and connects their contemporaneous suffering to the histories of past and present “systemic genocide” that “was inflicted on many of the Original People of this hemisphere” (7). Duran continues, “Eradication of the Native life-world was attempted through a long process of genocide, ethnocide, and cultural hegemony” and the historical processes of “Eradication of the Native life-world” produced, “Spiritual injury, soul sickness, soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” that Indigenous communities are currently suffering, in a phenomenon that he terms as “soul wound” (15). Duran describes “soul wound” as “intergenerational trauma, or historical trauma. Basically, these terms have similar meanings. The difference is that the Native
idea of historical trauma involves the understanding that the trauma occurred in the soul or the spirit (7).

In his important work *Violence Over the Land*, historian Ned Blackheart writes about the difficulty of talking about pain, especially the pain deployed on and suffered by Indigenous peoples as a consequence of colonial violence. “While violence emerges as the overarching theme of this book, pain remains its implied object, particularly as experienced by Indian peoples. Elusive yet omnipresent, pain remains an uncommon subject in historical inquiry...” (8). Like Blackheart, this chapter grapples with an “uncommon subject in historical inquiry...” and to examine the historical pain suffered by Tongan peoples that mark the topographies of contact with Europeans and their unrelenting deployment of violence on Tonganness. In addition, I utilize Eduardo Duran’s work in my analysis of Tonganness because he addresses and locates the pain from past and present colonization and he shows us that for Indian peoples, pain is experienced not just in the human body but it can be traced deep into the spirit. Thus, pain is not an individual experience but rather it is a shared and collective wound that is a suffering carried by multiple peoples for many generations and unlike how pain is usually explicated in mainstream text, for Indian peoples, the pain of colonial violence surpasses the boundaries of individualism and temporality.

Duran’s theory of the “soul wound” is important in this discussion that looks at narratives documenting Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and I connect these historical narratives to the contemporaneous image of the Tongan female protagonist, Feifafa as Tongan “soul wound.” Duran’s argument articulates that what distinguishes the “soul wound” for Native peoples is, “the difference is that the Native idea of historical trauma involves the understanding that the trauma occurred in the soul or the spirit” is especially pertinent in shaping the contours of this discussion because I argue, that at the root of the four historical moments documenting Tongan “historical unresolved grief” or wounds carried by Tonganness as a consequence of our severed va, relationality to the Sacred.

Telling the narratives of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and connecting them to the contemporaneous Tongan “Soul wound” that Feifafa represents, is participating in what Homi Bhabha terms as “painful remembering” (36). Bhabha writes about the process of “painful remembering” in the work to acknowledge and heal the “soul wound”: “Remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present” (36). As a Tongan woman, the contemporaneous telling of Feifafa’s narrative is to participate in the struggle of “painful remembering” and it is an attempt “to make sense of the trauma of the present” (36) and to contend with the histories of innumerable pain and suffering that are disproportionately allocated to Tongan women within the trajectories of “progress.” This is an effort to contend with this legacy.

**Captain James Cook’s Third Voyage to Tonga**

The earliest historical moments that produces Tongan “historical unresolved grief” was in 1777 during renowned British Captain James Cook’s third visit to Tonga. Cook named Tonga as “the Friendly Islands” and its inhabitants as “The Friendly Islanders.” The historical naming of Tonga as the “Friendly Islanders” elucidates Fanon’s statement, “The colonial subject is always ‘overdetermined from without’” (Bhabha 36) and the state of Tonganness as “Friendly Islander”
and “overdetermined from without” is further described by Jodi A. Byrd in her term “state of possession” that elucidates Capt. Cook’s overarching authority over Indigenous peoples:

Cook’s exalted subjectivity possesses land in the name of the British crown and possesses Whiteness as preeminent ownership within the logics of capitalism, is the site of the dialectic of sovereignty that functions similarly to Agamben’s state of exception where the state-in-contradiction to indigenous peoples’ own ontologies of relation and power—enacts sovereignty as ontological possession, delineating what is and is not possessed.

(22)

Thus, perhaps Cook’s “state of possession” is best illustrated in his surveillance and attempts to discipline Tongan and Pacific women’s bodies.

In Patty O’Brien’s informative book, The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific, she reveals how Cook deployed the institutions of white supremacy and patriarchal domination as technologies that specifically targeted the surveillance and disciplining of Pacific Islander women’s bodies and sexualities during his three historical voyages to the Pacific: “The complexity of women’s lives had been restructured to accommodate the sexual ‘needs’ of his men. These ‘needs’ were based upon male sexual gratification” (90). In addition, “This change made female sexual pleasure expendable and all sexual interactions by being equated with her ability to satisfy her [male] partner” (90). O’Brien further argues, “The stereotype of the Pacific muse held that island women were willing to provide sexual pleasure for men without demanding anything beyond trinkets in return. It was their ability to please white men that was portrayed as the pleasure women gained from the encounter” (90).

O’Brien’s work elucidates that Cook’s voyages followed in a colonial genealogy and he adjudicated new systems of va in Pacific nations that centered the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy. The colonial legislation of heteropatriarchy are themes I examine in Chapters Two and Four. I look at historical narratives that trace the maneuvers of “racialized projects” that delineate Tongan encounters and contact with Europeans beginning in the seventeenth century up until Tongan encounters with U.S. empire during the military occupation of Tonga during WWII. In all these “racialized projects,” I trace their systemic centering of the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy that was dependent on the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine as a means of severing Tongan va to the Sacred and thus, legislating new economies and systems of va that traced directly to heteropatriarchy that are symbolized by the new white and male Christian deity. I contend that the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine is the quintessential objective of the colonial project in Tonga and thus, the new colonial values of heteropatriarchy are adjudicated, respectively, in the boundaries of the nineteenth-century production of the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family and in the twentieth-century spatiality of the Tongan Mormon Family. These new colonial familial spatialities, respectively, legislate and normalize violence against women as a technology for maintaining order and the new status quo.

Returning to my discussion of Captain Cook. Cook’s voyages to Tonga follow a colonial genealogy of “state of possession” constituted through the targeting and surveillance of Tongan women’s bodies through the legislation of new Western gender roles that were limited to subjugation and submission to male domination and concomitantly, Cook’s legacy legislated new Western gender roles for Tongan men that are preoccupied with patriarchal violence as I show in this chapter and in Chapters Four and Five. Perhaps Cook’s “state of possession” over Tonganness, constituted through his surveillance of Tongan women’s bodies and the new roles for Tongan manhood that normalizes patriarchal violence on the bodies of Tongan women and girls are best illustrated in his colonial naming of Tonga as “Friendly Islander.” For at the core of
the colonial technology of naming Tonganness as “Friendly Islander” are the Western institutions of race, gender and sexualities and the normalization of patriarchal violence to maintain these new forms of order that are acrimonious to Tongan values and formations of va.

The late and respected Pacific Studies scholar, Teresia K. Teaiwa wrote about the image of the bikini bathing suit in her seminal chapter, *bikinis and other s/pacific n/oceans*: “The sensational bathing suit was named for Bikini Atoll. This was the site in the Marshall Islands for the testing of twenty-five nuclear bombs between 1946 and 1958” (87). The image of the bikini bathing suit draws “attention to a sexualized and supposedly depoliticized female body” because the image of the bikini is a ploy and, “the bikini distracts from the colonial and highly political origins of its name” (87). Teaiwa posits:

The sexist dynamic the bikini performs-objectification through excessive visibility-inverts the colonial dynamics that have occurred during nuclear testing in the Pacific, objectification by rendering invisible. The bikini bathing suit manifests both a celebration and a forgetting of the nuclear power that strategically and materially marginalizes and erases the living history of Pacific Islanders. (87)

Teaiwa’s postulation that the image of the bikini bathing suit draws “attention to a sexualized and supposedly depoliticized female body” and thus, the image of “the bikini distracts from the colonial and highly political origins of its name” by “rendering invisible” the histories of colonial violence and nuclear testing in the Pacific. “The bikini bathing suit manifests both a celebration and a forgetting of the nuclear power that strategically and materially marginalizes and erases the living history of Pacific Islanders” is highly informative and the themes examining the colonial production of making visibility and making invisibility as a means for achieving political objectives and expanding the colonial project is very useful in this analysis (87).

Teaiwa’s work urges me to question the political intentions that are made visible and invisible by the image of the “Friendly Islander” or as Teaiwa writes, “the bikini distracts from the colonial and highly political origins of its name” (87). A question that looms in my mind is: what are the historical and colonial trajectories of European patriarchal violence in Tonga that the image of the “Friendly Islanders” “distracts” us from viewing and confronting?

Ziauddin Sardar writes in his introduction chapter to Frantz Fanon’s *Black Skin White Masks* about Fanon’s term, “The idealized negro: “The idealized Negro is equally a construction of the white man. He represents the flip side of the Enlightenment: he is constructed not as a real person with real history but an image. The idealized Negro, the noble savage, is the product of utopian thinkers, such as Sir Thomas More... This Negro was born out of the need of European humanism to rescue itself from its moral purgatory and project itself, and displace, the original inhabitants of Latin America and the Caribbean.” (xiv) In addition, to Fanon’s term of the “idealized negro,” I also include ‘Epeli Hau’ofa’s definition of the “noble savage” as an image of Pacific Islanders that embody the desires of “the idealized Negro” (Ziauddin xiv). Hau’ofa writes, “In the earliest stage of our interactions with the outside world, we were the South Sea paradise of noble savage...; we were simultaneously lost and degraded souls to be pacified, Christianized, colonized and civilized” (47). Thus, Cook’s naming of Tonganness as the “Friendly Islanders” are a technology seeped with political desires and intentions to discipline Tonganness into performing “friendly” and acquiescing our mana and self-determination, both men and women, respectively, to the heavy hand of British colonialism and imperialisms in Tonga or as Hau’ofa astutely argues, this image renders Tonganness as “degraded souls to be pacified, Christianized, colonized and civilized” (47).

Returning to Teaiwa’s early arguments about the political role of the colonial image such
as the bikini swim suit, and drawing connections between this image with the “Friendly Islander,” she reminds us that the colonial image is meant to “distract” us from recognizing “the colonial and highly political origins of its name” (87). Her argument is very informative in viewing the case of Cook’s historical naming of Tonga as the “The Friendly Islands” because there is a section of this narrative that is often erased or downplayed that I reveal here, and I draw out some of the key points from this section to complicate the colonial telling of this historical moment. The section that is often erased from the mainstream telling of the “Friendly Islander” image is that Tongan leaders refused to perform “friendly” and they adamantly and unequivocally resisted Cook’s desires for Western expansion.

In fact, the Tongan leaders expressed their resistance in the most profound and emphatic way, they sought to end his life:

He [Cook] was entirely unaware that on the very same occasion there was a plot to assassinate him and his crew, and that they were only saved by a disagreement among their chiefly hosts as to whether to carry out the plot by day or by night. (Martin qtd. in Latukefu 12)

The Tongan leaders’ strategic plan to end Captain Cook’s life is a historical moment that should be memorialized because it highlights their unequivocal rejection of his messages of white supremacy and their refusal to perform “Friendly Islander.” This moment highlights their resistance to the new British laws that were inimical and profoundly contradictory to Tongan economies and systems of va, cosmologies and cultural values. For as Haunani K. Trask writes about Cook’s legacy in Hawai’i that is emblematic of his legacy throughout Moana Nui, “When Captain James Cook stumbled upon this interdependent and wise society in 1778, he brought an entirely foreign system into the lives of my ancestors, a system based on a view of the world that could not coexist with that of Hawaiians. He brought capitalism, Western political ideas (such as predatory individualism), and Christianity” (5). These systems are contradictory to Hawaiian and Tongan worldviews and values. Thus, this historical moment reveals the Tongan leaders’ emphatic disavowal of Cook’s values that Trask documents, are “capitalism, Western political ideas (such as predatory individualism), Christianity” (5) and in addition, our beloved Tongan leaders’ and ancestors vigorously rejected the European privileging of heteropatriarchy at the expense of the Sacred, the Feminine.

This historical moment allows us to view that our Tongan ancestors knew, unequivocally, that their acceptance of these European values signaled a death sentence for Tonganness. Furthermore what is touching and humbling about this historical moment is that it highlights the mana of Tongan self-determination that are constituted through our Tongan ancestors’ adamant “refusal” to perform “friendly islander.” Leeann Simpson documents the importance of her Nishnaabewin ancestors’ “refusal” to perform the norms of the colonial project as a “living alternative” (33). Simpson posits, “Within Nishnaabewin, refusal is an appropriate response to oppression, and within this context it is always generative; that is, it is always the living alternative” (33). These histories of our Tongan ancestors’ deliberate “refusal” and vigorous resistance against Cook and the European colonial project are as Simpson terms, the “living alternative” to the death sentence legislated by the Europeans that are embodied and symbolized by the “friendly islander” stereotype of Tonganness.

What is also important to note about this historical moment is that on the eve of a great crisis, and with the hungry hand of British authority and militarization hovering over them, our Tongan leaders, our beloved Tongan ancestors, were resolute and they remained grounded. According to the documentation of the young Englishman William Mariner who had been living
in Tonga during this time, Cook’s life was saved “by a disagreement among their chiefly hosts as to whether to carry out the plot by day or by night” (Martin qtd. in Latukefu 12). But I want to state that what took place between our Tongan leaders and our Tongan ancestors at this historical moment was anything but a mere “disagreement” as the Englishman terms it but rather, our Tongan leaders were engaged in Ceremony that included prayers and the honoring of va, or tracing economies of intimacies, relationalities, and honoring the laws of protocol and interactions that contradicted the confinements of linear movements that defined Western time and the desires of Western values.

Let us consider that what transpired during these spatialities of so-called “disagreement[s],” were social transactions between Tonganness that centered the Sacred; our Tongan ancestors’ shared many bowls of kava, food, laughed, offered prayers and gifts to the multiple deities, and they awaited the answers of the deities that does not abide to Western time allocations and perhaps they even exchanged and hauled foul and angry words and “disagreements” at each other during the course of these events. This is to be expected. Tongans are complex beings. But these Ceremonies were not an anomaly in every day Tongan life especially during moments of crisis but rather the centering of the Sacred in its multiple iterations were a part of everyday Tongan textures of interactions and producing networks of social and economies of relationalities that were rooted and directly led to the Sacred, the heartbeat of Tonganness. The Tongan Sacred, its systems of beliefs and extensive knowledges grounded and fed our Tongan ancestors, with the prying hands of European colonialism and their desires for “state of possession” frothing and festering on their shores. Thus, the Sacred was the very source of our ancestors’ mana that shaped their steadfast commitment to Tongan self-determination especially at this crucial historical moment of colonial crisis. This narrative is another example that elucidates our Tongan ancestors’ “refusal” to perform the colonial spectacle of “friendly islander” by remaining committed in their faith of the Sacred described by Leann Simpson as, “refusal is an appropriate response to oppression, and within this context it is always generative; that is, it is always the living alternative” (33).

Last, in this discussion, I posit that the “friendly islander” symbolizes Tongan “historical unresolved grief,” an image that Sodar writes about, “The idealized Negro is equally a construction of the white man” and thus, as Teaiwa suggests, the “friendly islander” image as a colonial construction, “distracts from the colonial and highly political origins of its name” and it works to maintain the expansion of the colonial project in Tonga (xiv; 87). Thus, I posit that the processes of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that recognizes and recounts the innumerable losses in the name of “progress” are a decolonial act that is an important cycle of reclaiming Tongan self-determination for it refuses to accept the colonial lies that the white male and Christian God “rescued” Tonganness and brought us out of the dichotomous spatialities that Epeli Hau’ofa has identified as an “era of darkness” into a “era of light” (28). Tongan grief and mourning is a process that names and counts the innumerable losses at the hand of our colonizers. These are deliberate acts that refuse the colonial surveillance of internalization of heteropatriarchy and its disciplines of gratitude, obedience and silence that are often the only legitimate choices allowed to Tonganness under the hands of colonial domination. These are colonial embodiments of Tonganness that I discuss in earlier chapters. The colonial naming of Tonganness as “Friendly Islander” is a technology that aimed to undermine Tongan self-determination and to silence Tongan resistance and thus, it does not allow for Tongan grief and mourning for all the innumerable losses at the hand of colonial exploitation and violence. It is an image that produces Tongan “historical unresolved grief.”
The Arrival of Christian Missionaries and Patriarchal Violence

The second historical moment that produces Tongan “historical unresolved grief,” is the arrival of the first Christian missionaries in 1797 led by Captain Wilson and sponsored by the London Missionary Society (LMS). My discussion of the Christian missionizing project in this section is going to be brief because these histories of Christian colonialisms intervenes and undergirds my discussion on Taufa’ahau in the next sections of this chapter. In my examination of the Christian missionizing project, I unequivocally contend that as Fanon terms it, they were the “bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the Native,” and they implemented a prodigious colonial project that harvested implacable violence on the past, present, and future of Tonganness through the institutionalization of the technology of linear time that severed our Tongan va to Sacred, the Feminine (91). The losses were strategically supplanted with the institution of heteropatriarchy symbolized by centering the new white, male, and Christian deity. Correspondingly, the technology, violence against women, is normalized to maintain the new colonial order and status quo as I show in my discussions of Taufa ‘ahau and in my discussion of the legacies of the Christian missionizing project in Chapters Four and Five.

As a “racialized project,” the Christian missionizing project was driven by the Christians’ white supremacist world view that classified Tongan natives as well as all non-white peoples as “Other” and “heathen.” The Europeans believed that Tongans were unlike them and were derelict of religion, “We have seen no person among them that seems more religious than another, or anything that could lead us to suppose there is any such character as a priest among them” (Wilson qtd. in van der Grijp 103). The late Tongan historian and Methodist Reverend, Sione Latukefu documents, “The Christian missionaries believed that, “the traditional way of life in Tonga was... a means used by the devil to destroy the souls of the Tongans and to obstruct the cause of the Almighty, and since the missionaries believed that they were recruited to carry out Jehovah’s war against the devil, they could make no compromise” (Latukefu 41) and it is important to note that the Christian missionaries did not “make no compromise” and they were ruthless and heartless in their work with the Tonganness as is evidenced in their strategy of desecrating the Sacred and they aimed for what Frantz Fanon terms as the “total” and permanent dominion of the colonial project in Tonga. The Christians deliberately aimed straight for the root, the heartbeat of Tonganness, and they desecrated the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine, this was the quintessential goal of the colonial project.

The Christian missionizing project produced histories of unfettered and unyielding patriarchal violence on Tonganness. Violence simultaneously constitutes and is constitutive of the Christian and Western technology of legislating linear time and dichotomous thinking in Tonga as well as other parts of the world as a means for colonizing peoples, Gloria Anzaldúa writes, “In trying to become ‘objective,’ Western culture made objects of things and people when it distanced itself from them, thereby losing ‘touch’ with them” and most significantly, she unequivocally declares, “This dichotomy is the root of all violence” (59). The Western dichotomization of Tongan time and space into “time of light” or the time after the institutionalization of Christianity vs the marginalization and criminalization of the time and space before Christianity as “the ‘time of darkness’” was central to the colonial project. The legislation of linear time, as ‘Epeli Hau’ofa contends: “In this formulation, Oceania has no history before imperialism...These comprise a brief prelude to the real thing: history beginning with the arrival of the Europeans. As it is, our histories are essentially narratives told in the
footnotes of the histories of empires” and furthermore, in the colonial imagination, the vastness of Oceania, our histories, political power and immensurable possibilities are comprised within the metaphor that Hau’ofa terms as, “smallness” that he describes as the systemic making of the Pacific region and her inhabitants dependent on Western institutions (62).

**Taufa‘ahau and Tongan Historical Unresolved Grief**

In this chapter as well as in Chapter Four of this dissertation, I examine a Tongan “origin narrative” that features Taufa‘ahau, after his conversion into Christianity, in his quest to create a new Tongan nation that centers the new white, male and Christian God and thus, propels his family line and himself into the privileged role of “Father of the nation.” The narrative privileges Taufa‘ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Tongan Sacred. It’s important to note that the narrative was a performance that aimed to provide evidence of Taufa‘ahau’s new allegiance to the white Christian God and to publicly display the veracity of the supremacy of the Christian God over the Tongan Sacred. We are informed that the narrative was memorialized and is an authentic account that was an eye-witness account made by the newly converted Tongan Commoner, Pita Vi. Vi’s eye-witness account of Taufa‘ahau’s performance was later translated to the English language, published and reproduced for wide public consumption.

Here is the version that is retold by Sione Latukefu in his seminal book, *Church and State in Tonga*:

Taufa ‘ahau wanted to test the validity and power of the old gods and to discover by experience whether Jehovah was the only true God...One day he took Pita Vi and others with him to test the power of the god Ha’e’a’etahi. On their arrival at the house of the god’s priestess, Taufa‘ahau asked her to let the god come so that they could have kava together. (64)

The narrative continues and I share the version that is narrated by Peter Vi that Latukefu also includes in his telling of this narrative:

The old priestess became inspired by Ha’e’a’etahi; and, in the meanwhile, Taufa‘ahau had prepared a great drinking cup [ of kava]. The [kava] cup was filled and handed by Taufa‘ahau to the priestess; but, while her face was turned upwards, in the act of drinking off its contents, Taufa‘ahau struck her a great blow on the forehead, which sent the god (or priestess) rolling on the ground. He then gave her another blow, and, raising a shout of victory, cried out that the god was slain. (64)

Taufa‘ahau’s historical performance of deploying patriarchal violence to desecrate the Sacred is a paradigmatic Tongan “stories of success” as Toni Morrison terms it delineating upwardly mobile movements of “progress” and it also serves as a Tongan “origin narrative” purporting to delineate the traditional and “authentic” laws for performing Tonganness. The objectives of the narrative are to prove the legitimacy of Taufa‘ahau’s conversion to Christianity and to publicly display his new political allegiance to the new white and Christian God.

This colonial narrative is also propagated as evidence of the legitimacy and ultimately, the supremacy of the Christian missionizing project in Tonga. However, I argue that in the Tongan imaginary, Taufa‘ahau’s conversion to the new white and male Christian God evidenced in his deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Tongan Sacred and to sever his va to the Sacred is however, not a celebratory moment like it is propagated in the colonial text but rather this historical moment signifies a spatiality defined by tangi, crying or weeping. This
moment represents a historical and irreparable heartbreak for Tonganness. Taufa‘ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Sacred, represented by the Sacred Elder woman is a moment that represents our collective “historical unresolved grief” that is a legacy that is contemporaneously carried by Tonganness. I posit that within the trajectories of “progress,” Tongans were denied the right to grieve for the loss of our Sacred because of the Christian’s criminalization of “the time of darkness.” Thus, Tongan suffering and pain from the loss of the Sacred is silenced and deemed as inconsequential because the Christians instituted the “time of light” as a spatiality that “rescued” or saved Tonganness from a life that Hau‘ofa describes as, “savage, lascivious and barbaric” (28). Tongan “historical unresolved grief” for the loss of the Sacred, the Feminine, for the severing of va with the heartbeat of our Tonganness is a grief that we continue to carry, it is a wound that haunts us, contemporaneously, and in addition, this wound is a burden that is disproportionately carried on the backs of Tongan women and girls.

The Myth that Tonga Was Not Formally Colonized

The last historical moment that produces Tongan “historical unresolved grief” is the Tongan nationalistic trope that claims that “Tonga was not formally colonized” and this trope is often told side-by-side with the narrative that I just shared about Taufa‘ahau’s desecration of the Sacred. This nationalist trope rooted in praising Taufa‘ahau as the “Father of the nation” and legitimates the Tupou family’s contemporaneous hegemony over the Tongan throne. This trope is repeated by the late Tongan Prime Minister, Baron Vaea in 1997 and reported in the Tonga Chronicle, “Because of Tupou’s God given leadership and wisdom, Tonga was never overrun or colonized by a foreign power, as happened in so many other island countries” (Vaea qtd. in Morton 38). This is a trope that I’ve heard often since I was a child growing up in Tonga and it was reverberated throughout my adult life in my family and especially in Tongan communities here in the U.S. I have often seen this trope deployed by many of us Tongans as a weapon to distinguish ourselves as “exceptional” from our Pacific relatives because we often believe that we hold the upper hand on issues of “authenticity” and “traditional” unlike our Pacific relatives from Melanesia, Micronesia and other parts of Polynesia, that we believe have been formally colonized and Westernized, and they are unlike us Tongans.

In my discussion, I return to the narrative shared earlier in this essay that memorializes Taufa‘ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Tongan Sacred. I posit that this narrative memorializes a historical moment that is venerated by Christian missionaries and the Christian missionizing project as evidence of the veracity and superiority of their colonial project on Tonganness and yet, for Tonganness this historical moment symbolizes an incompletable heartbreak and it represents Tongan “historical unresolved grief.” This historical moment renders an immaculate suffering that is inexplicable to utter because it defines a spatiality that is heinously perverse and perhaps even beyond our comprehension and imaginary. In the narrative, a mortal Tongan man, deliberately uses his own male body as a weapon to inflict violence, torture and to create suffering to a Sacred elder woman while she was engaged in Ceremony and while she was embodied in the most vulnerable state, this is the state of prayer. Thus, how do we Tongans hold this historical narrative replete and seeped with the heaviness of unimagined violence and horror? How do we contend with this narrative and its ghastly legacies of suffering and pain, that lives and haunts us intimately and deeply within the reservoirs of our Tonganness?
Ours is a Shared and Collective Shame

In Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar, Leeann Simpson’s moving and empowering book Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back, she documents a celebratory moment for Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg communities that took place on June 21, 2009, “dancers, artists, singers, drummers, community leaders, Elders, families and children walked down the main street of Nogojiwanong” (11). This is the Michi Saagig name for the land that is now known as Petersborough, Ontario in Canada. Furthermore, Simpson documents the significance of this historical moment for Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg peoples, “It was a celebration of our resistance, a celebration that after everything, we are still here” (12).

In her compelling discussion, Simpson also reveals that this celebratory moment also simultaneously opened up the wounds that are contemporaneously carried by Michi Saagiig peoples:

And if I am honest, I also thought of the shame that I carry in side of me from the legacy of colonial abuse, the unspoken shame we carry collectively as Michi Saagig Nishnaabeg. It is shame that is rooted in the humiliation that colonialism has heaped on our peoples for hundreds of years and is now carried within our bodies, minds and our hearts. It is a shame that our ancestors—our families—did not rally hard enough against the colonial regime. It is shame that we were tricked into surrendering our life, land...It is a shame that makes us think that our leaders and Elders did not do the best they could. To me, this colonial shame felt like not only a tremendous burden to carry. (13)

I share Simpson’s statement about “the unspoken shame we carry collectively” because I believe that she offers Tongans new ways to view and to process the colonial trope that “Tonga was not formally colonized.”

Returning to the narrative featuring Taufa‘ahau’s desecration of the Sacred, I ask a few questions: how do we Tongans contend with the horror of the destruction and violations committed against the Sacred and against all that we value and love, intimately, within this narrative? How do we contend with Taufa‘ahau’s crimes, intimate and precise in its maneuverings, he offered the Sacred Elder woman, a cup of kava, the warm and bitter root drink that binds their Tonganness reminding both of them, respectively, of their shared roots, ancestral bonds created before birth and this va transcends the boundaries of death, and yet, at this moment of recognizing va, Taufa‘ahau strategically deployed his hands as weapons to violently strike the Sacred Elder woman’s aging body with the intentions to create harm and to end her life? Again, I raise the questions; what do we Tongans do with these legacies of pain and suffering? Do we choose obedience and erase these memories and silence these wounds from the repositories of our Tonganness to fall in line with the adjudications of the Christian missionaries and the new Tongan monarchy? What are our responsibilities to this past, to the wounds of our ancestors of the past in our inhabitation of contemporaneous Tonganness?

In his work with holocaust victims, Marc Nichanian asks the question about the colonizer’s objectives in their deployment of violence to produce suffering, “Or is his goal simply to destroy his subject, to make it so that he cannot even recognize himself anymore” (148)? Was Taufa‘ahau’s goals, precisely, “to destroy his subject” so that he could not recognize himself and his Tonganness anymore? And if so, was Taufa ‘ahau’s goals to “destroy his subject” so that she is not recognized and remembered by Tonganness anymore? Cherrie L. Moraga posits, “But it is not really difference the oppressor fears so much as similarity” (Moraga 48). Thus, I ask how do we contend with our similarities, our shared Tonganness, the
“Otherness,” that the colonizers taught us to loathe, in ourselves and in each other? I pose that perhaps one of the most difficult threads about the telling of this narrative is that Taufa’ahau’s heinous crimes against the Sacred are committed in the name of a new and foreign European and male God, a God that is unknown and insignificant in our Tongan systems and economies of va.

Furthermore, Taufa’ahau’s heinous crimes committed against the Sacred was meant to validate a new God that we Tongans share no common allegiances, ancestral histories and we have no shared economies of intimacies, nor do we share histories of obligations of reciprocity to this new white male Christian God and yet we gave this new deity all of us and this historical moment is supposed to appease us. We are told by our Tongan leaders that this moment as well as many other historical moments like this are meant to be celebratory and they serve as evidence of “progress” and furthermore, we are also told that this historical narrative serves as evidence that Tonga was “never overrun or colonized by a foreign power” because precisely, it is one of our own and it is another Tongan that plays the role of colonizer and purveyor of the violence. Yes, perhaps what is also heart breaking in this narrative is that the systems or “bringers of violence” that desecrated our beloved Sacred are praised rather than disavowed, and the Christian missionaries in their alliance with the new Tongan monarchy are painted as “rescuers” and “saviors” of Tonganness rather than the progenitors and purveyors of the legacies of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that they represent.

In processing these many questions and concerns, I continue to use Marc Nichanian’s work focusing on Holocaust survivors. He writes, “The most terrible aspect of the act of torture is not the pain that it inflicts; it is not even the destruction of the soul that occurs in it, as guilt is internalized by a victim” (150). I return to the poignant arguments that I shared earlier about the contemporaneous internalization of shame that is a legacy of colonial violence on Indigenous peoples and communities that Leeann Simpson offers. Simpson writes, “It is shame that is rooted in the humiliation that colonialism has heaped on our peoples for hundreds of years and is now carried within our bodies, minds and our hearts.” Thus, I believe that we Tongans have resorted to internalizing the shame “within our [Tongan] bodies, minds and hearts” because this is the only available option that colonialism offers us because grieving and mourning are processes that have been denied of us (13).

As I have already posited, Tongan grieving and mourning for the desecration of our Sacred is a form of resistance against colonial regimes because it is an act of acknowledging a pain that indicates that something wrong happened and that a violent crime took place. Lastly, I also share Simpson’s follow up statement that I believe is significant in processing the past and the shame that we carry and it also offers us alternative ways to view our ancestors of the past such as our leader, Taufa’ahau:

My ancestors resisted and survived what must have seemed like an apocalyptic reality of occupation and subjugation in contexts where they had few choices. They resisted by simply surviving and being alive. They resisted by hanging on to their stories. They resisted by taking the seed of our culture and political systems and packing them away, so that one day another generation of Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg might be able to plant them. (15)

Simpson’s statement is compelling and it speaks to the wounds that we currently carry as Tongans and she also offers new ways to recognize and to process the suffering. In embarking on this dissertation project, I want to unequivocally state that I recognize and humbly honor the sacrifices made by our Tongan ancestors of the past, especially our great Tongan leader Taufa’ahau.
I humbly recognize that Taufa‘ahau as well as many of our Tongan ancestors “resisted and survived what must have seemed like an apocalyptic reality of occupation and subjugation in a context where they had few choices ” (15). I recognize that the colonial project left Taufa‘ahau as well as many of our Tongan ancestors with “few choices,” a phenomenon that historian Noel Rutherford documents:

[Taufa‘ahau] was convinced that the only way to ensure Tonga’s independence was to have it recognized by the Powers, and that the Powers would only recognize a state which could show tangible evidence of being “civilised.” He had learned “that the only way to remain Tongan was to appear western.” (85)

Thus, I recognize that the excruciating violence that Taufa‘ahau performed at a moment of historical crisis, in turn, revealed the prodigious hand of unremitting colonial violence that dominated the contours of his own life. As Frantz Fanon argued, “The colonized man will first manifest this aggressiveness which has been deposited in his own bones against his own people” and as Gloria Anzaldúa further comments “The violence against us, the violence within us, aroused like a rabid dog. Adrenaline-filled bodies, we bring home the anger and the violence we meet on the street and turn it against each other” (52, 205). In the paradigmatic narrative that I shared, Taufa‘ahau brought “home the anger and the violence” he encountered under the hand of Europeans and he unfortunately deployed this violence “against each other,” and methodically on the body of the Sacred. Thus, the narrative elucidates that it is within the privacy of our Tongan “homes” and in the architecture of our intimate va with each other that the historical wounds are produced and hidden from public purview and it is within these private spaces that they multiply and fester.

I also recognize with gratitude and humility that many of the vestiges of mana that we carry today are “seeds” that Taufa‘ahau strategically planted in the past so that we can cultivate and harvest them to feed ourselves, our families and to nourish our va to Tonganness. The project to recognize our Tongan “historical unresolved grief” is a work that allows all of us, including the spirit of our Tongan leader, Taufa‘ahau, to respectively and collectively make amends with the past and present so that we can heal this collective and contemporaneously festering shame that we carry. This is perhaps the most potent and generous gift that we can offer the ancestors of the past and the next generation of Tonganness.

**Controlling Images and the Surveillance of Women’s Bodies**

I begin this section by examining Patricia Hill Collins’s seminal work delineating the significant role of African American female stereotypes or “controlling images” in producing and maintaining systems of oppression that specifically surveil and discipline African American women’s gender and sexualities. I use Collins’s theory of “controlling images” to help me to briefly examine Xicana and Mexican iconic images of womanhood: La Malinche, La Llorona, and La Virgen de Guadalupe. This analysis looks at how “controlling images” of womanhood are deployed in Mexican communities to produce new forms of coloniality that normalizes violence against women as technologies for subjugating women’s bodies and sexualities and in turn, these new adjudications that center Xicana and Mexican women’s subjugation become central figures for defining the nation.

Maria Lugones important work on the “coloniality of gender” expands on Anibal Quijano’s “coloniality of power.” She contends, “Gender system was constitutive of the coloniality of power as the coloniality of power was constitutive of it. The logic of the relation
between them is of mutual constitution” (12). These themes shape Patricia Hill Collins’s work on African American women, “African American women’s experiences...have been shaped by the dominant group’s efforts to harness Black women’s sexuality and fertility to a system of capitalist exploitation” and correspondingly, she points out, “Portraying African-American women as stereotypical mammys, matriarchs, welfare recipients... has been essential to the political economy of domination fostering Black women’s oppression. Challenging these controlling images has long been a core theme in Black feminist thought” (50, 67). Furthermore, Collins reveals the political intentions that undergird the production of these “controlling images:” “These controlling images are designed to make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life” and, “they not only keep Black women oppressed but are key in maintaining interlocking systems of race, class, and gender oppression” (67–68).

*Women’s Images in Xicana Nationalist Narratives*

In this next section of the essay, I briefly look at the representation of three “controlling images” in Xicana and Mexican nationalistic texts; La Malinche, La llorona and La Virgen de Guadalupe. I show the key themes that bound these images together are; the patriarchal surveillance of women’s sexualities and I draw connections between these respective “controlling images” in the Xicana imagery to the Tongan female icon Feifafa and the unrelenting heteropatriarchal surveillance of her sexuality in the Tongan nationalistic text that I discuss in the latter section of this essay.

Gloria Anzaldúa identifies the three Xicana female icons as representations of what she terms as “*tres madres,*” or three mothers, and she names some of their respective and often dichotomous roles within the Xicana imagery: “All three are mediators: Guadalupe, the virgin mother who has not abandoned us, la Chingada (Malinche), the raped mother whom we have abandoned, and la llorona, the mother who seeks her lost children and is a combination of the other two” (52). I begin my analysis of “*tres madres*” by briefly looking at La Malinche or as Anzaldúa describes, as “la Chigada (Malinche), the raped mother whom we have abandoned” (52).

*Malinche, La Chigada*

Anzaldúa tells us that Malintzin “was an Aztec noble woman who was presented to Cortes upon landing in Veracruz in 1519. She subsequently served Cortes as lover, translator and tactical advisor” (81). In her informative essay, *Traddutora, Traditora, A Paradigmatic Figure of Chicana Feminism,* Norma Alarcon, reveals that Malintzin also known as La Malinche or La Chingada, (the Fucked One) “is viewed as the originator of Mexican people’s fall from grace” (3) and in the Xicana imaginary, she is defined by her betrayal, “Malintzin comes to be known as *la lengua,* literally meaning the tongue. *La lengua* was the metaphor used, by Cortes and chroniclers of the conquest, to refer to Malintzin the translator. However, she not only translated for Cortes and his men, she bore his children (4). Thus, Malintzin’s sexuality is a theme that emerges at the forefront of her representation, for as Cherrie Moraga writes, “In the very act of intercourse with Cortez, Malinche is seen as having been violated. She is not, however, an innocent victim but a culpable—ultimately responsible for her own sexual victimization. Slavery and slander is the price she must pay for the pleasure our culture imaged she enjoyed”
Patricia Hill Collins posits that one of the roles of “controlling images” are to maintain the status quo: “These controlling images are designed to make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life” (68). Returning back to Cherrie Moraga’s argument about the nationalistic image of La Malinche, “She is not, however, an innocent victim but la culpable—ultimately responsible for her own sexual victimization. Slavery and slander is the price she must pay for the pleasure our culture imaged she enjoyed.” Thus, the messages that are promulgated in the Mexican imaginary are that women, themselves, are the culprits of their own suffering under the hand of heteropatriarchal violence and the cycles of violence against women are, in fact, “natural, normal, and an inevitable part of women’s everyday life” (Collins 68).

Alarcon examines the scope of Malintzin’s “betrayal” and she identifies the transgression that lies at the heart of the “betrayal” as told in the nationalistic narrative, “The male myth of Malintzin is made to see betrayal first of all in her very sexuality, which make it nearly impossible at any given moment to go beyond the vagina as the supreme site of evil until proven innocent by way of virginity or virtue, the most pawning commodities around” (182). The nationalistic retelling of Malintzin’s “betrayal” is rooted in the surveillance of heteropatriarchal values and desires. As Alarcon contends, “The myth of Malinche contains the following sexual possibilities: Woman is sexually passive, and hence at all times open to potential use by men whether it be seduction or rape” (184). Sexual subservience defines the contours of women’s relationality to men, a point that Cherrie Moraga emphasizes as she reveals the punishment that allocated to women that resist and are defiant of these gender roles, “The woman who defies her role as subservient to her husband, father, brother, or son by taking control of her own destiny is purported to be a ‘traitor to her race’ by contributing to the ‘genocide’ of her people . . . . In short, even if the defiant woman is not a lesbian, she is assumed to be one; for, like the lesbian in the Xicana imagination, she is una Malinchista” (104). Moraga reminds us that women’s sexualities are, ultimately, always under surveillance and women’s subservience and obedience are central to maintaining the heteropatriarchal status quo. When women resist, they are punished and labeled as “Other” or lesbian, whether they are or not is irrelevant, because their female gender is criminalized and classified as “una Malinchista” (145).

In another compelling essay titled, Chicana’s Feminist Literature: A Re-vision Through Malintzin. Or Malintzin Putting Flesh Back on the Object, Norma Alarcon reveals how the nationalistic narrative telling of Malintzin’s betrayal intercedes and shapes the Chicana imagination and the landscape of everyday life, “Among people of Mexican descent, anyone who has transgressed the boundaries of perceived group interests and values often has been called a malinche or malinchí” (181). Thus, the nationalistic image of Malintzin and its consumption and dispersal in the cultural fabric serves as a “controlling image” that normalizes the marginalization and vitriolic hatred of women in every day Chicano life and social interactions.

Before I proceed to my next analysis of the image of La Llorona, I reiterate some of the key themes that I have shared on the nationalistic image of Malintizin or La Malinche and what her image reveals about gender and sexualities in the Mexican status quo. I bring up these points because I use them in my analysis of the protagonist, Feifafa in the Tongan nationalistic narrative telling about the origin of kava. One of the key themes that I want to reiterate is the cultural belief in the severity of Malintizin’s betrayal or treason of the state and yet, upon further analysis, and as Alarcon reveals, what lies at the heart of her abominable transgression, is,
precisely, her sexuality: “The male myth of Malintzin is made to see betrayal first of all in her very sexuality, which make it nearly impossible at any given moment to go beyond the vagina as the supreme site of evil until proven innocent by way of virginity or virtue, the most pawnable commodities around” (182).

In addition, the image of Malinche reveals the heavy hand of heteropatriarchal dominance that surveils and disciplines women’s lives and thus, women’s only options are obedience and subservience: “The myth of Malinche contains the following sexual possibilities: Woman is sexually passive, and hence at all times open to potential use by men whether it be seduction or rape” (182). The last point that I want to highlight from my earlier sexual is that the nationalistic image of La Malinche is a technology that normalizes the marginalization and vitriolic hatred of women in every day Chicano life and interactions and as Moraga writes, “She is not, however, an innocent victim but la culpable—ultimately responsible for her own sexual victimization.” The nationalistic telling of La Malinche delineates heteropatriarchal violence against women as a justifiable response and perhaps even crucial to maintain order.

La Llorona

The next female icon that I briefly look at is La Llorona that Anzaldúa describes as one of “tres madres,” and La Llorona is “the mother who seeks her lost children” (82). I briefly show that the nationalistic image of La Llorona elucidates the prominent hand of heteropatriarchal surveillance of her sexuality and the classification of her female sexuality as criminal or treason against the state. These are points that I will use later on in this essay in my analysis of the image of Feifafa in the Tongan nationalistic narrative. I begin by sharing a version of the narrative of La Llorona as told by Cherrie Moraga:

One traditional Mexican version of La Llorona tells the tale of a woman who is sexually betrayed by her man, and, in what was either a fit of jealous rage or pure retaliation, she kills their children by downing them in a river. Upon her own death, she unable to enter heaven because of her crime. Instead, she is destined to spend all eternity searching for her dead children. Her lament, ‘Miss Hijos!' becomes the blood-chilling cry heard along irrigation ditches and country creeks, warning children that any misbehavior (straying too far from camp, for example) might lead to abduction by this female phantom. (142)

In Norma Alarcon’s analysis of the image of La Malinche that I shared earlier, she wrote about the indelible mark of betrayal that centers around the surveillance of woman’s sexuality that defined the legacy of La Malinche in the Xicano nationalistic narrative, “The male myth of Malintzin is made to see betrayal first of all in her very sexuality, which make it nearly impossible at any given moment to go beyond the vagina as the supreme site of evil until proven innocent by way of virginity or virtue, the most pawnable commodities around” (Alarcon 182). I share Alarcon’s argument here in my brief discussion of La Llorona because the patriarchal preoccupation with surveilling woman’s sexuality are a prominent theme that shapes the contours of the nationalistic telling of La Llorona. This is a point that Cherrie Moraga points out when she first encountered the narrative of La Llorona:

I immediately recognized that the weeping woman, that aberration that criminal against nature, was a sister. Maybe by being a lesbian, my identification was more easily won, fully knowing my crime was tantamount to hers. Any way you slice it, we were both a far and mournful cry from obedient daughters...La Llorona is every Mexican woman’s story. (145)
Moraga’s quote elucidates the prominence of the patriarchal surveillance of women’s sexualities in every day Chicana life because Moraga links her sexuality as a lesbian woman, a sexuality that is surveilled and classified as criminal within a patriarchal dominated culture, to La Llorona’s crime of, simply, being a woman, or as Alarcon argues, “the vagina as the supreme site of evil” and thus Moraga draws the connection that ties her lesbian sexuality to La Llorona, “my crime was tantamount to hers” (145). Correspondingly, in her comparison to La Llorona, Moraga allows us to see that as women, whether lesbian or not, are surveilled and deemed criminal under the regime of heteropatriarchy because “The vagina as the supreme site of evil,” indelibly marks every woman as criminal.

Moraga’s analysis sheds further light on La Llorona’s narrative by noting that “The official version was a lie” and she beckons us to consider some of the “lies” or myths about La Llorona that were produced in the patriarchal telling of the narrative (145). She posits that La Llorona was not just a passive victim like she is portrayed in the nationalistic narrative, but instead her “traicon” or treason against the state can be read as acts of female agency and self-determination against oppressive gender roles and the surveillance of sexualities by the institution of heteropatriarchy. Moraga writes, “Well, if traicon was the reason, could infanticide then be retaliation against misogyny, an act of vengeance not against one man, but man in general for a betrayal much graver than sexual infidelity: the enslavement and deformation of our sex?” (145). Moraga’s argument asks us to consider that the state’s jurisdiction of La Llorona as criminal because of her “traicon” or acts of treason against the state or her female sexuality should not be taken as fact but rather the version of the narrative that are popular elucidates the betrayal of all women or the Feminine by the heteropatriarchal state, or as Moraga argues, “a betrayal much graver than sexual infidelity: the enslavement and deformation of our sex” (145). Moraga shows us the hostile and violent landscapes that women encounter, navigate and learn to survive under regimes of heteropatriarchal dominance and violence and correspondingly, she also reminds us that the nationalistic telling of La Llorona’s shows us that women’s resistance against their oppressors are often classified as “traicon” and criminalized as if it lies outside of what is termed as legitimate and normal.

La Virgen de Guadalupe

In my last analysis, I look at the iconic image of La Virgen de Guadalupe and like I did with the images of La Malinche and La Llorona, I trace Guadalupe’s role as a “controlling image” for the surveillance of Mexican women’s sexualities but in my analysis of Guadalupe, I look specifically for two key points. First, I trace how her image was politically deployed to replace and to silence powerful Indigenous female deities and cosmologies. Second, I also look at how her image is deployed as a “controlling image” for creating obedience and subservience to the colonial laws of gender and sexualities legislated by heteropatriarchal and white supremacist regimes. I intend to use many of the themes in this analysis to guide me in unpacking Feifafa’s image in the Tongan imaginary.

Gloria Anzaldua delineates in her informative essay, Entering Into the Serpent, the production of the contemporary image of La Virgen de Guadalupe was a colonial production with a layered historicity seeped with political objectives of silencing Indigenous female deities and placing her in dichotomous opposition to their images. Anzaldua writes:

The male-dominated Azteca-Mexica culture drove the powerful female deities underground by giving them monstrous attributes and by substituting male deities in their
place, thus splitting the female Self and the female deities. They divided her who had been complete, who possess both upper (light) and underworld (dark) aspects. *Coatlicue*, the Serpent goddess, and her more sinister aspects, *Tlazolteotl* and *Cihuancoatl*, were “darkended” and disempowered much in the same manner as the Indian *Kali*.

As Anzaldua’s statement elucidates, the silencing and obliteration of Indigenous female deities was part of an exorbitant colonial project that included erasing, dichotomizing female deities and stripping them of their powers while supplanting the losses with the centering of male deities.

For example, Guadalupe is produced through “splitting” or dichotomizing her in opposition to the Indigenous powerful female God Tonantsin, “After the Conquest, the Spaniards and their Church continued to split Tonantsin/ Guadalupe. They desexed Guadalupe, taking Coatlaloqueuh, the serpent/sexuality, out of her. They completed the split begun by the Nahuas by making la virgen de Guadalupe/ Virgen Maria into chaste virgins and dichotomizing the other Indigenous female deities through classifying them as “ putas” (50). In Anzaldua’s analysis, like earlier scholars argued, she identifies the patriarchal surveillance of women’s sexualities as central part of the production of Guadalupe as a “controlling image.” She is portrayed as “chaste virgin” vs the other Indigenous female deities that are deemed as “puta” (50). In addition, and important to note, “They went even further; they made all Indian deities and religious practices the work of the devil” and thus, under the new colonial production, “Tonantsi became Guadalupe, the chaste protective mother, the defender of the Mexican people” (50). This point is especially glaring to me because it rings similar to the colonial desecration of the Sacred that took place in Tonga both in the past and in the present day Tongan cultural fabric.

Anzaldua contends that the colonial production of “splitting” and dichotomizing Guadalupe in opposition to the other Indian female deities was a political strategy of great significance because it aimed at what Frantz Fanon argues, and I’ve shared earlier in this essay in my discussion on the strategic maneuvers of the colonial project in Tonga and the centrality of desecrating the Tongan Sacred, the feminine, as a technology for subjugating and dominating Tonganness. According to Fanon, the colonizers deployed a strategy that, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” and this was a technology that was methodical because it aimed for the sum of the “total” subjugation of the Natives, not only for temporality but it ensured the permanence of colonial domination because it aimed “to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness” (201) and furthermore, “The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation, and bestiality” (Fanon 211). Thus, if the nationalistic image of La Virgen de Guadalupe is produced through the silencing and desecration of the Mexican Sacred as Anzaldua has argued, then Guadalupe is, unequivocally, an image that also represents Xicana and Mexican “historical unresolved grief”.

The last point about the image of La Virgen de Guadalupe that I want to briefly raise here is how it serves as a “controlling image” aimed at silencing resistance and deployed to encourage compliance and obedience to the status quo. Norma Alarcon states that Guadalupe, “was the emerging Mexican people’s native version of the virgin Mary” and thus, I trace the political objectives that are forged in Guadalupe’s embodying “the emerging Mexican people’s native version of the virgin Mary” (58). In her book, *Women and the Conquest of California, 1543-1840: Codes of Silence*, Virginia M. Bouvier writes, “Throughout the period of exploration and early Spanish colonization, the Virgin Mary, patroness of the Americas and of the Indians, was a major figure in the symbolic repertoire of the conquest. Conquerors distributed among the
indigenous people pictures and statues of the Virgin, symbolizing Spanish power and sovereignty over indigenous deities (14).

Furthermore, Bouvier reveals how the conquerors strategically appropriated the symbol of the Virgin Mary “in the service of conquest.” She writes, “In their encounters with new peoples, they appropriated the symbol of the Virgin Mary and its many location variations in the service of conquest. The image was believed to attract and reassure the [Native] inhabitants . . .” of the efficacy and supremacy of the new colonial regime (14). Gloria Anzaldúa tells us that “Guadalupe appeared on December 9, 1531, on the spot where the Aztec goddess, Tonantsi (“Our Lady Mother”), had been worshipped by the Nahuas and where a temple to her had stood” (50). She appeared to a poor Indian man named Juan Diego. Furthermore, according to Virginia M. Bouvier:

The dark-skinned Virgin of Guadalupe...left her image of his[Juan Diego’s] cloak. The bishop proclaimed the apparition to have been a miracle and agreed to have a basilica built on the hill reportedly indicated for that purpose by the Virgin. Conversions of the New Spain’s Indian population purported skyrocketed. Friar Tobíbio de Motolinia claimed that some nine million baptisms were performed in the few months that followed. (15)

As Bouvier reveals, the image of the dark-skinned Guadalupe helped to initiate “some nine million [Indian] baptisms” into the new colonial regime and “in 1660 the Roman Catholic Church named her Mother of God, considering her synonymous with la Virgen Maria” (Anzaldúa 51). Thus, as a “controlling image,” “Guadalupe has been used by the Church to mete out institutionalized oppression” and “to placate the Indians and Mexicanos and Chicanos” and thus, to convince them to acquiesce and to follow the new political order (Anzaldúa 53). Returning to Collins’s statement about the role of “controlling images” in naturalizing the status quo and keeping systems in place that maintain women’s oppression, “These controlling images are designed to make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life” (68). She continues, “they not only keep Black women oppressed but are key in maintaining interlocking systems of race, class, and gender oppression” (68). Thus, the colonial image of Guadalupe is a production meant to keep Xicana and Mexican women “oppressed” through “maintaining interlocking systems of race, class, and gender oppression” (68).

**Controlling Images and the Surveillance of Women’s Sexualities**

I begin this last section of the chapter by revisiting my earlier discussion on “controlling images” of Xicana and Mexican women in nationalistic texts and I connect some of the key themes used in earlier sections to a discussion centering the figure of Feifafa that I initiate and engage with in this section. I engage in a discussion of Xicana and Mexican archetypes of womanhood because I am interested in tracking the maneuvers of Western colonialisms and their legislation of the institution of heteropatriarchy in countries with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous cultures outside Tonga and the Pacific region and I observe how the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy is institutionalized as a central organizing strategy for subjugating Indigenous peoples. In addition, my analysis of the three iconic representations of Xicana womanhood is my humble attempt at paying homage, remembering genealogies and honoring the va that connect me to the scholarship of Xicana ancestors and feminist foremothers, Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherrie Moraga that I was introduced to during my undergraduate studies.
Anzaldua and Moraga’s important storytelling documenting the three madres and their various and respective histories of suffering and resistance at the hand of patriarchal violence, touched my heart and the three madres have walked with me during the many storms of my undergraduate journey in Utah, encouraging me to pick up the pieces, to writing an MA thesis in Indiana and during the long journey of writing this dissertation project here in the Bay Area, California. Since our first meeting many decades ago, the three madres encouraged me and showed me by using their own female flesh and bodies as examples to look inside the deep heart of my Tongan woman body and to tell the stories that she shows me. This is a genealogy of va, that shapes the critical contours of this chapter and this dissertation project.

In my earlier analysis of the three images of Mexican womanhood, I show the heteropatriarchal preoccupation with the surveillance of women’s sexualities and I show how violence against women is a technology that is strategically deployed to discipline and surveil women’s sexualities especially within the spatiality of the family that directly connects to maintaining the status quo within the larger spatiality of the nation. Then I draw connections between these iconic images with Feifafa in the Tongan imaginary. Lastly, I briefly connect Feifafa’s image to the three historical moments that produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and I show how Feifafa represents a legacy of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and she symbolizes the contemporaneous Tongan “soul wound.”

I begin with analyzing some of the characteristics of perhaps one of the most vexed and despised images out of the three, La Malinche. La Malinche is also an important image to examine in this discussion because she is viewed as the most deviant out of the three and therefore she is allocated the backlash and fury of patriarchal punishment. This is important to point out because patriarchal punishment and the always looming threat of patriarchal violence is a technology necessary for keeping women in “their place” and for maintaining the status quo. For example, in the Tongan nationalistic telling of Feifafa, it is, in fact, the patriarchal deployment of violence against women that is the thread that ties all the disparate Tongan characters together, from the Commoners all the way to the top of the hierarchy straight to the feet of the Tongan King. Unfortunately, this moment also allows us to view that the normalization of violence against women is the phenomenon that is often widely classified and celebrated as “authentic” Tonganness and yet this is a myth.

Collins reminds us of the role of “controlling images” in maintaining the status quo, “These controlling images are designed to make racism, sexism, and poverty appear to be natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life” (67). As a “controlling image,” Feifafa delineates that heteropatriarchal violence against Tongan women is not just “natural, normal, and an inevitable part of everyday life” in Tongan families and in Tongan communities, but as I briefly discuss later in this essay, the narrative also delineates that this cultural “norm” is founded in Tongan tradition and it marks the propagation of cycles of violence against women as “authentic” and “traditional” Tongan performances of manhood and concomitantly, it marks performances of obedience and submission as “authentic” performances of Tongan womanhood.

Returning to the image of La Malinche. Norma Alarcon reveals that La Malinche was also known as la Chingada, (the Fucked One) “is viewed as the originator of Mexican people's fall from grace” and she is an image defined by her betrayal (Traddutora, Alarcon 3). Norma Alarcon identifies the transgression that lies at the heart of her “betrayal”: “The male myth of Malintzin is made to see betrayal first of all in her very sexuality, which make it nearly impossible at any given moment to go beyond the vagina as the supreme site of evil until proven innocent by way of virginity or virtue, the most pawning commodities around” (182). Alarcon
further lays out the patriarchal surveillance of women’s lives denies women access to their own self determination and agency, “The myth of Malinche contains the following sexual possibilities: Woman is sexually passive, and hence at all times open to potential use by men whether it be seduction or rape” (184). The last point that I want to highlight about La Malinche is that her “controlling image” serves as a technology that normalizes the marginalization and vitriolic hatred of women in every day Xicano and Mexican life for as Moraga writes, “She is not, however, an innocent victim but la culpable—ultimately responsible for her own sexual victimization.” The nationalistic telling of La Malinche delineates heteropatriarchal violence against women as a justifiable response and perhaps even necessary for maintaining order.

I return to the Tongan “controlling image” of Feifafa. In the Tongan imagery, Feifafa differs from La Malinche because Feifafa does not represent deviance and instead she represents the “good daughter” and ultimately, she represents the “good woman” in the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family and within the nation. Yet, interestingly, I want to point out that Feifafa’s “obedience” and “silence” does not save her life for as the fateful narrative is told, Feifafa’s female body is killed and sacrificed to appease and to honor the Tongan King. Like La Malinche, however, its Feifafa’s female body and her sexuality inevitably mark her as deviant, regardless of her obedience and compliance, and therefore as the narrative illustrates, Feifafa’s life is expendable and available for the taking and she is used as a sacrifice to honor and to appease the patriarch, the Tongan King and the nation. As Norma Alarcon documents about the treatment of women that are explicitly shown in La Malinche’s narrative, “The myth of Malinche contains the following sexual possibilities: Woman is sexually passive, and hence at all times open to potential use by men whether it be seduction or rape” and as Feifafa’s narrative shows us, women must also be open to sacrificing her life and undergoing physical death as the price for her female sexuality (184).

This section recalls key themes about La Llorona that I examined earlier in this essay. Although, La Llorona is not classified as deviant like La Malinche, La Llorona is inevitably also marked by her female sexuality: “first of all in her very sexuality, which make it nearly impossible at any given moment to go beyond the vagina as the supreme site of evil until proven innocent by way of virginity or virtue, the most pawning commodities around” (182). The trajectory of La Llorona’s sorrowful life elucidates the prominent hand of heteropatriarchal surveillance of her sexuality that dominates and shapes every contour of her life and its reach is transcendental and limitless and it extends even after her death. Like La Llorona, Feifafa is a figure that is always located under the hand of heteropatriarchal surveillance and dominance throughout the course of her lifetime and the surveillance even extends to the contours of her death. As the narrative tells us, Feifafa’s dead body is not allowed to rest in peace but in her death, she gives birth to kava, the symbol of the nation. In addition, even in death, Feifafa’s representation serves as a ghost to haunt every Tongan woman and girl that are alive to obedience and to stay in compliance with the laws and prohibitions of heteropatriarchal womanhood that includes being a “good daughter” and bearing the legacy of a “good mother” and a “good woman” for all eternity to fulfill her obligations to the father, the Tongan King, and the nation.

Last, I recall some of the key themes about La Virgen Guadalupe made earlier in this chapter and use the themes to help me to unpack Feifafa’s “controlling image” in the Tongan imagery. Earlier I examined how Guadalupe is a “controlling image” that is often the most beloved out of the three and she is often classified as “the good mother” and like Feifafa, she represents a state-sanctioned and legitimate version of the ideal womanhood. Thus, Guadalupe is
a “controlling image” that is politically deployed to silence the images of powerful Indigenous female deities and secondly, she is deployed for inculcating contemporary Xicana and Mexican women the messages to perform obedience to the new colonial laws of gender and sexualities. Returning to the figure of Feifafa. The political objectives that undergird the production of Feifafa as a “controlling image” aim to not only silence but to also normalize the colonial desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, for contemporary Tongan communities and for the Tongan ancestors of the future. Like Guadalupe as a “controlling image,” Feifafa’s silences the names and histories of powerful and beloved Tongan women deities. These deities are now deemed as inconsequential, criminalized and erased from our hearts and from our memories. In addition, the spatialities of loss were supplanted with “controlling images” such as Feifafa, the Tongan Nationalistic Family and other images of Tongan womanhood that support the new laws of Christianity and other forms of colonialisms that aim to subjugate Tonganness through the adjudication of heteropatriarchal surveillance and keeping Tongan women in “their place.”

**Feifafa and Tongan Historical Unresolved Grief**

In this last section, I briefly connect Feifafa’s image to some of the key themes that are evoked by the three historical moments that produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that is a phenomenon described as, “The profound unsettled bereavement resulting from cumulative devastating losses, compounded by the prohibition and interruption of Indigenous burial practices and ceremonies” (Brave Heart 252). In addition, this is a phenomenon that shape the contours of contemporaneous Native American lives, “historical unresolved grief, contributes to the current social pathology, originating from the loss of lives, land and vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by European conquest of the Americas” (252). I show how Feifafa represents a legacy of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and I also posit that she symbolizes the contemporaneous and festering Tongan “soul wound.” Recalling the three historical moments that produce Tongan “historical unresolved grief” are; First, produced by the renowned British Captain James Cook’s historical naming of Tonga as the “Friendly Islands” during his third voyage in 1777.

At the core of the colonial technology of naming Tonganness as “Friendly Islander” are the Western institutions of race, gender and sexualities and unrelenting deployment of patriarchal violence to maintain these new forms or order. The naming of Tonganness as “Friendly Islander” silences histories of Tongan resistance against colonial domination constituted through centering the Sacred as a methodology for mana and Tongan self-determination; second, the arrival of the British Christian missionaries in 1797 and their institutionalization of linear time that leads to the severing of Tongan va with the Sacred and the systemic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine or what I posit, is the heart beat of Tonganness. The losses are strategically supplanted with heteropatriarchy that is symbolized by the new white and male Christian God at the center of the new Tongan imaginary. Lastly, Taufa‘ahau’s deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Sacred and the Tongan nationalist trope claiming that “Tonga was never formally colonized,” is meant to legitimate the Tupou family’s claim and hegemonic rule of the Tongan throne and it aims to silence the innumerable losses, suffering and historical trauma produced by the Christian missionizing project by denying and criminalizing Tongan grief and mourning that in turn, produces a collective shame carried by Tonganness.

These historical moments memorialize the devastating hand of patriarchal violence and dominance that are legacies inherited from Europeans and these histories and the suffering that
they produced are burdens that are disproportionately carried on the backs of Tongan women and Tongan girls. The historical narratives also delineate the layers of flesh that reveal Tongan suffering, historical trauma or the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and I also show some of the technologies that were systemically deployed to silence Tongan “historical unresolved grief.”

In my earlier discussion of Feifafa, I contended that she is a “controlling image” that aims to silence the legacy of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” for contemporary Tongan women and communities and this narrative aims to inculcate these messages to our Tongan ancestors of the future. Recalling an earlier argument that I made that connected Feifafa’s “controlling image” to La Virgen Guadalupe, I posited that Feifafa silences the histories and images of powerful and beloved Tongan female deities and secondly, she is strategically deployed for inculcating contemporary Tongan women to the new norms of colonial gender and sexualities. Thus, Feifafa is a “controlling image” meant to not only silence but to normalize the systemic desecration of the Sacred that is appropriated into every day and contemporaneous Tongan lives through normalizing violence against women within the private spatialities of our families and intimate relationalities. Last, I also posit that Feifafa is a figure that defies the boundaries of nationalistic and patriarchal ownership and in the next sections of this essay, I show how Feifafa makes our Tongan “historical unresolved grief” visible and tangible.

In his important work on the holocaust, Marc Nichanian writes about the systemic processes of silencing the voices of Jewish “witnesses” or survivors of the Holocaust from telling about the genocide and historical trauma. Nichanian posits that the perpetrators produced a systemic “death of the witness,” because “They knew that by destroying that capacity of bearing witness, they destroyed the very possibility of writing history, the possibility for a fact to be a fact” and “If the core of the event is the elimination of the witness, there can be no bearing witness for what happened to the victim or to the survivor” (144, 151). One of the methods for systemically producing the “death of the witness” was to manipulate the contours of the narrative so as to control the public’s perception of the victim, “The perpetrator succeeds when he prevents the victim from dying as a victim” (146). I share Nichanian’s work in this discussion because it helps us to further contextualize Feifafa’s complex and layered role as a “controlling image” in Tongan nationalism.

Feifafa’s violent death at the hands of her caregivers, her parents, and the Tongan nation, is fraught with political intentions. The narrative is mediated with a new cadence and rhythm of Western “progress” and “enlightenment” although its located in the “past,” and its therefore, presented as a narrative that is “traditional” and “authentically Tongan.” Feifafa is a remnant of the spatiality that is termed “era of darkness” and her travels of upward mobility into the “time of light” is mediated and is evidenced through her performance of colonial gender and Tongan female submissiveness and the objectives of “progress” are further visible in the deployment of patriarchal violence on her female body that violently takes her life and leads to her death.

Yet, even in her death, her dead female body is utilized as a site of patriarchal reproduction and she reproduces the nation. She is furthermore, utilized as a commodity exchanged at the hands of men, taken from the hands of her biological father and offered as a sacrifice to another patriarch, the Tongan King. Even in death, Feifafa is not allowed to rest in peace but she is relegated to fulfill her gendered obligations and thus, her female Commoner body gives birth to kava, the symbol of the nation, that is constituted through innumerable layers of patriarchal violence that includes; homicide and the taking of her life by the hands of her father, and through rape, or a heterosexual union with the Tongan king that she is forced into.
without her consent that produces the birth of kava. Feifafa’s upwardly mobile journey of “progress” and “enlightenment” is mediated through the surveillance of relentless patriarchal violence and rape. I want to emphatically state that Feifafa’s life journey encapsulates the ultimate objectives and desires of Western colonialism for Tonganness. Thus, the nationalistic classification of Feifafa’s narrative as a “story of success” as Toni Morrison terms it and as evidence of “progress” is strategic because she is not allowed to die as a “victim” and we are not allowed to mourn or to grieve her death and furthermore, we are not allowed to name the horror of colonial violence that took her life because she represents the desires of the privileged “time of light” and she represents the celebratory forward movements towards Western “progress.” Thus, Tongan grief and mourning for the “victims” produced by the hands of patriarchal violence are silenced and deemed inconsequential within the boundaries of this new colonial order and status quo.

In her seminal poem remembering and lamenting Feifafa’s death as a sacrifice for the Tongan King, renowned Tongan poet, Konal Helu Thaman begins by unabashedly expressing Tongan grief and mourning, “it hurts me to remember” (14). Helu Thaman’s declaration refuses the nationalistic and heteropatriarchal trope of dehumanizing Feifafa and painting her as an inconsequential object or what Nichanian terms “death of the witness.” The nationalistic narrative paints Feifafa as a Commoner Tongan woman that is only offered prominence after her body is occupied and deployed as a site for enacting multiple forms of patriarchal violence. Thus, Feifafa’s body is utilized as a site for enacting and validating the objectives of Western “progress” and in this process, she is not viewed as a veritable “witness” to the horrors of colonialisms. Helu Thaman’s statement “it hurts me to remember,” asks us to engage in the difficult work of “remember” our va, to trace the flesh of the severed intimate and to once again, remember our va, relationality to Feifafa.

To reconsider the ancestral bonds and the umbilical cords that connect us, our shared intimate knowledges that we have forgotten, the archives of memories that trace our va to Feifafa is central because this act of remembering awakens the routes that revive her humanity, once again, and we recognize her as our sister, our mother, the aching that lives inside of our Tonganness. It is within the many possibilities offered by remembering our shared va that the crimes of patriarchal violence that defined the fabric of Feifafa’s life and death is not celebratory but instead, “it hurts,” and it’s at this moment of recognizing our shared va, and the collective “hurt” that we are able to recognize the colonial horror and we can begin to question the status quo and we can recognize and honor the histories that depict the terror of patriarchal violence thus, we are finally able to recognize that Feifafa died as a “victim” (Nichanian 15). As Marc Nichanian contends, “The perpetrator succeeds when he prevents the victim from dying as a victim and the survivor from surviving in order to bear witness” (146). Feifafa’s memory shows that she is both a “victim” and “survivor” and she “bear[s] witness” to the realities of colonial horror and terror produced by the histories of European contact and Western “progress” on Tonganness but these horrors are especially “witnessed” on the bodies of Tongan women and girls and like Helu Thaman passionately reminds us at the end of the poem, “i still don’t believe that a king was worth it (15).”

*Soul Wound*

In his influential work delineating the legacies of historical trauma on Indigenous peoples and communities, psychologist Eduardo Duran recalls his early clinical work with Native
American communities in central California and he documents a phenomenon that took place in many of his conversations with community members, “When asked about the problems in the community, people did not mention the expected symptom-oriented problems. They began to mention such as spiritual injury, soul sickness and soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” (15). Duran attempts to examine the phenomenon of “Spiritual injury, soul sickness, soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” that these Indigenous California community members reported in their conversations and he traces and connects their contemporaneous suffering to the histories of past and present “systemic genocide” that “was inflicted on many of the Original People of this hemisphere” (7). Duran further writes, “Eradication of the Native life-world was attempted through a long process of genocide, ethnocide, and cultural hegemony” and the historical processes of “Eradication of the Native life-world” produced, “Spiritual injury, soul sickness, soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” that Indigenous communities are currently suffering, in a phenomenon that he terms as “soul wound” (15, 27). Notably, Duran describes “soul wound” as “intergenerational trauma, or historical trauma. Basically, these terms have similar meanings. The difference is that the Native idea of historical trauma involves the understanding that the trauma occurred in the soul or the spirit (7).

Duran’s theory of the “soul wound” is important in this discussion that attempts to trace Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and I connect these historical narratives to the contemporaneous image of the Tongan female protagonist, Feifafa as Tongan “soul wound.” Duran contends that what distinguishes the “soul wound” for Native peoples is, “The difference is that the Native idea of historical trauma involves the understanding that the trauma occurred in the soul or the spirit” is especially pertinent in shaping the contours of this discussion because I argue that at the root of the three historical moments documenting Tongan “historical unresolved grief” are the wounds carried by Tonganness as a consequence of our severed va, relationality to the Sacred.

Telling the narratives of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and connecting them to the contemporaneous Tongan “Soul wound” that Feifafa represents, is participating in what Homi Bhabha terms as “painful remembering” (36). Bhabha writes about the process of “painful remembering” that is part of a project to acknowledge and to try to heal the “soul wound.” He writes, “Remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present” (36). As a Tongan woman, moreover, the act of retelling Feifafa’s narrative and attempting to contend with the layered colonial histories that she conceals as well as reveals are a “painful remembering” or as Konai Helu Thaman wrote about Feifafa, “It hurts me to remember” and as these scholars’ suggest, it is precisely our work of “painful remembering” that is necessary in our attempts to pick up the scattered and broken pieces and “to make sense of the trauma of the present” (14, 36).

The “painful remembering” of Feifafa’s narrative is a phenomenon that Saida Hartman describes as, “Every generation confronts the task of choosing its past. Inheritances are chosen as much as they are passed on. The past depends less on ‘what happened then’ than on the desires and discontents of the present” (100). We Tongans must remember that the narratives that we tell and privilege are “inheritances” that come with a responsibility in shaping the present, past and future of Tonganness. For as I have shown in this chapter, the mainstream telling of Feifafa’s life reflects European colonial objectives and desires for Tonganness and these are not “authentic” or “traditional” Tongan values. As I have shared earlier, a national study on domestic violence conducted in 2009 and released in 2012, showed the normalization of violence against women
within Tonganness. The survey showed that 77% of Tongan women are physically or sexually abused. These contemporaneous horrors suffered by Tonganness are the inheritances of Western “progress.”

Additionally, I also contend that these statistics are a conservative rendering and they do not accurately document the realities and the preponderance of patriarchal violence in the lives of Tongan women living in Tonga and in the lives of Tongan women living in the diasporas. As Hartman’s statement posits, “The past depends less on ‘what happened then’ than on the desires and discontents of the present” (100). At this historical moment of crisis, it is the struggles and dreams of our ancestors of the past that continues to nourish our contemporaneous Tonganness and like the example set for us by our ancestors of the past, that I shared earlier in this chapter in my telling of Captain Cook’s legacy in Tonga, these are the times when we unfurl the maps, already drawn for us, compassionately and carefully by our ancestors with original instructions that can help us to survive these contemporaneous moments of tumultuous colonialisms and authoritarianisms. These are the moments that we are asked to, once again, remember, and to center our Sacred, the heartbeat of our Tonganness as “inheritances” we offer as medicine to ourselves, our families and our communities and furthermore, we offer these ancestral knowledges and cultural practices as gifts, as medicine, as “inheritances” of mana to the next generation of Tongan ancestors and especially to our daughters and granddaughters that the colonial project systemically erased and maligned. Our histories have shown us that this is the route to reclaiming Tongan mana and self-determination.

Conclusion

I conclude this chapter by sharing Sara Deer’s important work on rape and sexual violence in Native American communities. Sara Deer writes about the profound historical wounds and trauma that are consequences of rape and sexual violence not just on the lives of individual women but on nations, “All of these events are attacks on the human soul; the destruction of indigenous culture and the rape of a woman connote a kind of spiritual death that is difficult to describe to those that have not experienced it. It is not only Native women who have been raped but Native nations as a whole” (12). Deer’s work, like Eduardo Duran’s theory of “soul wound” allow us to view that the violence of rape and other forms of violence that define the everyday lives of Tongan women are not suffering owned only by individuals nor can this suffering be contained within the silences and boundaries of respective families because as Deer and Duran argue, the violence creates a collective “soul wound.” Deer writes, “It is not only Native women who have been raped but Native nations as a whole” (12).

The histories of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that Feifafi’a’s image silences and she simultaneously also represents are collective “soul wounds” carried by Tonganness. Thus, at this time of great suffering and crisis, I want to offer an example of embodying Tonganness that can help us to “find our way back home.” Perhaps we can follow the courageous example shown by our Tongan ancestor and respected female scholar and poet, Koni Helu Thaman on the important role of Tongan cultural practices such as storytelling and creating poetry as strategies for challenging the status quo. We can follow Helu Thaman’s footsteps and tell narratives about Tonganness that are courageous and unafraid to begin with; “It hurts me to remember” as a methodology for “speaking back” against the histories of suffering and losses that transpired in the name of “progress.” This is also a theme that Xicana scholar, feminist foremother and ancestor, Gloria Anzaldúa documents and I use it here to illuminate the important responsibility
of the storyteller and poet within Tonganness, “Her first step is to take inventory” and moreover, “She communicates that rupture, documents the struggle. She reinterprets history” (104). Helu Thaman and Anzaldúa generously offer us decolonial and creative Indigenous responses and they ask us to take our place and to participate in the production of “taking inventory” of our own Tongan histories by utilizing cultural practices as strategies that acknowledge and attempts to heal our collective Tongan “soul wound.”
Chapter Four: Racializing Tonganness, Challenging Heteropatriarchy, and Centering Patriarchal Violence

La vendita. The small fawn. They had to kill their pet, the fawn. The game warden was on the way with his hounds. The penalty for being caught in possession of a deer was $250 or jail. The game warden would put su papi en la carcel.

How could they get rid of the fawn? No, la guardia’s hounds would sniff Venadita out. Let Vandalita loose in the monte? They had tried that before. The fawn would leap away and seconds later return. Should they kill Venadita? The mother and Prieta looked toward las carabinas propped against the wall behind the kitchen door—the shiny barrel of the .22, the heavy metal steel of the 40-40. No, if they could hear his pickup a mile and a half down the road, he would hear the shot.

Quick, they had to do something. Cut Venadita’s throat? Club her to death? The mother couldn’t do it. She, Prieta, would have to be the one. The game warden and his perros were a mile down the road. Prieta loved her papi. (Anzaldua, Cervicide)

Introduction

This chapter examines the production of the Tongan Nationalist Family, one of the official and major “racialized projects” and carceral spatialities in Tonga that is founded on and maintained through the colonial desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine. These histories continue in the contemporaneous normalization of violence against women within everyday Tongan life within the intimate and private spatialities of the familial. I contend that the normalization of violence against Tongan women is an importation from European settlers and Christian missionaries and I trace the genealogies of patriarchal violence by examining the three notable historical moments defining Tongan encounters with Europeans. In each respective moment, I highlight the Europeans’ deployment of “white terror” on Tonganness. Furthermore, I also examine the legacies of “white terror” on contemporaneous Tonganness and strategies to reclaim Tonganness by working in collaboration with Indigenous communities in the U.S. diaspora to protect the Sacred.

I begin this chapter by examining the production of one of the official and major “racialized projects” in Tonga, which I posit is the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family. Next, I trace the genealogies of violence to histories of Tongan encounters with Europeans in three notable moments. The following section briefly examines the genealogies of patriarchal violence in Tonga by looking at significant Tongan encounters: 1) with the Dutch explorers Schouten and Le Maire in 1666, 2) Captain Cooks’ three historical voyages that take place between 1774 and 1777, and 3) to the arrival of the British Christian missionaries in 1797. Although these settlers arrive from two respectively different European nations spanning the Netherlands and England, I show that the White European settlers shared a common belief in the institution of White supremacy and they, respectively, and uniquely produced “racialized projects” constituted through the deployment of a phenomenon scholars termed as “white terror.”

The last section situates the occupied Indian land that is now known as California, the land that I as well as many Tongans currently call home. I trace the recent and local campaign
here in Huichin, the original name given to the East Bay by the Ohlone, the first peoples and caretakers of this land, to protect the oldest Ohlone Sacred Site, the West Berkeley Shellmound. I contend that Tongans and peoples from Moana Nui living on occupied Indian land should stand in political solidarity with Ohlone and other Indigenous peoples in the diaspora in our work to tauhi va. This solidarity is a work that helps us to “find our way back home” to our own respective Tonganness.

The Tongan Nationalist Family as a “Racialized Project”

I examine the production of one of the official and major “racialized projects” in Tonga—the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family. In their foundational work on racialization, Omi and Winant define “racialized projects” as “the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed” (56). Furthermore, they contend that racialized projects are “historically situated projects in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized” (56). The legislation of the Tongan nationalist family is central to locating Tonganness on the trajectory of “progress.” Anne McClintock historicizes the production of the colonial spatiality of the family and she identifies it as central to the colonial project and the Western linear timeline of “progress”. She asserts that in the late-nineteenth century, “to meet the ‘scientific’ standards set by the natural historians and empiricists of the eighteenth century, a visual paradigm was needed to display evolutionary progress as a measurable spectacle. The exemplary figure that emerged was the evolutionary family Tree of Man” and in another example that she offers, “After 1859 and the advent of social Darwinism, the welter of distinctions of race, class, and gender were gathered into a single narrative by the image of the Family of Man” (37, 45). The spectacle of “progress” that is elucidated in the “Family of Man” is defined by Heidi J. Nast as a spectacle of the “white supremacist family” and she contends that this type of racialized familial spatiality delineates “how sexed and racialized landscapes ‘out there’ unconsciously and consciously impinge upon and structure interiorized anxieties, rage, and desire. In this sense, landscapes not only record conscious acts and intentions or articulable cultural beliefs and political ideologies” (219).

These points delineating the politicization and surveillance of spatiality, especially intimate spatiality, are further articulated in Ann Stoler’s argument highlighting the pivotal role of the surveillance of sexualities within “racialized projects.” Stoler asserts, “The notion of the intimate is a descriptive marker of the familiar and the essential and of relations grounded in sex…It is ‘sexual relations’ and ‘familiarity’ take as an ‘indirect sign’ of what is racially ‘innermost’ that locates intimacy so strategically in imperial politics and why colonial administrations worried over its consequence and course” (9). Thus, the politically strategic production of the colonial family as a “racialized project” for “containing” what Europeans often define as the Native’s “deviance” constituted by their sexualities helps us to view the inextricable connection between the production of the colonial familial spatiality and the introduction and systemic production of carceral spatialities in Tonga after the arrival of the Christian missionizing project. Stanley and Smith offer the term “Prison industrial complex” “to begin to name the enormity of the prison system…Other than the facilities themselves and the economic and geopolitical connections, the PIC also helps us to think about the practices of surveillance, policing, screening, profiling, and other technologies to partition people and produce populations that often occur far beyond the walls of the prison” (12). Thus, the term “prison industrial complex” helps us to better contextualize the systems of “containing” Tongan Natives by
European Christian settlers that was contingent on the legislation of new forms of va, relationalities and the production of new colonial economies of intimacies. Choi and Jolly explain, “We see Christian missionary encounters as pivotal in the development of diverse forms of modernity and central to the fashioning of diverse new domesticities” (5).

These new “domesticities” are productions of carceral spatialities shaped by colonial tenets and objectives. Richard Dyer explicates, “Many of the fundamentals of all levels of Western culture—the forms of parenting, especially motherhood, and sex… come to us from Christianity, whether or not we know the Bible story or recognize the specific items of Christian iconography” (15). Throughout this chapter I show how the “racialized projects” centered on legislating Tongan relationalities and intimacies as strategies for “containing” what they imagined was the “deviance” of Tonganness constituted through colonial systems of sexualities and gender. In her important work Inventing the Savage: The Social Construction of Native American Criminality, Luana Ross argues that classification of Indigenous peoples as “deviance” was an important strategy for producing discursive forms of coloniality for subjugating Indigenous peoples here in the U.S. that includes the invention of apparatus such as laws and new cultural norms that criminalized them. I draw connections and trace the similarities between Ross’s research on Indigenous peoples and criminality here in the U.S to colonial expansion in Tonga, “Natives were seen and treated as deviant” and thus colonizers produced laws and jurisprudence with aims for subjugation “laws has repeatedly been used in this country to coerce racial/ethnic group deference to Euro-American power” (Ross 12).

As I argue in this chapter, the nineteenth century production of the Tongan Nationalist Family is one of the first official colonial adjudicated spatialities aimed to “coerce” Tongans to deference” to European power and to the hegemony of the new Tongan monarchy. This new colonial spatiality sought for the normalization of the new colonial forms of va that center the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine, symbolized through the privileging of the new white male Christian deity. In addition, the technology of violence against women was normalized as well as it was necessary for maintaining this new status quo and new forms of order. The Tongan Nationalist Family is a microcosm representing the jurisprudence and value systems of the larger spatiality of the Tongan nation.

In his formative work on racialization, Frantz Fanon contends that the colonial and carceral spatiality of the “white family” is significant for inculcating and maintaining the new norms of the nation: “The White family is the agent of a certain system. The society is indeed the sum of all the families in it…The white family is the workshop in which one is shaped and trained for life in society” (149). Fanon highlights the role of the “white family” in the trajectory of “progress” and “civilizing” the native: “In Europe and in every country characterized as civilized or civilizing, the family is a miniature of the nation” (142). Important to the discussion, Fanon delineates that the political objectives of “the white family” and the values that it inculcates are foreign inventions that differ from the cultural norms of blackness, “A normal Negro child, having grown up within a normal [black] family, will become abnormal on the slightest contract with the white world” (143). Fanon lays out some of the political objectives of the “white family” in maintaining the new norms of the nation: “The White family is the agent of a certain system. The society is indeed the sum of all the families in it…The white family is the workshop in which one is shaped and trained for life in society” (149). The “white family” is a “racialized project” that privileges the Western institution of patriarchy a stratification described by Gloria Anzaldua as, “The culture and the Church insist that women are subservient to males.
If a woman rebels she is a mujer mala. If a woman doesn’t renounce herself in favor of the male, she is selfish. If a woman remains a virgin until she marries, she is a good woman” (39).

The Production of Patriarchal Violence

Dylan Rodriguez’s term “Prison regime” points to the significant role of “gratuitous violence” in the productions of carceral spaces or “the prison site,” “a production of the prison site as the organized ritualization of gratuitous violence” (11). I draw on Rodriguez’s work on violence and carcerality in this chapter because it helps me to locate the central role of violence in the production of the carcerality that is the Tongan Nationalist Family. Rodriguez writes further about violence within the “prison regime”: the “prison regime’s constitutive technology of violence” as “The sanctioning and exercise of dominion (absolute ownership and ‘inner power’) over its human captives” (44). Rodriguez’s theories on the centrality and utility of violence within carceral spaces sheds light on the centrality of violence within the Tongan Nationalist Family as a technology for “sanctioning and exercise of dominion” of the new regimes of power symbolized by the centering of a new Tongan nation under the hegemony of the Tupou monarchy and the new white and male Christian deity and the new system of heteropatriarchy.

Furthermore, in this chapter and throughout this dissertation, I often refer to the discursive “gratuitous violence” that takes place in Tonga after the arrival of European settlers as patriarchal violence because this form of violence imported from Europe was preoccupied with and it specifically targeted the bodies of Tongan women and girls. In her important work, Paula Gunn Allen documents about the import of the phenomenon of violence against Indigenous women that is a production that began with the coming of European settlers, “The devaluation of women that has accompanied Christianization and westernization is not a simple matter of loss of status. It also involves increases in violence against women by men, a phenomenon not experienced until recently and largely attributable to colonization and to westernization” (Gunn Allen, 202). Thus, I return to Fanon’s point made earlier about the political objectives of the colonial familial spatiality that he terms the “white family,” he argued that this spatiality served as “the workshop in which one is shaped and trained for life in society” (Fanon).

I use Fanon’s argument in my analysis and I put it in dialogue with Rodriguez and Gunn Allen’s theories that shed light on the centrality of “gratuitous violence” in the production of the “prison regime” or carceral spatiality and I argue that in Tonga, like in many other Indigenous lands, European settlers specifically targeted the bodies of women and girls and these political tenets and objectives undergird the production of the Tongan Nationalist Family. I contend that as a “racialized project” the Tongan Nationalist Family serves as a “workshop” to inculcate Tonganness to the normalization and urgency of the technology of violence against women. One that can help maintain the new status quo not only within the intimate and private spatiality of the Tongan family but heartbreakingly, the normalization and centrality of violence against women undergirds the processes of maintaining order in the larger Tongan nation. I show this in my telling of a paradigmatic narrative that depicts, Taufa'ahau, the “Father of the Tongan nation” in a historical moment that centers his deployment of patriarchal violence to desecrate the Sacred, the Feminine.
Legislating the Family Through Law and Order

Luana Ross elucidates that settler colonialists produced systemic racialization through jurisprudence and the purpose of these new adjudications were to “coerce” Natives to “deference” to the new norms and order legislated by their colonizers “laws has repeatedly been used in this country to coerce racial/ethnic group deference to Euro-American power” (12). Ross’s poignant argument is elucidated in the systemic production of the Tongan Nationalist Family through the implementation of new laws and policies such as: Code of Vavau 1839, The 1850 Code of Laws, The 1862 Code of Laws that are edited and consolidated into the Constitution of Tonga, 1875. The Constitution was a major official document—authored by British Methodist Missionary Shirley Baker—that tried to locate Tonganness on the Western trajectory of “progress” that historian Noel Rutherford contends, “marked a major step in Tonga’s progress towards becoming a modern civilized state” (76). The opening section of the Constitution explicitly delineates these new colonial power stratifications and hegemonies:

Seeing it appears to be the Will of [Christian] God for man to be free, as He has made of one blood all nations of men, therefore shall the people of Tonga be forever free, and all the people who reside or may reside in this kingdom. And the lives and bodies and time of all people shall be free to possess and acquire property, all doing as they like with the fruit of their hands, and using own property as they may see fit. (qtd. in Latukefu 252)

The opening statement of this official national document unequivocally maps the contours of the new Tongan hierarchies and power stratifications and it explicitly demarcates the “deviant” Tongan pasts from the futurity of “progress” and enlightenment made possible through the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine.

In addition, I want to point out that the Constitution is an official document that legislate the normalization of violence against Tongan women and thus, the new laws of the nation continues to replicate the colonial legacy of the desecration of the Sacred, a gendered and racialized violence, that the nation is founded upon. In the very beginning and at the top of the hierarchy, the Constitution unequivocally centers the European’s white male and Christian deity at the forefront of the Tongan nation. Returning to my analysis of the Constitution, the Tongan nation’s continued colonial legacy of severing va with the Sacred is proliferated and it intervenes into Tongan futurities through the systemic severing of land and the natural world into commodities of private land ownership laws that align with the Western values and desires of individualism and capitalism and to further aggravate the gapping wound, the new laws of the Constitution allocate the privileges of private land ownership only to Tongan men while it marginalizes Tongan women from this new political system. The systemic compartmentalization and severing of land that privilege Tongan men produces new forms of va that are legislated in Clause 125: “This is a law of inheritance: It is lawful for those only born in marriage to inherit. The law of inheritance shall be to the senior male child and the heirs of his body; and so on until all the male line is ended” (qtd. in Latukefu 281). Private land ownership is a colonial apparatus for producing new Tongan va that is disconnected from the land, the natural world, that constitutes the Sacred. Furthermore, the Constitution highlights the production of new colonial power stratifications that are contingent on colonial gender roles and definitions, and the new laws marginalize Tongan women’s mana within their familial spatialities through limiting their power constituted through legislating their relationship ties to the land. These new norms are a form of patriarchal violence that aims to sever Tongan women’s va to the Sacred, the source of Tongan women’s mana and self-determination.
In addition, the *Constitution* also continues the desecration of the Sacred through legislating the criminalization of Tongan women’s agency and ownership of their own bodies through adjudicating legal restrictions on reproduction rights and abortion and furthermore, the institutionalization of heteropatriarchal marriage is privileged and thus, the multiple forms of intimacies and sexualities outside of heteropatriarchy are criminalized. Under the new laws, the institution of marriage can only be officiated by Christian Churches and their leaders, “All the marriages celebrated in the Wesleyan and Papal churches by their ministers shall be valid, and the King and chiefs will protect them if they be according to these laws” (qtd. in Latukefu 242). These systems of patriarchal violence that aimed to surveil Tongan women’s bodies, agency and self-determination are abhorrent changes to the Tongan political landscape that was legislated by European foreigners in the nineteenth century and these laws and cultural norms continues to produce gross imbalances that is a colonial legacy disproportionately carried by Tongan women and girls. As I attempt to discuss more in detail in Chapter 5, according to a national study on domestic violence conducted in 2009 and released in 2012, 77% of Tongan women are physically or sexually abused in the twenty-first century. These numbers are alarming but yet, they are also conservative renderings of the ghastly reality of the prodigious hand of patriarchal violence that define the contemporaneous shape of Tongan women and girls lives under the hand of the new colonial regimes that was founded on the historical desecration of the Tongan Sacred.

The spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family is an institution that is central in the colonial project because it “naturalizes” this new status quo as well as it consolidates and acculturates these new laws and replicates them into every day Tongan life especially within the private contours of intimate va. Recalling Frantz Fanon’s statement about the role of the colonial family or what he terms as “The white family,” “In Europe and in every country characterized as civilized or civilizing, the family is a miniature of the nation” (142). Thus, the Tongan Nationalist Family is one of the first major official “racialized projects” that is a production of “progress” aimed to “civilize” Tonganness through normalizing the historical desecration of the Sacred through legislating new jurisprudence that marginalize Tongan women’s mana and va with the land, surveil Tongan women’s positionalities of power within the family and nation constituted through normalizing violence against women as a technology for maintaining order and the politics of the new colonial status quo.

**White Supremacy, European Settlers and Normalizing Patriarchal Violence**

This section briefly examines the histories of early European settlers in Tonga that begin with the Dutch explorers Schouten and Le Maire in 1666, to Captain Cook’s three historical voyages that take place between 1774–1777 to the arrival of the British Christian missionaries in 1797. Although these settlers arrive from two respectively different European nations, that include the Netherlands and England, I attempt to show that the white European settlers shared a collective belief in the institution of White supremacy and they, respectively, and uniquely produced “racialized projects” that relied on their deployment of unfettered violence on Tonganness that is a phenomenon termed as “white terror.”

Frantz Fanon poignantly states, “The colonial subject is always ‘overdetermined from without,’ … It is through image and fantasy— those orders that figure transgressively on the borders of history and the unconscious” (Bhabha xxvi). For as he posits in *Wretched of the Earth*, according to the colonial mind, “The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents
not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values...he is the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he is the deforming element, disfiguring all that has to do with beauty and morality; he is the depository of maleficient powers” (41). Thus, the colonial project that the European explorers and Christian missionaries carried out in Tonga viewed Tonga and Tonganness as Fanon terms, “overdetermined from without” due to their core white supremacist belief that Tonganness, was, “declared insensible to ethics; he [Tongan native] represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values...he is the absolute evil” (Bhabha xxvi, 41). Correspondingly, the European technology of linear time and linear thinking, painted the “Native” pejoratively, while on the other hand, painted Europeans as the opposite of the “Native” symbolizing all that is good.

_Theorizing White Terror_

Consider for example the colonial state of Tonganness as “overdetermined from without” that dictated the shape of the colonial violence that the European settlers’ deployed, often unremittingly and indiscriminately, in the early first encounters with Tongan Natives in three notable historical moments that symbolize celebratory movements towards “progress” in colonial text (Bhabha xxvi). And yet, as I attempt to show, these historical moments produced a legacy of “white terror” a phenomenon described by Mike Hill as, “White terror” is terrifying because the struggle to remain ‘undistinguished’- the struggle to be ordinary, to be as passive as omnipresent, as invisible as dominant, to be an essential feature of every life and yet unaccountable” (2). I also utilize Beth Ritchie’s theory of “prison nation” to further contextualize the phenomenon of European “white terror” in Tonga that began in the seventeenth century with the arrival of the first Europeans. Beth Richie contends, “The political apparatus that goes into building a prison nation” (3) and she names them. First, “Practices that increasingly punish or disadvantage norm violations” (3) and second, “institutional regulations designed to intimidate people without power into conforming with dominant cultural expectations” and I jump to Ritchie’s fourth point that is also relevant in our discussion on the production of the colonial familial spatiality.

“Ideological schemes that build consensus around conservative values (the primacy of heterosexual nuclear families)” and lastly, Ritchie profoundly highlights the primacy of fear in the production of “prison nation”: “A prison nation depends on the ability...to create fear...and to reclassify people as enemies of a stable society” (3). Thus, Ritchie’s theory of “prison nation” is informative and she assists me to contextualize the historical production of “white terror” that are demonstrated in the three distinctive and respective historical examples that I share in the next sections. The European deployment of histories of “white terror” is unequivocally a “racialized project” aimed to incarcerate Tonganness through its unrelenting deployments of “gratuitous violence” that include punishment, intimidation, legislation of va through institutionalizing the nuclear family and it also renders productions of “fear” mongering to classify “peoples as enemies of a stable state” and furthermore, the objectives of “white terror” in Tonga aims to render Tonganness as “Other” and as enemy. In addition, the violence that shapes the phenomenon “white terror” as Ritchie has suggested in her term “prison nation” legislates the boundaries of the “heterosexual nuclear family” that is unrelentingly gendered and it disproportionately targets and surveils the bodies of Tongan women and girls. I highlight and draw out these themes in my analysis of “white terror.”
Dutch Explorers and White Terror

The first historical moment of “white terror” transpired in 1616 and this ghastly horror and destruction memorializes the arrival of the first Europeans to Tonga, the Dutch explorers Schouten and Le Maire in 1616. I attempt to demonstrate that the European settlers’ deployment of the technology of “white terror” to produce dominion over Tonganness is not isolated to Tonga alone for as Frantz Fanon notes, “Colonialism’s condemnation is continental in its scope” (211). For this patriarchal violence forges and defines the legacy of relationality between European settlers with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous lands throughout the world; a phenomenon what noted historian Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz terms in her influential book, An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States, a “world system of colonization” (4).

In 1614, a Dutch capitalist named Isacc Le Maire “founded his own maritime company, the Australische Compagnie, in order to find a second western route to Asia” (Van Groesen 77). Le Maire’s project was motivated by a desire for capitalist consumption and domination with objectives to counter the state-sponsored, Dutch East India Company’s monopoly of “international trade in pepper and spices” (80) that was never theirs to own in the first place. To clarify, their capitalist desires required the extrapolation and exploitation of the natural resources of cultures and nations that the European gaze marked as “Other” that included many countries in Asia. Thus, the capitalist desires for individual ownership and accumulation of the “Other” undergird Isacc Le Maire’s maneuvers and he “financed a small fleet of two ships, the Eendracht and the Hoorn, and appointed his son Jacob Le Maire and the experienced captain Willem Cornelisz Schouten as leaders of the venture” (80). Two years later, we jump to the historical moment in 1616 when the Dutch sailors first encounter Tonganness, or as Deborah Miranda writes about the historical moment of encounter between California Indians and their Spanish colonizers, “The key word here is not, in fact, encounter, but destruction” (257). This moment is significant because it is the first recorded encounter between Tongans with Europeans; but since this poignant moment is marred by European “destruction,” this moment serves as a harbinger of the antagonistic political landscape that lies ahead for Tonganness in their interactions with Europeans. “After sailing an amazing one-sixth of the circumference of the Earth from the bottom of South America without sighing any land,” the Dutch Eendracht finally encounters a Tongan tongiaki that is inhabited by what is described as a “cozy family relationship” and the tongiaki crew consisted of unarmed Tongan women, children, elders, and men. The Tongan tongiaki was superior in its technology to the European ship and “mov[ed] faster than the European ship, looking well organized and comfortable out of sight of land” (Purdue 106). On this historical moment, the Eendracht was sailing “just north of Niuatoputapu, Tonga” and when the Dutch first encountered the Tongan tongiaki that consisted of unarmed Tongan families: “They [the Dutch sailors Le Maire and Schouten] fired warning shots to stop them. When the Pacific islanders did not stop, they shot some [of the people] and that stopped them” (104). This historical moment memorializing the first recorded encounter between Tongans with Europeans delineates “white terror” produced by the Dutch explorers at the moment of contact. This moment also unfortunately serves as a harbinger of the legacies of European goals and interactions in Tonga and it’s a foretelling of the upcoming histories of “white terror” that lies ahead for Tonganness.

Before moving to my analysis of the next historical moment of colonial encounter and “white terror” in Tonga, I return to a brief analysis of the Dutch sailors deployment of guns as weapons to enact patriarchal violence or “white terror on Tonganness and in turn, to incite
suffering and even death as a strategy for marking their dominion over Tonganness. Frantz Fanon astutely notes about colonial violence, a type of violence that I deliberately term throughout this dissertation project as patriarchal violence. He contends, “It is true that weapons are important when violence comes into play” and understanding the specificity of the “weapons” deployed are “important when violence comes into play” (64). As I attempt to show in this short section, an analysis of the colonists’ “weapons” helps us to better conceptualize the breadth and perhaps the European colonizers’ psychological intentions or what Fanon terms the colonists’ “perverted logic,” a colonial psychological condition that I attempt to examine later on in this chapter, that undergird the European’s deployment of guns and their enactments of unyielding patriarchal violence with the objective to desecrate the Tongan Sacred.

In her book, Loaded: A Disarming History of the Second Amendment, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, helps to shed some light on the Dutch’s “perverted logic” that undergird their deployment of guns on Tonganness at the historical moment of contact in 1616. Dunbar-Ortiz writes, “Guns are made for killing and while nearly anything including human hands, may be used to kill, only the gun is created for the specific purpose of killing a living creature” (4). In addition, Dunbar-Ortiz’s research also traces the historical deployment of firearms and guns in early U.S. history to preserve the institutions of settler colonialisms and white supremacy. She posits that the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that is often cited by gun-rights activists and organizations throughout the U.S. “gave [White] individuals and families the right to form volunteer militias to attack Indians and to take their land” (4). Dunbar-Ortiz’s research helps us to view the deployment of guns as an act that is intentional, deliberate and precise in its intentions, “only the gun is created for the specific purpose of killing a living creature” and furthermore, she also presents another important historical fact that helps us to better conceptualize the breadth of the Dutch violence that took place in 1616 in Tonga (4). Dunbar-Ortiz’s research shows us that the inception and desire to deploy guns and firearms are deeply rooted in European white supremacist desires for conquest and surveillance of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous lands and these are the political objectives that frame the Europeans’ deployment of “white terror.”

The European’s deployment of guns at the moment of contact with Tongans are summed up by Fanon in his statement “To put it briefly, the triumph of violence depends upon the production of armaments” (64). Thus, its important to map the chronology and layers of the production of the violence that took place on Tongan waters. The Dutch explorers’ motivated by white supremacist motivations that include the intentions, inception and deployment of violence through the use of guns and fire arms are a project that took place in Europe and the materiality of these intentions were enacted in the Dutch deployment of “White terror” utilizing firearms on the bodies of unarmed Tongans they encountered in 1616. Thus, the Dutch explorers’ deployment of “White terror” at the moment of contact with Tonganness that transpired on Tongan waters, depicts the inextricable link between intention and material performance that amalgamate and are embodied in the phenomenon of “White terror” and they show us how these unique and respective threads of violence that takes place in Europe as well as the material violence that transpires on Tongan waters are layers of the phenomenon of “white terror” and these cycles constitute each other as well as they are constituted by each other.

Fanon adds more clarity to this analysis that attempts to look at the motivations that undergird the Dutch deployment of firearms and he also shows us what this historical moment tells us about the psychology of the colonist. Fanon explains, “Violence is not simply an act of will but needs for its realization certain very concrete preliminary conditions, and in particular
the implements of violence” (64). The “very concrete preliminary conditions” that motivate the violence that the Dutch committed on Tongan waters are the consequences of the desires of white supremacy. Fanon’s argument allows us to view the vast differences between the Tongan mind and the colonial mind that is enacted in the historical moment in 1616. In fact, Fanon’s point helps us to see that the Dutch’s deployment of firearms on unarmed Tongans at the moment of contact, is not sporadic nor does it fall out of context for the Europeans for as Fanon elucidates, “Violence is not simply an act of will” but the destruction caused by the Dutch’s deployment of “white terror” on that fateful moment in 1616 was part of a genealogy and cycle of violence that the Dutch and other Europeans were already complicit in producing prior to their encounter with Tonganness.

Consider for a moment that when the Dutch sailors first encountered Tonganness on the vast ocean that day in 1616, they encountered the tongiaki, an exceptional sailing vessel produced with knowledges and technology that perhaps even surpassed the technology of the sailing vessels that they had in Europe, “here on the other side of the world the Europeans encountered people with sailing machines par excellence, multi-hulls which could sail faster than their own larger ships” (Purdue 105). The Tongan tongiaki navigators held the expertise and knowledges about both land and ocean that were extensive and yet, I want to point out here that the Tongan ancestors, with all their astute knowledges and expertise at constructing complex and sophisticated structures, sciences, and technologies, chose not to limit their talents, knowledges, and the boundaries of their imaginations into producing firearms because Tongans did not have a preoccupation with patriarchal violence at this time in our histories. I want to emphatically state that the preoccupation with patriarchal violence was an import from the Europeans and this is not a Tongan “tradition” and it is contradictory to Tongan cosmologies, genealogies and economies of va.

In my examination of “white terror,” I also draw connections to California, since this is a site that I refer to often in this chapter and dissertation project especially in the last section of this essay because California is the site that I have created a new home and it is also through my intellectual and activist work with California’s Indigenous peoples that has helped me to imagine and to better contextualize Tongan histories with a critical voice. In his informative work on California histories, Benjamin Madley documents in American Genocide: The United States and the California Indian Catastrophe, 1846–1873, that the European deployment of violence in California introduced a new political landscape where warfare is centered, “California Indians did have violent conflicts with each other before contact with Europeans, but warfare does not seem to have dominated their lives” (25). The European preoccupation with violence is a theme that is addressed in a quote taken from the writings of the Englishman William Mariner that lived in Tonga during the early-nineteenth century, that offers an example where Tongans appropriated the European weaponry of firearms and thus, they had access to produce unfettered violence and geographies of terror on their enemies and yet this example shows that unlike the Europeans’ the Tongans were governed by principles and values and they had restrictions and limitations in their deployment of the weaponry. Their goals were not determined by an intention and preoccupation for relentless violence, “Tongan chiefs refused to use cannon fire against foot soldiers, for it was considered cowardly simply to mow down the enemy” (Mariner qtd. in Gailey 164). Thus, I return to my point that the European “racialized projects” deployment of the phenomenon of “white terror” shows its multiple layers and complications that include both intentions and desires that are produced and materially deployed in multiple global sites to
produce what Deborah Miranda terms as historical “destruction” on the lives of Indigenous peoples here in California as well as Indigenous peoples in Tonga and throughout Moana Nui.

Before moving to my next discussion, I want to briefly remark on an important phenomenon that transpired during this historical moment that is often silenced in the telling of this narrative. In the face of the European firearms, weapons created, precisely, with the intent to incite “white terror” and destruction at the moment of first contact, our Tongan ancestors were steadfast and they refused to acquiesce. In an interview with Radio New Zealand, Tongan scholar Malakai Kolomatangi explicates that the Tongans, “They weren't passive actors” (Kolomatangi Radio NZ) and they memorialized their resistance against the Dutch in the family names that they still carry today, “The encounter has actually been memorialised and remembered through the creation of Tongan family names. There’s a name called Vakata—Vaka is boat and ta is to hit. So Vakata is to hit the boat and also the name Tauvaka” (Kolomatangi, Radio NZ). Tauvaka means to be at war with the vaka or the Dutch ship that incited “white terror” on unarmed Tongans. The narratives telling of our Tongan ancestors’ resistance against colonialisms in the past are important knowledges to acknowledge especially at this contemporaneous moment when we have been inculcated to believe the colonial myths that recite that acquiescing to our colonizers are our only options. Our Tongan ancestors’ courageous struggles for self-determination against the prying hands of Western colonialisms of the past continues to guide and nourish our lives today as we honor their legacies in our commitments and in our struggles for Tongan self-determination in our everyday lives as well as these histories that remember our Tongan ancestors’ resistance shape the formations of the dreams that we share with our Tongan ancestors of the future. Our resistance against colonialisms defines our legacies of Tonganness.

*Captain Cook and White Terror*

The next section briefly examines the histories of “white terror” that take place between British Captain James Cook and Tonganness. If the earlier Dutch settlers to Tonga deployed guns and firearms as a technology for producing and enforcing patriarchal violence at the moment of contact, than Cook’s legacy in Tonga deployed the gun to produce “white terror” especially for reinforcing violence against women as a technology imperative for fulfilling colonial objectives and thus, Cooks legacy drastically changes the Tongan political landscape making it vulnerable for the arrival of the Christian missionizing project and their quintessential systemic project that aimed to desecrate the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine. Cook’s legacy in Tonga was to make Tonganness into what Jodi A. Byrd terms a “state of possession”:

Cook’s exalted subjectivity possesses land in the name of the British crown and possesses Whiteness as preeminent ownership within the logics of capitalism, is the site of the dialectic of sovereignty that functions similarly to Agamben’s state of exception where the state-in contradiction to indigenous peoples’ own ontologies of relation and power—enacts sovereignty as ontological possession, delineating what is and is not possessed. (22)

Perhaps this example of Byrd’s theory of Cook’s “state of possession” highlighting “possesses land in the name of the British crown and possesses Whiteness as preeminent ownership” and thus, “delineating what is and is not possessed” by Indigenous peoples can best illustrated in Patty O’Brien’s informative book, The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific. She reveals how Cook deployed the institutions of white supremacy and
patriarchal ownership as technologies that specifically targeted the surveillance and disciplining of Pacific Islander women’s bodies and sexualities during his three historical voyages to the Pacific, “The complexity of women’s lives had been restructured to accommodate the sexual ‘needs’ of his men. These ‘needs’ were based upon male sexual gratification” (90). In addition, “This change made female sexual pleasure expendable and all sexual interactions by being equated with her ability to satisfy her [male] partner” (90). O’Brien further argues, “The stereotype of the Pacific muse held that island women were willing to provide sexual pleasure for men without demanding anything beyond trinkets in return. It was their ability to please white men that was portrayed as the pleasure women gained from the encounter” (90). O’Brien’s work elucidates that Cook’s voyages instituted new systems of va in Pacific nations such as the implementation of Western gender roles for women that centered the values of white supremacy and male domination and thus these new laws produced female subjugation and in addition, these newly implemented Western gender roles also inevitably leads to the centering of heteropatriarchy within intimate va founded within the spatiality of the family. These new systems of European patriarchal domination that are manifested in the formation of new systems of Tongan relationalities, inevitably, also lends to the normalization of the technology of violence against women as a means for surveilling Tongan and Pacific women’s bodies and sexualities. Cook’s deployment of “white terror” reinforces the colonial tropes of surveillance, domination, and the deployment of patriarchal violence as a pivotal technology for maintaining discipline and surveillance of Pacific and Tongan women’s bodies and sexualities. These colonial tropes and practices undergirds Cook’s “state of possession” with Tonganness (Byrd 22).

The Christian Missionizing Project and White Terror

The last historical moment that I look at is the arrival of the first Christian missionaries arrived in 1797 led by Captain Wilson and sponsored by the London Missionary Society (LMS). The legacy of the Christian missionaries are perhaps some of the most significant moments that illustrates Fanon’s statement about European colonizers as, “the bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native” (Fanon 38). I show how the Christian missionizing project were the “bringers” of “white terror” on Tonganness that is a prodigious legacy that contemporaneous Tonganness must contend with. In his discussion of the colonial productions as “bringer of violence” Fanon contends, “I speak of the Christian religion, and no one need be astonished. The Church in the colonies is the white people’s Church, the foreigner’s Church. She does not call the native to God’s ways but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor” (42). I keep this section brief because the next sections of this chapter trace and analyze the historical legacy of privileging the white male Christian God in Tonga, a legacy that is produced by and maintained through the heinous desecration of the Tongan Sacred.

In this section of the chapter I retell a definitive colonial narrative that memorializes Taufa‘ahau’s legacy as “Father of the nation,” and his paradigmatic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine that is inclusive of the natural world, including the land and ocean and the innumerable worlds in between, and as I argue throughout this dissertation, the Sacred is the heartbeat of Tonganness and it is at the center of Tongan systems of va. The Sacred contains what Indigenous peoples all around the globe term as “original instructions” that Citizen Potawatomi Nation scientist Robin Wall Kimmerer describes, “These are not ‘instructions’ like commandments, through, or rules; rather, they are like a compass: They provide an orientation
not a map” (7). Like a compass, “the original instructions” orient us to protocols, economies of intimacies, relationalities, and systems of living in reciprocity with the multiple living economies and cycles that we as human beings are a part of. Taufa’ahau’s historical performance of colonial or patriarchal violence deployed to sever his va with the Sacred through the desecration of the Sacred is an important colonial text that serves as evidence of the legitimacy of his conversion and allegiance to the Christian God.

In fact, this historical moment is memorialized and still centered today because of the work of early Christian missionaries to ensure that this narrative not only survives but is read as a legitimate text documenting Tongan “tradition.” The European Christian missionaries translated the narrative from a newly converted Tongan, Peter Vi. We are told that the narrative is Vi’s “authentic” eye-witness account and it comes straight from the mouth of the Native. Vi’s account is translated into English, published and proliferated throughout England. The narrative is self-evident bearing witness to the veracity of White supremacy and heteropatriarchy and it shows the omnipresent Christian God that is centered all around the globe, and his reach transcends even to the distant shores of Moana Nui. Concomitantly, the narrative is utilized as a text to inculcate Tonganness to the veracity of White supremacy and to the utility and efficacy of heteropatriarchy in their everyday lives and in their contemporaneous productions of Tonganness.

In my analysis of the narrative, I show that the political intentions of the new European religion in Tonga, Christianity, “does not call the native to God’s ways but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor.(Fanon 42)” Thus, I show the layers of the colonial process of “call[ing] the native to…the ways of the white man” through my analysis of Western linear time and its severing of Tongan time and space into “Time of light” or the time after the arrival of the Christians that is contrasted with the “Time of darkness,” or the time before the coming of the Christians (42). These are points that the late Tongan historian and Methodist Reverend, Sione Latukefu, writes about in Church and State in Tonga. He notes, “The Christian missionaries believed that, “the traditional way of life in Tonga was… a means used by the devil to destroy the souls of the Tongans and to obstruct the cause of the Almighty, and since the missionaries believed that they were recruited to carry out Jehovah’s war against the devil, they could make no compromise” (41). The historical process that Latukefu terms as “Jehovah’s war against the devil” is a historical deployment of unfettered and unyielding patriarchal violence or “white terror” to “convert” Tonganness to Christianity.

**Taufa’ahau and the Performance of Patriarchal Violence**

“One of the major justifications presented by the first missionaries for their activities in Polynesia was the ‘depravity’ of ‘degradation’ of the women” (Ward Gailey 153). Thus, this section looks at a narrative often termed as a Tongan “origin story” that centers on the Christian response to Tongan women’s imagined “depravity” and “degradation.” This narrative memorializes Taufa’ahau’s performance of the legitimacy of his conversion and new allegiance to Christianity. Taufa’ahau’s performance centers the laws of colonial masculinity that is manifested through his desecration of the Sacred and his deployment of violence against women.

The aims of the performance were to bear witness to the supremacy of the new White male Christian God over the Tongan Sacred and in retrospect, to display European supremacy and dominion over Tonganness. Interestingly, as the narrative unfolds, we are informed that this historical moment was memorialized and authenticated by a Tongan eye-witness, the newly
converted Tongan Commoner, Pita Vi. Vi’s eye-witness account of Taufa’ahau’s performance was later translated into the English language, published and reproduced for wide public consumption in England. Here is a shortened version of the narrative that is retold by Sione Latukefu in his seminal book, *Church and State in Tonga*:

Taufa’ahau wanted to test the validity and power of the old gods and to discover by experience whether Jehovah was the only true God...Then one day he took Pita Vi and others with him to test the power of the god Ha’e ha’e tahi. One their arrival at the house of the god’s priestess, Taufa’ahau asked her to let the god come so that they could have kava together.

The old priestess became inspired by Ha’e ha’e tahi; and, in the meanwhile, Taufa’ahau had prepared a great drinking cup [of kava]. The [kava] cup was filled and handed by Taufa’ahau to the priestess; but, while her face was turned upwards, in the act of drinking off its contents, Taufa’ahau struck her a great blow on the forehead, which sent the god (or priestess) rolling on the ground. He then gave her another blow, and, raising a shout of victory, cried out that the god was slain. (64)

Frantz Fanon astutely posits, “The colonized man will first manifest his aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones against his own people” (52). Thus, as a colonial subject, and as the narrative reveals, Taufa’ahau’s deliberate performance of “aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones” by European colonizers follows in a genealogy of European patriarchal violence and “white terror” that is deliberately aimed “against his own people” (52). Furthermore, Taufa’ahau’s “aggressiveness...against his own people,” is a colonial phenomenon that Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson explicate in their edited book, *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*, “The ways in which hegemonic masculinity has acted to subordinate Indigenous men encourages them to similarly assert power and control by subordinating Indigenous women” (11). Taufa’ahau’s “aggressiveness” aimed at “his own [Tongan] people” deliberately focused on the desecration of the Sacred that is embodied and represented by the Elder woman (Fanon 52). The desecration of the Sacred was, precisely, the quintessential objective of the colonial project in Tonga.

Historian Noel Rutherford documents that the colonial process of making the Tongan nation required Taufa’ahau’s promulgation and acceptance of many new “legal and constitutional reforms...” (85). All documents authored by Westerners such as the European Methodist missionary Shirley Baker rose to political eminence in Tonga were during Taufa’ahau’s reign. Thus, Taufa’ahau envisioned that his performances of complicity to these new Western political changes that included the institutionalization of legislation and jurisprudence that was vehemently antagonistic to Tongan values as well as his public conversion to Christianity at the price of the Tongan Sacred would help to alleviate the horrors of “white terror” and these were efforts aimed to assuage the insatiable hand of Western colonialisms from infringing on the already small and meager crumbs that was left of Tongan sovereignty. Rutherford writes:

[Taufa’ahau] was convinced that the only way to ensure Tonga’s independence was to have it recognized by the Powers, and that the Powers would only recognize a state which could show tangible evidence of being “civilised.” He had learned “that the only way to remain Tongan was to appear western.” (85)

As the earlier narrative illustrates, one of the most politically efficacious performances of Taufa’ahau attempting to “appear Western” was his performance of deploying patriarchal violence and desecrating the body of a Sacred Elder woman. Thus, the cycle of violence that this
narrative depicts are as Scott L. Morgensen describes, “Violence continued, because colonization itself is violence; but it also was elaborated as modes of policing, reeducation, and assimilation…” (45).

A paradigmatic performance of “assimilation” that reveals Maori scholar Brandan Hokowhitu’s postulation shared in his work on Maori masculinities, “masculinity cannot be analyzed merely from a contemporary snap-shot; masculinity is a historical construction” (Hokowhitu 264). Taufa’ahau’s performance of “white terror” is as Jose Esteban Munoz describes aims to, “enact a mode of ‘manliness’ that is calibrated to shut down queer possibilities and energies” (58). Taufa’ahau’s desecration of the Sacred participated in a performance of “manliness” that aims to project a “regime of power that labors to invalidate, exclude and extinguish faggotry, effeminacy…” (58). Taufa’ahau’s desecration of the Sacred was a “baptism” defined by Anne McClintock as, a ritual that “the child is named after the father, not the mother” (29). This “baptism” or disavowing and “cleansing” of “the mother” was constituted through Taufa’ahau’s paradigmatic desecration of the Sacred Elder woman as a symbol of “era of darkness” (Hau‘ofa 28). A cleansing to “extinguish faggotry, effeminacy [and his va with the Sacred]” and all other forms of racialized “depravity” that Tonganness represented in the European and Christian mind. Taufa’ahau’s performativity of colonial manhood or “white terror” is, in fact, the evidence that depicted the legitimacy of his conversion and it also unequivocally highlights his new allegiance to the White male, Christian God in his attempt “to appear western” and to perform the colonial desire of Tonganness (85).

Last, Taufa’ahau’s desecration of the Sacred was an enactment of a psychological phenomenon that Fanon terms, “epidermalization of his inferiority” (Saadar xiii):

When the black man comes into contact with the white world he goes through an experience of sensitization. His ego collapses. His self-esteem evaporates. He ceases to be a self-motivated person. The entire purpose of his behavior is to emulate the white man, to become like him, and thus hope to be accepted as a man. (Saadar xiii)

Fanon succinctly defines this phenomenon in his important book Black Skin, White Masks, “For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man” (110). Taufa’ahau’s performativity of violence against Tongan women and desecrating the Sacred was, ironically, a depiction that verified the very racialized stereotype of the “savagery” of Tonganness that dominated the European mind, while the enactment of violence against the Sacred woman’s body was, precisely, Taufa’ahau’s performativity of being Tongan in “relation to the white man” and proving the legitimacy of his conversion to the white man’s religion. Furthermore, this was a performance saturated with Taufa’ahau’s desires, “hope to be accepted as a man” (Saadar xiii). Taufa’ahau hoped that in the British gaze, Tonganness would be accepted as a man and he believed that these changes might help to allay the insatiable British hunger for the domination of Tonganness. Thus, it is imperative to note that even with all the losses, and even after all his work and sacrifices to create historical changes that attempted to make “Tonga appear more Western” that included histories of copious bloodshed, massacres, and the irreparable losses that are the legacies of the desecration of the Sacred, etc., the British Government officials in the late-nineteenth century officially and adamantly withheld “recognition” of Tonga as a “civilized state” (Rutherford 87).

Taufa’ahau’s historical performativity of manhood contingent on the heinous desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine followed the map of manhood legislated by the genealogy of European “white terror” on Tonganness. Unfortunately, for Taufa’ahau and for Tonganness, his performance of desecrating the Sacred was a historical moment where he was confronted with
the psychological state that Fanon terms, the “epidermalization of his inferiority,” and as the British colonizers demonstrated, even after all the losses that Taufa‘ahau enacted to make Tonga “appear more Western,” Tonganness will always be denied the “recognition” of a “civilized state” or as Fanon argues, “for not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man” and under the regimes of white supremacy and “racialized projects,” Tonganness will always be “Other” (110).

Consequently, I end this section by sharing a statement made by Dean Spade, a trans activist and scholar, in his compelling chapter, *Their Laws Will Never Us Safer*. Spade profoundly contends, “The ability to recognize that an enticing invitation to inclusion is not actually going to address the worst forms of violence affecting us, and is actually going to expand the apparatuses that perpetuate them” (10). As the “Father of the nation,” Taufa‘ahau’s performativity of desecration on the body of our Sacred Elder woman is a violence that materialized and internalized “white terror” and the colonial “apparatuses that perpetuate them” into our contemporaneous Tongan lives and into the contours of our va with each other extending to the intimate boundaries of our families. These histories and legacies of “white terror” in all its multifarious and salient manifestations are consolidated and normalized in the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family.

The Violence of Western Linear Time

This section continues my examination of “white terror” and the layers of the patriarchal violence that European’s deployed on Tonganness as strategies to produce Tonga into a carceral state or “prison nation” to locate Tonganness on the trajectory of “progress.” In his important work, *'Epeli Hau'ofa* tracks the maneuvers of colonial violence in the Pacific by examining one of its most egregious and pernicious projects: the legislation of Western linear time. I focus on Hau’ofa’s theories here because I want to show the layers and nuances of the multiple forms of patriarchal violence deployed to colonize Tonganness. Epeli Hau‘ofa points out how this Western allocation of time and space is contrary to the movements of the natural world and thus, it is contradictory to Pacific values and epistemologies:

In the Fijian and Tongan languages, the terms for past are *gauna i liu* and *kuonga mu’a*, respectively—*gauna* and *kuonga* meaning “time” or “age” or “era,” and *liu* and *mu’a* meaning “front” or “ahead.” When Fijian and Tongan preachers or orators point their fingers to the past, they say *gauna i liu* or *kuonga mu’a* and point to the back; they say the appropriate term and point ahead. The conception of the past as ahead or in front of us is not a mere linguistic construction. It has an actual historical basis in the documentation of our oral narratives on our landscapes. (66)

Hau‘ofa reminds us that Pacific time is in alignment with our histories that are based on our “oral narratives” and on our natural “landscapes” (66). In addition, if Pacific time is in alignment with “our oral narratives on our landscapes,” then Hau‘ofa’s theory allows us to view that the colonial technology of linear time is not “natural” and it is in fact a Western social construction that is seeped with political intentions for shaping the lives and futurities of Pacific peoples. I will return to Hau‘ofa’s work highlighting the historical violence that is a consequence of the colonial implementation of technology of Western linear time very shortly in my discussion.

The legislation of Western linear time that leads to the desecration of the Sacred, or what Eduardo Duran, terms as the “Eradication of the Native life-world” is a colonial violence that did not just take place in Tonga but was part of a “world system of colonization” and as Duran
documents, “was attempted through a long process of genocide, ethnocide, and cultural hegemony” that is unyielding in its reach and furthermore, its cycles continue to proliferate today (27). The desecration of the Sacred, the quintessential goal of the Christian colonial project is produced as well as it constitutes the legislation of the colonial technology of linear time that is profoundly described by Linda Tuhiiwai Smith as, a “story of domination” (55). Gloria Anzaldua is in agreement and she notes, “In trying to become ‘objective,’ Western culture made ‘objects’ of things and people when it distanced itself from them, thereby losing ‘touch’ with them. This dichotomy is the root of all violence” (59). Anzaldua further writes about linear time and its hand in producing “split” or dichotomous relationships, “This dichotomy” that she argues “is the root of all violence” (59). It is a practice that was instituted by Christianity, “The Catholic and Protestant religions encourage fear and distrust of life and of the body; they encourage a split between the body and the spirit and totally ignore the soul; they encourage us to kill off parts of ourselves” (59). The processes of “kill off parts of ourselves” are the goals of linear time and as I attempt to show later in this section, the objective of “kill off parts of ourselves” centers on severing Tongan peoples’ va with the Sacred, the Feminine, that is the heartbeat of Tonganness.

Western Linear Time as Colonial Apparatus

Returning to ‘Epeli Hau’ofa’s argument, discussed earlier in this chapter, points out that in the Pacific region, Western linear time is not “natural” and Hau’ofa’s important work allows us to see that linear time is a social construction that is seeped with political objectives for shaping Pacific cultures and peoples. This point is elucidated in his documentation of the deployment of linear time in the production of Pacific histories, “The wholesale condemnation by Christian missionaries of Oceanian cultures as savage, lascivious and barbaric has had a lasting and negative effect on people’s views of their histories and traditions” for as Hau’ofa contends, Pacific histories are severed into two dichotomous spatialities, “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism, and the era of light and civilization ushered in by Christianity” (Hau’ofa 28).

Hau’ofa and Anzaldua’s theories elucidating the “root of all violence” that is inherit in the dichotomous relationship between “era of light” vs “era of darkness” is perhaps best illustrated the colonial narrative that memorializes Taufa’ahau’s desecration of the Sacred that I shared earlier. The colonial narrative highlights the new political objectives that produce “era of light.” As the colonial narrative is told, “Taufa ‘ahau wanted to test the validity and power of the old gods and to discover by experience whether Jehovah was the only true God.” Christianity and its roots in the institution of White supremacy privileged the individual white male Christian God and unlike the Tongan Sacred that is embodied by the Sacred elder woman or the Feminine with her va, that is far reaching and without a beginning or end, she encompasses the wide breadth of Tongan life. For example, it is important to note that the Elder woman was a revered leader in Tonga for she was the caretaker and keeper of a sacred temple that was built on a sacred site or the temple stands on sacred land. Hence, the Sacred elder woman’s va is extensive and it is interconnected to the powerful male Shark God Ha’e ha’e Tahi that lives in the depths of the Moana, deep ocean. Thus, in his objective to desecrate the Sacred, Taufa’ahau’s goals were insatiable and he simultaneously also desecrated his va to the revered and powerful Shark God, Ha’e ha’e Tahi and moreover, he also severed his va to the vast acres of the Moana, our beloved Mother, the Pacific ocean, the vast body of waters that is the homeplace for our shark ancestor Ha’e ha’e Tahi. These are some of the layers of va, and
Tongan ancestral knowledges and respective ancestors that Taufa‘ahau desecrated in his plight to legitimate his conversion into Christianity. In addition, as Taufa‘ahau’s narrative also unfortunately shows us, the coming of the Christians and their “time of light” normalizes the patriarchal deployment of violence against women as a technology that is necessary for maintaining the new status quo that is vastly contradictory and antagonistic to the values and world view of Tonganness.

I return back to Hau‘ofa’s discussion on the legislation of Western linear time and its’ division of Pacific time and space into the “era of light” versus the “era of darkness.” Hau‘ofa posits that this is a colonial technology that marginalizes and criminalizes Pacific pasts as “era of darkness” or into a spatiality that is also often termed as “prehistory.” It is imperative to note that the colonial project located the Sacred within this spatiality as a strategy for instituting its erasure:

Oceania has no history before imperialism, only what is called ‘prehistory’: before history…These comprise a brief prelude to the real thing: history beginning with the arrival of Europeans. As it is, our histories are essentially narratives told in the footnotes of empires. (62)

Hau‘ofa’s profound voice as the Father of Pacific Studies is also remembered in his call to Pacific peoples to question the logics of the Western linear time as a strategy of resistance that traces to the root of our colonialism, what Anzaldúa posits, “is the root of all violence.” Hau‘ofa profoundly argues, “We cannot afford to believe that our histories began only with imperialism or that as peoples and cultures we are the creations of colonialism and Christianity. We cannot afford to have no reference points in our ancient pasts” (76). In addition, I revisit a significant point that Hau‘ofa makes about the importance of Pacific peoples remembering their pasts or what the Christians have termed, “era of darkness” as a strategy for attempting to heal what Anzaldúa has documented was the work of Christianity to “kill off parts of ourselves.” Hau‘ofa reminds Pacific peoples of the importance of remembering the cultural “reference points” that are founded in the spatiality of “in our ancient pasts” as medicine for reinvigorating our contemporaneous Pacific spirits at this time of great crisis and in our struggles against white supremacy, heteropatriarchy and especially in our struggles within the intimate spaces of our own homes and communities to stop the cycles of violence against women that are a legacy of “progress” and a “time of light.”

Similarly, Hau‘ofa astutely reminds Pacific peoples to resist the tenets of “progress” and the current status quo because “When you view most of a people’s past as not history, you shorten very drastically the roots of their culture.” Our great Pacific Studies ancestor, ‘Epeli Hau‘ofa reminds us to resist the Christian classification of our pasts as “era of darkness” and to take upon ourselves a new and decolonial view that locates our Pacific “past” as legitimate histories because they serve as the “roots” of our Pacific cultures and these “roots” remember and trace our va with our Tongan ancestors, especially our Tongan female ancestors, female deities, like the Sacred Elder woman that lost her life under Taufa‘ahau’s hands. Furthermore, we also remember the long lists of Tongan female ancestors whose lives were taken and their names, mana and legacies forgotten, marginalized and disavowed within the contours of the “racialized projects” of “white terror” that are histories legitimated in the name of “progress.”
Heteropatriarchy, and European “Perverted Logic”

In this chapter and throughout this dissertation project, I use the term heteropatriarchy to define a central organizing principle in the colonial “racialized projects” that were historically deployed in the projects of “white terror” by the European explorers, Christians and U.S. military and Mormon missionaries in the 20th and 21st centuries to colonize Tonganness. As M. Jacqui Alexander has argued, “heteropatriarchy functions in ways that supercede the sexual. At this historical moment, for instance, heteropatriarchy is useful in continuing to perpetuate a colonial inheritance (24). In addition, I remind readers of one of the key themes of this chapter discussed in earlier sections, the modern spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family as a Tongan institution that centers heteropatriarchy as organizing principle in defining its boundaries and contours and yet, ironically, these modern and colonial productions are believed to be Tongan “traditions.”

In my analysis of Tongan historical narratives in this chapter and throughout the dissertation project, I posit that heteropatriarchy is a colonially manufactured systems and economies of va, spatialities of intimacies and economies of relationalities that traces its root to the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine and the natural world that includes the fonua (land) and Moana (deep Ocean) and encompasses all the worlds in between. The systemic desecration of the Sacred is supplanted and centered with the new white and male Christian God. I use Frantz Fanon’s important research on the colonial methodology and psychology, “perverted logic” to help me set up my argument that the institutionalization of heteropatriarchy constituted through the desecration of the Sacred was the quintessential goal of the colonial project in Tonga and it strategically aimed to colonize the Tongan native’s past as a strategy for ensuring the subjugation of the Tongan native’s present with aims to lay down roots to ensure the subjugation of the native’s future. Heteropatriarchy is a colonial system that produces as well as it ensures the subjugation of Tonganness.

Frantz Fanon and Perverted Logic

Frantz Fanon in his seminal work, Wretched of the Earth, astutely documents the various technologies that white colonizers strategically deployed to colonize the Third World. He deconstructs the white colonizer’s insatiable desire for power by identifying the psychological root of this desire as an ontology and methodology that he terms, “perverted logic” (210). In fact, Fanon reveals that the “perverted logic” of the colonizer that undergird the colonial project is unrelenting and insatiable in its desires for subjugating the Native, “Perhaps we have not sufficiently demonstrated that colonialism is not simply content to impose its rule upon the present and the future” because this is not enough and to further demonstrate the insatiable appetite of European colonizers,’ Fanon writes, “Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native’s brain of all form and content” because, according to Fanon, the colonizers deployed a strategy that is methodical and strategic and it, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (210).

In Chapter Three of this dissertation as well as this chapter, I attempt to examine the early histories of European colonialisms in Tonga and the respective “racialized projects” that each colonial project instituted on Tonganness through the deployment of various forms of patriarchal violence or “white terror” and dominion over Tonganness that began with the institutionalization of Western linear time and the colonial severing of Tongan time and space is a harrowing process that ‘Epeli Hau‘ofa documents, the “past” or the time before the coming of Christians
was criminalized and everything that existed within this spatiality was systemically denigrated, “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism” (28). Thus, the colonial project in Tonga follows the trajectory that Fanon has documented, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (210). The Tongan “past” was vehemently contrasted to the new spatialities of the present and futurity termed as “the era of light” and these new legitimate spatialities, present and future, reflected the new time line of progress and “civilization ushered in by Christianity” (28). I want to emphatically state that the Tongan Sacred is located within the spatiality that the Christians designated as “past” and “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism” (28).

In my mind, the breadth of this type of colonial project, with the European deployment of unrelenting violence and firearms on the bodies of unarmed Tongan women and men of all ages from children to elders at the moment of first contact is unfathomable and perverse in its cruelty and yet, as I attempt to show in this discussion, the killing of the Tongan body was not enough and they were “not satisfied” and they hungered and reached for more. They aimed for the root of Tonganness; they aimed to sever our va, to our Sacred, the very heartbeat of Tonganness and the source of our mana.

Fanon continues his arguments by reminding us that the strategies and methodologies deployed by colonizers to subjugate the natives were strategic and not “left to chance” (210). In addition, and perhaps most significantly, the colonial desires for domination born out of what he posits is the colonizer’s, “perverted logic” demanded unfettered dominion of “the total” scope, contour and interceding into every crevice of the Native’s life (210). The colonial project desired all of the Native, all sum and “total,” and they refused to settle even for just a partial dominion. In fact, the colonizers’ “perverted logic” desired dominion of everything that the Native owned, the past, the present and the future. Fanon poignantly contends:

When we consider the efforts made to carry out the cultural estrangements so characteristic of the colonial epoch, we realize that nothing has been left to chance and that the total result looked for by colonial domination was indeed to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness. The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarianism, degradation, and bestiality. (211)

Fanon’s clearly points out one of the most potent weapons deployed in the colonial project that aimed for a “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native was to disempower the Native and to eradicate their agency and self-determination and thus “to convince the natives that colonialism came to lighten their darkness. The effect consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives’ heads that the idea that if the settlers were to leave, they would at once fall back into barbarianism, degradation, and bestiality” (211). For as Nadine Gordimer points this out in her introduction chapter to Albert Memmi’s, The Colonizer and the Colonized, “the colonizer justified his/her situation by asserting that the colonizers brought enlightenment, technical as well as religious, to the indigenous people living in the heart of darkness” (32).

The colonial project that aimed for “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native, strategically aimed to define the Native’s past by maligning and marginalizing it, “devaluing precolonial history” a colonial technology and process that Hau‘oafo documents happened in Tonga and in the Pacific region that resulted in the severing of time and space into two dichotomous spatialities, “the era of darkness associated with savagery and barbarianism, and the era of light and civilization ushered in by Christianity” (28). The “devaluing of precolonial history” that included the systemic denigration and the criminalization of the “customs of the colonized
people, their traditions, their myths...are the very sign of that poverty of spirit and of their constitutional depravity” (Fanon 42). In addition, and most significantly, the colonial project located the Tongan Sacred within “prehistory” or “era of darkness” and the new values of the Western linear timeline of “progress” saturated with the colonial values of heteropatriarchy demanded the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, or as I have argued throughout this dissertation project, the Sacred is the heartbeat of Tonganness. Thus, the strategy to desecrate the Sacred was the quintessential goal of the colonial project in Tonga, because to sever the heartbeat of a people is to obliterate their lifeline and their source of mana. This strategy is a means to guarantee that they will remain submissive not only in the present time but it extended its reach to Tongan futurities. The Christians systemically supplanted the losses of the Tongan Sacred, with the centering of the institution of heteropatriarchy that is symbolized by the new white male Christian God at the forefront of the Tongan nation.

In this next section, I include the important research contributions of the Laguna Pueblo/Lebanese writer and scholar Paula Gunn Allen and I use her work to help flesh out the colonist’s psychological state that Fanon terms as “perverted logic” that undergirds the productions and deployments of colonial violence and technologies aimed at a “total” dominion and subjugation of the Native’s past, present and future that are constituted through the desecration of the Sacred and the institutionalization of heteropatriarchy.

In her important book, *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*, Paula Gun Allen, situates her analysis, “Within a critique of U.S. patriarchal colonialism attempts to destroy Indigenous societies for being women-centered, ‘gynocratic’ societies.” Furthermore, as Joanne Barker writes about Gunn Allen’s book, the U.S. patriarchal colonialism’s attempts to destroy “gynocratic” societies, “included genocide, land dispossession, and forced assimilation programs aimed at undermining women’s roles and responsibilities within their nations and territories, as well as at eroding the cultural histories that figured those roles and responsibilities (19).

According to Gunn Allen, the colonial project and its histories of producing “physical and cultural genocide” on Indigenous peoples was centered on their preoccupation with “the patriarchal fear of the system that she terms as ‘gynocracy.’” She writes:

The physical and cultural genocide of American Indian tribes is and was mostly about patriarchal fear of gynocracy. The Puritans particularly, but also the Catholic, Quaker, and other Christian missionaries, like their secular counterparts, could not tolerate people who allowed women to occupy prominent positions and decision making capacity at every level of society. (3)

Gunn Allen further documents, “The colonizers saw (and rightly) that as long as women held unquestioned power of such magnitude, attempts at total conquest of the continents were bound to fail” (3). In addition, “Gunn Allen also shows us a construction of knowledge and an approach to understanding “reality” that is gynecentric and that counters the knowledge production of modernity” (Lugones 7).

Gunn Allen’s documentation highlights the significant role that the institutions of gender and sexuality play in shaping the desires and contours of colonial violence is important for this discussion that attempts to grapple with the complicated layers of colonial and patriarchal violence that has dominated the production of Tonganness since the seventeenth century. Furthermore, Gunn Allen’s discussion helps to flesh out Frantz Fanon’s term “perverted logic” or the colonists’ psychological state that undergird the colonial processes of imagining and manifesting productions of the most pernicious forms of violence on Native peoples. For as
Gunn Allen declares, at the heart of the European colonial project, is the European fear of the system of “gynocracy” that is described as “women-centered tribal societies…maternal control of household goods and resources, and female deities of the magnitude of the Christian God were and are present and active features of traditional tribal life” (4). The Europeans’ “perverted logic” that undergirds the various forms of heinous patriarchal violence that I have mentioned throughout this chapter is founded on the “patriarchal fear of gynocracy” rooted in the desecration of the Sacred and in their centering of heteropatriarchy. Gunn Allen writes, “The colonizers saw (and rightly) that as long as women held unquestioned power of such magnitude, attempts at total conquest of the continents were bound to fail” and thus, the colonial project systemically and strategically obliterated and quelled Indigenous women’s mana to ensure the “total” subjugation of Indigenous nations by instituting and centering the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy (3).

Maria Lugones in *The Coloniality of Gender* is critical of Anibal Quijano’s “coloniality of power” that Quijano describes as, “The coloniality of power introduces the basic and universal social classification of the population of the planet in terms of the ideas of ‘race’” (Quijano qtd. in Lugones 2). Lugones posits, “Quijano seems not to be aware of his accepting this hegemonic meaning of gender” (2). Furthermore, she contends, “The gender system introduced was one thoroughly informed through the coloniality of power.” She argues:

And thus in understanding the extent to which the imposition of this gender system was as constitutive of the coloniality of power as the coloniality of power was constitutive of it. The logic of the relation between them is of mutual constitution. But it should be clear by now that the colonial, modern, gender system cannot exist without the coloniality of power, since the classification of the population in terms of race is a necessary condition of its possibility. (12)

Lugones argument highlighting the “gender system was as constitutive of the coloniality of power as the coloniality of power was constitutive of it” (12). Correspondingly, in her research examining the genocide of California Indians by the Catholic Church and Spanish colonizers, Deborah Miranda suggests the term “gendercide” as a form of gendered violence deployed by the Spanish military on Indigenous peoples and especially on the bodies of Indigenous two spirit men that they termed pejoratively as “sodomites” “as an act of violence committed against a victim’s primary gender identity” (259) and “what the local Indigenous peoples had been taught was gendercide, the killing of a particular gender because of their gender” (259). Miranda’s research elucidates the scope of heteropatriarchy and the textures of its extent and objectives that is a “racialized project” that is preoccupied with the surveillance of Indigenous gender and sexualities. The gratuitous violence that shape the phenomenon “gendercide” like the formations and maneuvers of “white terror” on Indigenous peoples in California are a historical phenomenon that shape and define the travels of colonial “racialized projects” in Moana Nui and in Tonga

I have attempted to argue in this section and throughout this dissertation project, the systemic supplanting of the Sacred with the institution of heteropatriarchy was a deliberate strategy to end the heartbeat of a people, and to destroy their lifeline and their propensity for revolt and revolution against their colonists. As Saidiya Hartmann writes in her compelling book *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route*, “In every slave society, slave owners attempted to eradicate the slave memory, that is, to erase all the evidence of an existence before slavery…A slave without a past had no life to avenge. No time was wasted yearning for home” (155). Furthermore, Hartmann profoundly documents how the slave’s severed
relationality to the Sacred, and their loss of memory serves as a technology for disempowering
the slave living under regimes of white supremacy:

Expunged all memories of a natal land, and it robbed the slave of spiritual protection.
Ignorant of her lineage, to whom could the slave appeal? No longer able to recall the
shrines or sacred groves or water deities or ancestor spirits or fetishes that could exact
revenge on her behalf, she was defenseless. No longer anybody’s child, the slave had no
choice to be bear the visible marks of servitude and accept a new identity in the
household of the owner. (156)

In closing this section, I revisit the argument that I made earlier at the beginning of this
section about the centrality of heteropatriarchy in the colonization of Tonganness. I posit that
heteropatriarchy is a colonially manufactured systems and economies of va, spatialities of
intimacies and relationalities that are rooted on the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the
Feminine and the natural world that includes the fonua (land) and Moana (deep Ocean) and
embraces all the worlds in between. The systemic desecration of the Sacred is supplanted and
centered with the new white and male Christian God. The institutionalization of heteropatriarchy,
produced through the desecration of the Sacred, was the quintessential goal of the colonial
project in Tonga and it strategically aimed to criminalize the Tongan native’s past as a strategy
for ensuring the subjugation of the Tongan native’s present and future. Heteropatriarchy is a
colonial system that produces as well as it ensures what Frantz Fanon terms as the “total”
colonization of Tonganness.

West Berkeley Shellmound, Protecting the Sacred and Tauhi Va

In this last section of the essay, I situate the land that is now known as California, the
land that I as well as many Tongans currently call home. I trace the recent and local campaign
here in Huichin, the original name given to the East Bay by the Ohlone, the first peoples and
caretakers of this land, to protect the oldest Ohlone Sacred Site, the West Berkeley
in the San Francisco-Monterey Bay Area:

Beyond doubt the Ohlones had been settled for an extremely long time before the
arrival of Europeans, and it was during these many centuries that they achieved
something quite rare in human history: a way of life that gave them relative peace and
stability, not just for a generation or two, not just for a century, but probably for
thousands of years. (59)

The East Bay includes Berkeley and Oakland and these are cities that I call my new homes away
from Moana Nui. The campaign to protect the West Berkeley Shellmound as well as other
campaigns to protect Indigenous Sacred sites is a work that I have humbly engaged in under the
leadership of Lisjan Ohlone Leader, Corrina Gould. I begin by historically charting the
significance of the West Berkeley Shellmound to Lisjan Ohlone peoples and next, I attempt to
show that as a Tongan immigrant, settler and “arrivant” on occupied Lisjan Ohone land, the
work of supporting Indigenous communities to protect and save their Sacred is to engage,
respectively, in the Tongan ancestral work of tauhi va.
In his informative book, *Red Skin White Masks*, Glen Sean Coulthard defines the goals of “settler-colonial relationships” as a “particular form of domination” that “continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority” (7).

A settler-colonial relationship is one characterized by a particular form of domination; that is, it is a relationship where power—in this case, interrelated discursive and non-discursive facets of economic, gendered, racial, and state power—has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchical social relations that continue to
facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority. (7)

Joanne Barker and Audra Simpson expand on Patrick Wolfe’s landmark work defining the discourse of settler colonialism. Barker notes, “settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event…elimination is an organizing principle of settler-colonial society” (23). Audra Simpson adds, “Because ‘Indigenous’ peoples are tied to the desired territories, they must be ‘eliminated’; in the settler-colonial model, ‘the settler never leaves.’ Their need for a permanent place to settle propels the process that Wolfe calls, starkly, ‘elimination’” (19). Hence, Gould arduously works to resist the settler’s desires of “elimination” of Ohlone ancestors of the past, present, and future. This work is founded on the Indigenous traditions of “refusal” that Audra Simpson describes a, “refusal…simply to disappear” (22). Leaann Simpson also writes about the Indigenous response of “refusal”; “Within Nishnaabewin, refusal is an appropriate response to oppression, and within this context is always generative; that is, it is always the living alternative.” Simpson also offers an example of Indigenous peoples performing “refusal”: “After the state believed we could no longer hunt and fish in our territory as a result of the Williams Treaty, many [First Nations] hunters and fishers refused and continued to do so” (33). Thus, Gould’s work of “refusal” to the objectives of settler colonialisms here in the Bay Area, is as Simpson contends, “it is always the living alternative” (33).

I began my new life here in the East Bay more than a decade ago when I moved to Berkeley to pursue dreams and to begin a new life as a graduate student at UC Berkeley. In addition, the East Bay is also the new home for many Tongans and it hosts large Tongan communities. According to the 2014 U.S. Census, California hosts the largest Tongan population in the U.S. and second to Hawai‘i (EPIC, Report on 2014 Census). In addition, Tongans and other Pacific Islanders are the fastest growing population in Alameda County with a 41% increase in 2000–2010” (PI Health Fact Sheet for Alameda County). Although I am an Indigenous woman from the Pacific nation of Tonga, I am an “arrivant” on this occupied Ohlone land. Scott L. Morgensen offers a definition of the term “arrivant” that elaborates on Native American scholar, Jodi Byrd’s definitive work:

Racialized non-natives inhabit Indigenous lands while experiencing colonial and racial subjugation, and that her accounts of their participation in colonization and their responsibilities to Indigenous decolonization call for a term distinct from white people. These accounts acknowledge close ties of “settler” status to whiteness while they trace distinctive relations to settler colonialism borne by variously-situated non-native peoples of color. (Morgensen, Decolonization: Indigeneity)

Jodi Byrd articulates the protocols for “Settler, native and arrivant,” living on occupied Indian land, “Settler, native and arrivant each acknowledge their own positions within empire and then reconceptualize space and history to make visible what imperialism and its resultant settler colonialisms and diasporas have sought to obscure” (xxx).

Many of the theories and themes that shape this research project, that are both shown and not shown on these pages, including embarking on the healing journey that helped me to imagine and to participate in the everyday commitment to write this research project during the last decade, are the result of the generous gifts that I received through engaging in years of community work supporting the leadership of American Indian leaders and communities here in California in their various and respective campaigns to fight for their sovereignty centered on protecting their Sacred. It is not an exaggeration for me to state that this is a work that saved me and it helped me to “find my way back home” to my own, respective, Tonganness. My work
with California’s American Indians included but is not exhaustive of; attending countless planning meetings, cooking food, singing and talking-story for hours, visiting and meeting with families and tribes, babysitting children, painting and making signs and marching out in the streets participating in public protests and demonstrations, participating in protocol and Ceremony, letter-writing and phone-banking projects, participation in Indigenous occupation of land, visiting various sacred sites throughout California to offer prayers and to participate in Ceremony, attending Ceremony with Indigenous sisters and brothers that included American Indian and Pacific Islander prisoners incarcerated in Solano, San Quentin, and Chowchilla prisons here in California are just some of the work that have invoked me to tell these narratives about the legacies of the desecration of the Sacred in my own respective Tongan communities. This work with Indigenous peoples here in California has helped me to attempt to recognize the legacy of these losses on my own Tongan female body and to attempt to touch the edges of the pain. Furthermore, this work encouraged me to map the trajectories that Indigenous scholars have termed “historical unresolved grief” that I analyze in Chapter Three. These are the consequences and legacies of the desecration of the Tongan Sacred. My work supporting American Indian communities to protect and defend their Sacred was a work that in turn, saved me, and it has created opportunities for healing for my family members and ancestors of the past, present and future for as Linda Tuhiriwai Smith reminds us, “a human person does not stand alone” (74).

Although I have engaged in work with various California Indian Tribes and community organizations throughout the years that include Southern California and throughout Northern California, I specifically concentrate on my work with Lisjan Ohlone leader, Corrina Gould and the campaign to save the West Berkeley Shellmound, which is an on-going campaign. For as Arwin et al argue, “settler colonialism must be understood as a multi-fronted project of making the First Peoples of a place extinct; it is a relentless structure” (Arwin et al. 7). Thus, the “multi-fronted project of making the First Peoples of a place extinct” is often centered on the relentless colonial desire to desecrate the Sacred as I have attempted to show in this chapter and throughout this dissertation project and as Corrinn Gould’s contemporaneous work shows us.

In a recent cover story titled “Living On Ohlone Land,” by Will Parish and featured in the East Bay Express, he documents the historical significance of the Shellmound for Ohlone people and why they actively resist the desecration of this site:

In the last two years, Chochenyo Ohlone people and their supporters have been locked in a campaign to protect a portion of one of the oldest sites of human habitation and an important Ohlone ceremonial place along San Francisco Bay... The West Berkeley Shellmound and Village Site is estimated to be roughly 5,700 years old, according to radiocarbon dating. The sacred mound, a pyramid of shell and earth, was roughly 30 feet high and covered the area of about two or three football fields. (Parish, Living on Ohlone)

In her compelling essay, The Prison-Industrial Complex In Indigenous California, California Indian scholar and ex-prisoner, Stormy Ogden declares, “At the beginning of the colonization process two tools of genocide were forced upon Native people; the bottle and the bible. Along with these tools the traditional ways of behavior and conduct of the Native people were criminalized” (58). Ogden’s statement elucidates that the colonial project in California was constitutive of institutionalizing foreign values on the lives of California Indians that would profoundly alter their lives, these new colonial institutions are represented by “the bottle and the bible” and in addition, Ogden also points out one of the most potent colonial technologies that
was deployed on Indigenous peoples were new laws and prohibitions that criminalized the Sacred, “The traditional ways of behavior and conduct of the Native people were criminalized” (58).

Vine Deloria contends in his important book, *God is Red: A Native View of Religion*, on the important role of reclaiming Indigenous religions, customs and traditions criminalized by Christianity and U.S. law as organizing principles in American Indian movements for self-determination “There could be no doubt that religion played a critical…role in the Indian movement” (37). Deloria posits that in 1978, the “first pieces of legislation passed to resolve Indian problems was the American Indian Religious Freedom Resolution” (37). In addition, Winona LaDuke writes about the American Indian Religious Freedom Resolution, “While the law ensured that Native people could hold many of their ceremonies, it did not protect the places where many of these rituals take place or the relatives and elements central to these ceremonies” (14).

Hence, sacred sites such as the oldest Ohlone sacred site in the Bay Area, the West Berkeley Shellmound is vulnerable to colonial desecration. LaDuke further contends:

Those protections were applied to lands held by the federal government, not by private interests, although many sacred sites advocates have urged compliance by other land holders to the spirit and intent of the law…Today, increasing number of sacred sites and all that embodies the sacred are threatened. (14)

In an on-line interview, Gould addresses the legacy of colonial violence and their aim to desecrate the Sacred here in the Bay Area:

What I say about this development that happens all over the Bay Area, is that it’s a cultural genocide. They’re trying to wipe us out, in a different kind of a way. There’s no more monuments of the ancient people, of my ancestors, here in the Bay Area. When people go around to those places to try to find out, who were the native people here, what did they live like? There’s nothing here. (Gould qtd. in Lundberg, *Ohlone*)

Gould’s statement elucidates the irreparable loss, systemic invisibilization and historical trauma that her people have suffered and continue to suffer, contemporaneously. The historical trauma and “cultural genocide” that Gould delineates is taking place at this present moment as well as it is founded in the past in the legacies of three waves of colonization that began with the Catholic Father Junipero Serra and Franciscan missionaries working with the Spanish military in the eighteenth century to colonize California. Dunbar Ortiz describes the history of California as “World System of Colonization,” including the familiar colonial tropes that center the deployment of colonial violence to desecrate the Sacred incited by the European Christian missionaries in the eighteenth century in Tonga. In his work on early California History, Benjamin Madley delineates that the colonization of California Indians was termed as a “spiritual conquest”:

Father Junipero Serra, called the “spiritual conquest” of California. Serra and his fellow Franciscan missionaries viewed California Indians as pagans and *gente sin razon*, or people without reason, to be treated as children. From this infantilizing perspective, these Franciscans—like many other missionaries working in the Americas—aimed to fashion allegedly childlike Indians into Catholic workers by replacing indigenous religions, cultures, and traditions with Hispanic ones. (26)

Madley’s statement elucidates the important role of desecrating the Sacred in the colonial project. The Catholic’s desecration of the California Indians’ Sacred, “replacing indigenous religions, cultures, and traditions with Hispanic ones,” is at the root of the historical trauma and
“cultural genocide” that Corrina Could refers to in her statement stressing the significance of contemporary Ohlone resistance against the desecration of the West Berkeley Shellmound and it also shows the importance of protecting this sacred site for her people and for future generations.

Before proceeding, I briefly mention the next two waves of colonialism here in California: “California Indians faced encroachment by Mexican rancheros…Native people were hunted down in a genocidal effort to clear the land for Mexican settlement. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which brought an end to the Mexican-American war, ceded California along with a large swath of Arizona, Texas, and Nevada to the United States” (Ogden 59). The third wave was in the 1880s, “The Gold Rush, heralded by whites as lucrative bonanza, drew hundreds of thousands of ruthless settlers to California. These miners and settlers plundered Native lands and raped Native women” (Ogden 59).

Robin Wall Kimmerer documents the significance of land to Indigenous peoples’ and to Indigenous identities, cultures and value systems. She emphatically declares, “But to our people, it was everything”:

Children, language, lands: almost everything was stripped away, stolen when you weren’t looking because you were trying to stay alive. One thing our people could not surrender was the meaning of land. In the settler mind, land was property, real estate capital, or natural resources. But to our people, it was everything; identity, the connection to our ancestors, the home of our nonhuman kin-folk, our pharmacy, our library, the source of all that sustained us. Our lands were where our responsibility to the world was enacted, sacred ground. It belonged to itself; it was a gift, not a commodity, so it could never be bought or sold. (17)

The Indigenous view of the land as “everything” is echoed in ‘Epeli Hau‘ofa poignant statement on the significance of our Tongan and Pacific Sacred sites that included “seascapes” and “landscapes” (17). He writes, “Our landscapes and seascapes are thus culture as well as physical. We cannot read our histories without knowing how to read our landscapes (and seascapes)” (73). In addition, Hau‘ofa reminds us of the importance of protecting our Pacific Sacred sites as work that is central for our self-determination, “There are reasons why it is essential not to destroy our landmarks, for with their removal very important parts of our memories, our histories, will be erased” (73).

Returning to Will Parish’s article, he explicates the current crisis for the Ohlone in their struggle to protect the West Berkeley Shellmound, “In what has become one of Berkeley’s most heated development battles in recent memory, a proposed housing and retail development there would involve digging to depths of eight to ten feet across the property” (Parish, Living on Ohlone). However, Corrina Gould and other Ohlone leaders and activists remain resilient and they are committed in their struggle to protect the Sacred, and “have stood firm against any effort to develop the site, and they have called attention to the possibility that their ancestors remains will be disturbed by the excavation. They have instead proposed a memorial park honoring their history and culture to the present” (Parish, Living on Ohlone).

In a moving short film titled “If We Take Time to Listen,” featuring Corrina Gould talking about her work to protect the West Berkeley Shellmound, she reminds us of the important role of the Sacred in our contemporary lives:

I often imagine us going back to go forward in order for us to create a world that’s better. We need to look behind us so that we can go forward in a good way and that’s what these Shellmounds do. That’s what these ancestors do for us. If we take time to listen, if we take time to do the work, that we can actually create something different.
Gould’s statement elucidates the significance of centering the Sacred, the West Berkeley Shellmound that she acknowledges and honors as living “ancestors” in shaping the direction and contours of contemporaneous Ohlone life, “We need to look behind us so that we can go forward in a good way and that’s what these Shellmounds do. That’s what these ancestors do for us” (Gould, *If We Take Time*). Furthermore, Gould’s statement is especially compelling for “settlers” and “arrivants” such as Tongans and peoples from Moana Nui because she offers us “original instructions” that as Kimmerer has stated, “These are not ‘instructions’ like commandments, through, or rules; rather, they are like a compass: They provide an orientation not a map” (7).

Thus, we can use Gould’s “instructions” as a compass to guide and navigate our lives here on occupied Ohlone land in ways that honor our Tongan ancestral methodologies of tauhi va, relationality to the Ohlone in a humble and respectful way.

**Conclusion**

Earlier in this section, I shared my experiences in working with Indigenous communities here in California in their struggles for reclaiming their self-determination that are projects centered on protecting the Sacred. I also mentioned earlier that it’s not an exaggeration for me to state that this is a work that has saved me and it helped me to “find my way back home” to my own, respective, Tonganness. This work, here in California, the site that is currently my new home, helps me to fulfill my Tongan obligations of tauhi va, and to recognize, cultivate and to reciprocate relationalities with the first peoples of the land that I currently occupy. Furthermore, this is a work that has put me on a healing and empowering journey that invoked me to embark on one of the most difficult journeys of my life and this is to tell the narratives about the legacies of “white terror” and the desecration of the Sacred in my own respective Tongan family and on my Tongan woman body and to find the courage and support to finally finish this doctoral dissertation. My work under the leadership of California Indian leaders such as Corrina Gould gave me the tools to map the pain and suffering, the disjointed trajectories that Indigenous scholars have termed “historical unresolved grief” that are the legacies of “white terror” and their quintessential objective to desecrate the Tongan Sacred. This work with Indigenous peoples and following the leadership of Indigenous California leaders helped me to embark on a journey of healing for myself and for my family.

I bring these points up again because I want emphatically let Tongans and Pacific peoples know that our contemporaneous work to stand alongside our Indigenous relatives and to protect the Sacred in our new homes here in the U.S. is the work that will bring us “salvation,” a term that is often used by Christians and I use it here because of its familiarity to many Tongans and Pacific peoples. This is the work that will help us to “return back home” to our own Tongan ancestors “in a good way” like Gould states and in a humble way that recognizes and honors our va, our ancestral connections and relationalities to each other, systems of relationalities created between Indigenous peoples throughout the Pacific region of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia with our relatives in Turtle island that was alive and thriving before the coming of the Europeans (Gould, *If We Take Time*). Contrary to the colonial myths that we have been taught by the Christian churches and by many of our leaders, our returning back to our Sacred is the journey that can help us to heal our broken spirits and hearts and it is also a work that can help to heal our ancestors of the past and future. As Corrina Gould states about the centrality of the Sacred in navigating our contemporary lives, “I often imagine us going back to go forward in
order for us to create a world that’s better. We need to look behind us so that we can go forward in a good way” (Gould, *If We Take Time*).

The “something different” that this work offers us Tongans and Pacific peoples is our, own, respective, self-determination (Gould, *If We Take Time*). The work to protect the Sacred offers us opportunities to reject the terms of the settler-colonial relationship that mark our connections with the Mormon Church and other colonial institutions that claim ownership of our bodies and spirits and these institutions also played a major hand in the terms of navigating our migrations to the U.S. As I have mentioned in earlier chapters, most Tongans living in the U.S. are members of the Mormon Church and we were inculcated to the values of settler colonialisms in our Tongan homeland prior to our migrations to the U.S. We were inculcated to politically align ourselves with the settler and to sever and to deny the Indigenous within our own Tonganness. These settler colonial values line the systemic classification of Tongans and other Pacific Islanders within the rubric of Asian Pacific or API that we are relegated to here in the U.S. The classification of Tongans and other Pacific peoples under API is a colonial strategy that continues the desecration of the Sacred because it aims to erase our Indigenous genealogies, ancestral obligations and affiliations to other Indigenous peoples and lands. Furthermore, this colonial classification silences the innumerable possibilities of Indigenous solidarities and resistances against settler colonialisms.

I revisit Glen Sean Coulthard’s articulation of the “particular form of domination” that manages the “settler-colonial relationship” that connect Tonganness to our European and U.S. colonizers. He writes:

A settler-colonial relationship is one characterized by a particular form of domination; that is, it is a relationship where power—in this case, interrelated discursive and non-discursive facets of economic, gendered, racial, and state power—has been structured into a relatively secure or sedimented set of hierarchal social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority. (7)

Recognizing our roles as “settlers” and “arrivants” on occupied Indigenous lands and aligning our political solidarity with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous communities to save and protect the Sacred is a work that renders “visible what imperialism and its resultant settler colonialisms and diasporas have sought to obscure” and thus, we refuse to participate in the terms of settler colonialisms, and we reject “hierarchal social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority” (Byrd; Coulthard 7). As I have mentioned earlier, perhaps one of the most important tools that the work to protect the Sacred has offered me is to “remember” ancestral knowledges and narratives that we Tongans and Pacific peoples were forced to disavow and to forget in the name of “progress” and it is through this dissertation project that I have started the work of resuscitating some of these narratives and reciting them. Mishuana Goeman writes, “The key to reconciling the conflation in historical trauma rests in the stories that haunt, which we must engage, because to ‘decolonize’ means to understand as fully as possible the forms colonialism takes in our own times” (Goeman 110).

Ultimately, our work to protect the Sacred is a project that helps us to embark on the difficult work of “remembering” and it offers us the courage to tell “the stories that haunt” as “means to understand as fully as possible the forms colonialism takes in our own times” as part of our journey, as Tongans and Pacific peoples, to “decolonize” (Goeman 110).
Chapter Five: The Mana of the Tongan Everyday: Tongan Manhood, Patriarchal Violence and The March of Surrender

Inside us the dead,
like sweet-honeyed tamarind pods
That will burst in tomorrow's sun,
or plankton fossils in coral
alive at full moon dragging virile tides over coy reefs
into yesterday's lagoons.

Albert Wendt from the poem “Inside Us The Dead”

The month of May, 2015 was a time of political excitement in the streets of downtown Nuku‘alofa, the capital city of the Tongan nation. Hundreds of Tongans, that included intergenerational families consisting of elders, young children, babies to exuberant youth marching bands dressed in their Sunday-best tupenu and ta‘ovala, joined together and marched the streets, united in a movement led by the Tongan Churches’ Forum, a coalition of Tongan Christian leaders, consisting mostly of men, to publicly demonstrate their opposition to the Tongan government’s aim to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women better known as CEDAW. The Tongan Churches’ Forum’s exuberant demonstrations were rooted on their fear that CEDAW would alter the Tongan status quo and lead to the erosion of patriarchal power by creating laws that would allow women to own land, allow the legalization of same sex marriage and it may also lead to granting Tongan women reproduction rights that may include access to abortion. All three of these major women’s rights are currently legislated as illegal in contemporary Tongan jurisprudence. In addition, the urgency for Tongan lawmakers to support the ratification of CEDAW was highly publicized by Tongan women’s rights leaders and activists because according to a national study on domestic violence conducted in 2009 and released in 2012, 77% of Tongan women are physically or sexually abused. As the statistics and the large public demonstrations against CEDAW illuminates, to be a Tongan woman in the 21st Century, is to know the hands of patriarchal violence and its various maneuvers, intimately, and to know that its familiarity and the silence that shrouds its horrors are norms that are embodied and intricately woven into the fabric of our Tonganness.

Introduction

This chapter continues my examination of the genealogy of colonial violence in Tonga that I often refer to as patriarchal violence because as I show in this chapter and throughout this dissertation, this is a colonial violence imported from Europeans that disproportionately targets the bodies of Tongan women and girls. This chapter examines the legacies of colonialisms and its manifestations in shaping the textures of the spatiality of contemporaneous Tongan manhood. I highlight the vociferous Tongan patriarchal resistance to the Tongan Prime Minister, ‘Akilisi Pohiva, and their decision to finally, after ten years in the making, ratify CEDAW, or the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women in 2015.
I want to emphatically state that while my intentions in this chapter are not to publicly advocate for CEDAW, I do intend to use the objectives of CEDAW and the public discussions incited by CEDAW that highlight issues of Tongan women’s rights as windows through which I observe and analyze the state of contemporaneous Tongan life and the maneuverings and imaginings of Tongan manhood. I contend that the contemporaneous state of Tongan manhood depicts the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and the festering historical Tongan “soul wound” that are the consequences of the systemic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the systemic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, that is inclusive of the natural world and all the worlds in between, was the quintessential objective of the colonial project in Tonga. First, I examine the histories of Tongan women’s work in the Tongan Pro-Democracy and in the Tongan political landscape that brings CEDAW and Tongan women’s rights to the political forefront. Next, I tell a story that centers CEDAW and the issues of heteropatriarchal authority and violence and the legitimate boundaries of Tongan “women’s place” within the terrain of contemporaneous Tonganness. The conversation transpires within the walls of a classroom at Tonga High School located in Nuku’alofa Tonga, the capital of Tonga and I use the format of a play as an attempt to show the bizarre, “unnatural” and grotesque nature of heteropatriarchal authority and violence that is currently normalized in contemporaneous Tonganness.

After I share some of the key themes in my earlier work about the genealogy of patriarchal violence and the making of the contemporaneous Tongan preoccupation with patriarchal violence as a colonial import from Europeans, I show how the European patriarchal violence is preoccupied with the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine. I then historicize the 2015 representations of Tongan manhood performed at the anti-CEDAW and anti-Tongan women’s rights demonstrations that took place in downtown Nuku’alofa by showing that it follows in a cycle of historical productions of Tongan manhood. I share a harrowing narrative from 1840 that memorializes a moment of Tongan “several old chiefs” participating in what I term as a march of surrender. Furthermore, I also draw connections from the 1840 Tongan march of surrender to a harrowing march that took place here in California in1863 called “the Konkow Trail of Tears” that took place after a massacre of California Indian lives described as, “one of the most ghastly marches” (McPhate, *California Sun*). The last section analyzes the 2015 images of Tongan manhood displayed at the anti CEDAW and anti-women’s rights marches in downtown Nuku’alofa and I show that the contemporaneous imagery of Tongan manhood continue in the historical production of the spectacle of march of surrender. Furthermore, I contend that the 2015 imagery are contemporaneous examples of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and the Tongan “soul wound” that are legacies of the past and present systemic desecration of the Sacred.
Figures 3 and 4. CEDAW marches in Tonga.
CEDAW and contemporary movements for women’s rights are not an anomaly in the Pacific or in Tonga: “Most Pacific nations have ratified or acceded to CEDAW” that began with New Zealand and Samoa in the twentieth century (Lee 66). Palau is the only other Pacific nation that has signed it but has not officially acceded to it. CEDAW is a UN Convention: Developed by the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women addresses the advancement of women, describes the meaning of equality and sets forth guidelines on how to achieve it. It is not only an international bill of rights for women but also an agenda of action. Countries that ratify CEDAW agree to take concrete steps to improve the status of women and end discrimination and violence against women. The Convention focuses on three key areas: civil rights and the legal status of women, reproductive rights, cultural factors influencing gender relations. (Fonua, Tonga Ready to Sign CEDAW)

In March 2015, Hon. ‘Akilisi Pohiva, Tonga’s current Prime Minister, a leader that came to institutional power through his role as a prominent and respected leader in the Tongan grassroots Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement stated, “The high abuse of women and children in Tonga is one of the driving forces for the government to ratify CEDAW” (TNews, “Yes to CEDAW”). In his historical presentation to Parliament notifying the public on the official decision to move forward with CEDAW, Pohiva, “proudly told Parliament that his cabinet had agreed to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women” (Munro, Sydney Morning Herald). Pohiva in the same breath, then moved the trajectory of the speech to highlight the criticisms of the Convention that was expressed by earlier Prime Minister Feleti Sevele because ultimately, these criticisms served as obstacles that eventually stopped the process of ratifying CEDAW. Hence, in his presentation, Pohiva, “quickly added that Tonga would only ratify with reservations, which would enable Tonga to retain its laws preventing same-sex marriage and abortion as well as its constitutional provisions for succession to the throne and noble titles” (Lee 67). And as this quintessentially Tongan narrative seeped with all the makings of a entertaining national drama slowly begins to gather at the center, it very quickly and unremittingly unravels, and not just in private but this drama is played out in front of a very public audience, “The Minister for Internal Affairs Fe’amoceata Vakata, whose portfolio included women’s issues, had informed the United Nations in New York about the ratification. What was meant to be a celebrated event turned sour as a clash between supporters and opponents of CEDAW erupted immediately after the announcement” (Lee 67).

The introduction of CEDAW to the Tongan political arena are the fruits of Tongan women’s arduous labor and their unrelenting commitment to women’s rights on various political sites. Tongan women had an investment in this movement as well as other movements for social changes because of their marginalized gender, sexuality and class status within the fabric of the new Tongan status quo. Christine Ward Gailey explicates how the new political changes under the hand of the Tupou dynasty and the new Tongan nation inimically impacted Tongan women’s lives:

Women have lost significant authority over the past century and a half, primarily due to missionary and governmental agendas. These policies—such as prohibiting the customary call sisters and their children had on the goods and services of the brother and his wife and children (fahu), restricting divorce, limiting inheritance to children born in wedlock, favoring sons over daughters in inheritance, and making husbands legally
responsible for tax payments and familial support—have made marriage a social institution defining family formation and fostered a formal and somewhat material dependency of wives upon husbands. (171)

As I have shown in Chapter Four, the production of the colonial spatiality, the Tongan Nationalist Family, is a site that centers the new hegemonies of heteropatriarchy that are maintained through the normalization of violence against women within this intimate spatiality that informs and mirrors the political agenda of the larger Tongan nation.

In addition, in her important work, Ward Gailey also documents Tongan Commoner women’s important work in building the Tongan Pro-Democracy movement that are a response to their marginalization based on their gender and their growing economic povertization:

Since the end of the 1980s, however, a small but vocal group of women, mostly commoners from the professional class, have become visible in pushes for governmental reform. Numbers of commoner women have participated in major demonstrations in the capital against government corruption, beginning with a 2,000-person march in late 1986. Beginning with working on the national front and working side-by-side with Tongan men in the growing Pro-Democracy movement, calling for economic changes against the Tongan government’s laws of neo liberalism that further produced povertization. (176)

The political changes created by Tongan men and women in the twenty-first century fighting for social changes opens up the public space to allow the first Commoner, Feleti Sevele, to the role of Prime Minister in 2008. During Sevele’s time in office, Tongan women’s rights leaders presented his administration three major documents that showed the contemporaneous preponderance of gender discrimination and these documents delineated the reality of violence against women that Tongan women and girls experienced in their everyday Tongan lives. Furthermore, all these documents, respectively, included urgent calls for Tongan leaders to make immediate institutional changes. The three official documents that the women’s rights leaders presented to Sevele were:

The publication of a UN Volunteer CEDAW Information Research Report (2005) which surveyed 1,600 Tongan women was conducted in partnership with the Catholic Women’s League; parliament’s receipt of a petition introduced by several People’s Representatives in September 2008; and the publication the National Study on Domestic Violence Against Women in Tonga. (Ward and van Heerde–Hudson 5)

The 2009 publication of the “National Study on Domestic Violence Against Women in Tonga” was of great significance because this was a study that located the issue of violence against women in the Tongan national spotlight and it documented the realities of every day Tongan life for women and girls under the dominant hand of patriarchal violence. The study revealed that 77% of Tongan women are victims of violence (Jansen et al National Study on Domestic Violence). As a researcher and daughter in a Tongan family and in my work as an activist in Tongan communities, the numbers in this research are conservative renderings and they don’t accurately reflect the unrelenting and prodigious patriarchal violence that dominate and shape Tongan women’s everyday lives and experiences.

Returning back to my discussion about ex-Prime Minister, Sevele—it is ironic though that Prime Minister Sevele, the first Commoner, that came to the office of the Prime Minister through the backs of Tongan women’s work in the Pro-Democracy Movement, however, “was the only Prime Minister who did not support CEDAW” (TNews, “Tonga to be a Signatory”) and after leaving the PM’s office, he and his wife, Lady Asinate Sevele have been adamant critics and political activists furiously fighting against the ratification of CEDAW and against the
legislation of women’s rights in Tonga. Hence, as Helen Lee writes, Sevele’s actions during his
time in the office of PM resulted in stifling the process of moving CEDAW forward:
The process was suspended, and debate continued sporadically until 2009 when the issue was
raised again in Parliament. Tonga’s Legislative Assembly voted not to ratify CEDAW, arguing
the need to reserve the right to maintain male succession to the throne, to noble titles, and to
registered land. Such reservations about the relevant articles in CEDAW were assumed to be
“impermissible,” given that they would be “incompatible with the object and purpose of the
present Convention. (68)

Before moving on, I want to share a brief analysis on the important role that two of the
male government leaders played in CEDAW in 2015, when the Convention was reintroduced
and I want to raise some concerns about the invisibility of Tongan women’s voices in the
political landscape that they fought and arduously labored to produce. The leaders that I want to
briefly analyze are ex-Prime Minister Fred Sevele and Tonga’s current Prime Minister, ‘Akilisi
Pohiva. Both men are Commoners and they came to power because of their, respective,
leadership roles in the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement. Kerry James writes about the Pro-
Democracy Movement that is motivated by gaining “political freedoms,” (248) “The beginning
of the movement toward greater political freedoms may be fairly traced to the institution of law
in Tonga last century” (248).

This movement was a response to the making of the Tongan nation under the hegemonic
hand of the Tupou dynasty and thus, “Pro-Democracy supporters in Tonga want a greater say in
which people make up their government” (James 248). Some of the political unrest in Tonga that
transpires during the twentieth century that bleeds and exacerbates into social unrest in the
twenty-first century was founded and stirred by growing vast economic disparities and
povertization:

The late 1960s and early 1970s, were marked, however, by a generally low level of
economic development. Overcrowding and landlessness became increasing problems,
especially in Tongatapu and around the main town, Nukuʻalofa, to which many people
from outlying areas had moved in search of better educational and work opportunities.
The few employment opportunities made the emigrants’ lack of garden land only more
distressing. The people's growing poverty was blamed on inequitable land distribution,
and social unrest increased. (James 249)

The early-twenty-first century was rife with political crisis and activism; social changes were at
the forefront of the Tongan consciousness as well as it was a part of everyday Tongan life. In
fact, a majority of Tongans actively participated in social movements in mass troves. Heather
Leslie Young documents the prodigious Tongan participation in these marches and public
demonstrations, “These numbers reflect roughly 8 percent of the residents of the main island of
Tongatapu, and 6 percent of the national population. The turnout… and the rapidity with which
the civil action was mobilized astonished even the organizers” (263).

The Tongan government’s adoption of neoliberal reform that economically benefitted the
elite while creating povertization for the rest of the Tongan working population incited massive
strikes and demonstrations in the early-twenty-first century. Young documents, “The public
servants’ strike was the defining event of 2005” and the Tongan people resisted the Tongan
government offering the ministers exorbitant pay raises while the public servants made poverty-
level wages (263). For example, Tongan “government ministers now earned over T$100,000
(US$52,532) a year, police-men struggled to survive on T$50 (US$26.27) a week” (263). In
response, the Tongan public came together to public display their resistance to the government,
“The following evening, 21 July, two thousand civil servants met at the Queen Salote Hall in the capital of Nuku‘alofa and voted for an immediate strike” (263). And to make their indelibly point clear to the government officials, the Tongan people continued to organize and the numbers of protesters continued to proliferate. Tongan people refused to be silenced and they publicly marched to show their resistance. “Overnight they mobilized, and on 22 July an estimated six thousand people marched through Nukuʻalofa to Parliament” (263).

Furthermore, Leslie-Young further elaborates about this time of great political changes in Tonga:

What began as a protest against neoliberal reforms of civil service payrolls became a catalyst for changes that have already led to serious political, economic, and, perhaps most significantly, psychological ramifications for the Tongan people: The monarchy is not overthrown, but the sacrosanct status once enjoyed by the Tupou dynasty and traditional nobles is gone. (275)

I return to my analysis of the two male leaders, Hon. ‘Akitisi Pohiva and former Prime Minster, Lord Sevele, both leaders that were created by movements of Tongan resistance and hunger for social changes, and I want to humbly raise some questions to these two male leaders. As a Tongan woman, I respectfully question their very limited vision for social changes in Tonga because although they came into power through the Pro-Democracy movement, a social movement that purports to decenter the unilateral power structures that privilege the Tongan Monarchy and the Tongan elite at the expense of the Tongan Commoners, their vision for Tongan liberation excludes Tongan women and Tongan girls and yet, it was on the backs and vision of Tongan women that they came to power. Unfortunately, and it is also heart breaking to me that their actions illustrate that Tongan women’s lives are not valued and their contributions to the building of Tonganness is inconsequential. As I mentioned earlier, in 2009, ex-Prime Minister Lord. Fred Sevele’s aggressive disavowal of CEDAW is a legacy that he proudly declares and reminds Tongans in a public letter in 2015:

We and the Government I led were opposed to ratifying CEDAW as its main provisions, especially Articles 2 and 16—the core provisions of the Convention—are in direct conflict with:

a) some of the main provisions of our Constitution and laws;

b) some of our traditional customs and traditions; and

c) some of our basic Christian doctrines. (Sevele, Matangi Tonga)

As I also mentioned earlier, Lord Sevele’s earlier opposition to CEDAW stifled the progression of the convention for a few years until the issue was revived by Pohiva in 2015 at the persistence of Tongan women leaders.

I begin my discussion on Hon. Pohiva by firstly, acknowledging and thanking him for his courageous leadership and legacy in the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement and in the severely heteropatriarchal political landscape, I express my gratitude to him for working with Tongan women rights leaders and resurrecting CEDAW shortly after he came into office. Pohiva’s courageous leadership and legacy in the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement inspired many Tongans, like me, to remember, once again, that Tonganness is seeped with political possibilities outside of the current status quo of Tongan nationalism. In addition, I respectfully question Hon. Pohiva’s political motives in abandoning CEDAW and placing the burden on the back of Tongan women’s rights leaders, especially at moments of political crisis, when the many factions of Tongan hegemonies that included many of Hon. Pohiva’s political enemies; the politically right wing Church Leaders’ Forum aligned themselves with the Tongan Monarchy to overstep his authority or the authority of the Prime Minister’s office and to oppose CEDAW. Thus, I question
Pohiva’s motives at this crucial political juncture, this moment lined with political possibilities, when Pohiva should have politically aligned himself with the underdog, or this case, the underdog was Tongan women and Tongan girls and their supporters that extend to the global diaspora.

Interestingly, this methodology for coalition building and resisting the imperialisms of hegemonies by politically aligning with the marginalized and the underdog is not new to Pohiva and it is, in fact, the backbone and vision of the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement and it is a methodology that Pohiva utilized to great success as a leader of the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement and in return, the Tongan people rewarded Pohiva with our allegiance to the movement and to his leadership. Hence, I raise the question, why would a historically courageous leader like Pohiva abandon his support of the political underdog, or Tongan women and girls, especially when his political enemies were united in their stance against his goals for the ratification of CEDAW? What was different this time around that motivated Pohiva to pursue a new political strategy that would inevitably lead to defeat? I question why Hon. Pohiva refused to stand and fight like the Warrior that he has shown us so many times in the past? What changed? Earlier Hon. Pohiva declared, “The high abuse of women and children in Tonga is one of the driving forces for the government to ratify CEDAW” (Pohiva, TNEWS). With the lives and the safety of these same Tongan women and girls in mind, I respectfully ask Hon. Pohiva what he believes are the consequences of his actions and what happens to these same Tongan women and girls when he chooses to put CEDAW on hold and or to remain politically “luke warm” on urgent issues pertaining to their safety and pertaining to their very lives? What is the price of Pohiva’s silence and who carries the burden and pays the price for the silence? Furthermore, I ask, what are the responsibilities of our Tongan male leaders to women, the many victims of patriarchal violence, many of them you share inextricable with and they are your relatives and you share bloodlines, they are your sisters, cousins, etc? Are the multitudes of Tongan women and Tongan girls’ lives and safety expendable and perhaps even disposable in your vision for a new Tonga?

Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement and Family Commitment

I am a daughter from a Tongan family that supports and stands with the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement and the evidence of our commitment to this movement is documented in the histories of women’s sacrifices and labor in my family. My mother Litia, a Commoner, with her kainga traced to Ha’ano, Ha’apai, traces her ancestral line to courageous men and women banished to Fiji because of their resistance to the Christian hegemony. After receiving a PhD from Brigham Young University, and committed to a long history of working as an educator in Tonga for several decades, she was invited to participate as a speaker in the 1995 National Pro-Democracy Movement Conference to speak about the role of democracy in education and the importance of making education accessible for all Tongans. My mother was passionate about speaking about this subject that she knew well because as a daughter of Tongan Commoners, her life struggles and its various trajectories that straddle multiple continents that include: Tonga, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the U.S., were testimonies to the veracity and prodigious hand of institutional racism, misogyny, class inequalities and the persistence of patriarchal domination and patriarchal violence in shaping every texture and corner of her life.

Yet as a result of her courageous voice and participation in this conference, my mother was severely punished by the Tongan government and she was banned from entering Tonga for
several years because of her criticism of the Tongan Government. Although my mother’s passport was reinstated, a few years later, her heart was wounded when the Tongan government banned her from returning back to her beloved homeland, Tonga and the criticisms that she received from family members and her extended Tongan community that called her out for “betraying Tonganness” deeply hurt her. These are histories that I can easily recite because I am her daughter and I also carry these wounds for her but, nevertheless, Litia has never regretted her decision to speak at the Pro-Democracy Conference about the importance of a democratic educational system that benefits all Tongans and not just the children of the Hou’eiki or noble birth and elite. Litia, like many women in my family, have showed me through every day courageous examples, that a Tongan woman’s role is at the forefront of a struggle for Tongan self-determination.

My family’s commitment to the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement also includes my younger sister Loa’s unpaid labor as a volunteer in the office of the Pro-Democracy Movement for a few years. Loa enthusiastically worked at the Tongan Pro-Democracy Office without pay because she eagerly wanted to learn from Pohiva and to support the growing movement for Tongan self-determination. Yes, just like Tongan men, we, Tongan women, have a stake in movements for social change in Tonga. My mother Litia, my sister Loa as well as multitudes of Tongan women that include Tongan wives, lovers, mothers and sisters that are not represented in the Tongan public arena, have labored, arduously, to support the political vision that the Tongan Pro-Democracy Movement stands for, and yet, Tongan women, are systemically silenced and our lives and our safely are marginalized by the male leadership of the movement. I believe that our critical conversations about the unilateral power stratifications in Tonga that were incited by Pohiva and other courageous Tongan Warriors must also include a critical analysis of who is included and excluded in their visions for Tongan liberation especially if their goals and vision for Tonganness falls in line with the current Tongan status quo.

As I have shown throughout this dissertation, the colonial project and the processes of disciplining and surveilling Tonganness are contingent on the desecration of the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine. The “remembering” and centering of our Tongan Sacred that is inextricably linked to the emancipation of Tongan women and Tongan girls must be located at the forefront and at the heart of Tongan social movements. Tongan women must take their rightful place as leaders, healers, medicine women within the intimate contours of our familial spaces, within the folds of our communities, and at the forefront of our nation, once again, like our ancestors before us, to help facilitate healing and to help bring balance into the spatiality of Tonganness. This is how a Tongan movement for decolonization truly looks like and at this time of great crisis; we must not settle for anything less.

The Mana of the Tongan Every Day

This section is a one act play and it examines a conversation centering around CEDAW, heteropatriarchal authority and violence and the legitimate boundaries of Tongan “women’s place” within the terrain of contemporaneous Tonganness. The conversation transpires within the walls of a classroom at Tonga High School located in Nuku'alofa Tonga, the capital of Tonga. The conversation is an exchange that takes place between two Tongan characters that inhabit incongruous power positionalities in Tongan culture; a young fifteen-year-old girl, Supi Halafili, and an adult and male Pastor from the Christian Church, Assembly of God. In an attempt to show the bizarre and grotesque nature of heteropatriarchal authority and dominance in every day
Tongan life, I utilized this format of storytelling to underscore the “unnatural” and often cruel ways that Tongan men deploy their newly founded authority to marginalize and erase Tongan women and girls’ mana and self-determination. Thus, very often, under this new status quo, we often imagine Tongan resistance to heteropatriarchal authority and violence as futile and perhaps even impossible but I hope that centering the voice of a non-human and blue dolphin narrator named HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR and this being is represented by the multiple pronouns of they, his and her to show that the terrain of the Feminine, and Tongan women’s mana, leadership and self-determination are characteristics and values that are ineluctably Tonganness and furthermore, it is however, the institution of heteropatriarchy and violence against women that is “unnatural” within the terrain of Tonganness.

Additionally, I also changed the format of the conversation into a one-act play to show the nuances and textures of Tonganness that are contingent on the Feminine in its various trajectories and iterations that are often erased and thus, are often unimaginable in the contemporaneous state of Tonganness that have silenced these realities. In addition, the character, HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR is named after the Tongan methodology, Heliaki as an attempt to illuminate the multiple maneuvers of Tongan gender and sexualities that are alive and these forms of inhabiting and imagining Tonganness defies the colonial objectives of making Tonganness into the colonial spatiality that ‘Epelihau’o’fa defines as “smallness.” Heliaki is described by anthropologist Adrienne Kaeppler as:

Heliaki means to say one thing but mean other, and it requires skills based on cultural knowledge to carry out. Heliaki is manifested in metaphor and layers of meaning and is developed by skirting a subject and approaching it repeatedly from different points of view. Encoding hidden meanings and unraveling them layer by layer until they can be understood requires considerable creative skill and imagination. (Kaeppler qtd. in SoJo Journal 100)

It’s a Friday morning in Nuku’alofa, Tonga and HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR is performing being a “good Tongan daughter/son” and they continue to eavesdrop on conversations around them, from their home at ‘Uafu ‘O Vuna in downtown Nuku’alofa while pretending that they are intently listening to the Gods.

Heliaki attentively tunes in to a conversation conducted between two characters, a fifteen year-old Tongan girl, a student at Tonga High School, Supi Halafili, and an adult Tongan Male Pastor From Assembly of God. The conversation between these two characters takes place in front of a black board and the Tonga High School student body. Before we begin our story, Heliaki puts several more pats of New Zealand Anchor butter on their large slice of bread from Sitani Mafi Bakery. They know well that at the end of this conversation, like at the end of all good Tongan conversations, someone will, inevitably, tangi, or cry. Heliaki is, at the least, very hopeful.

Enter HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR. She/he moves gracefully out of the ocean dressed in a kahoa made of Australian Minties and clusters of rose-colored plumeria. Their body layered with kie Ha’amo’a, fine mats gifted by relatives from Ha’amoa, a land also known as Samoa. They proceed to quiet the wind and then they close their eyes to signal that they will embark on something of great significance and importance.
They clear throat as ocean waves and clouds stop and gather around them kissing them on the cheek:

HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR:
Fakatulou ‘atu…

(ALARM SOUNDS! [Reminiscent of U.S. War planes during WW II]:

We [person(s) documenting this narrative] humbly apologize for this abrupt interruption. For our Western readers, inclusive of our Tongan Mormon readers, please note that HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR is currently participating in a Tongan Ceremony that precedes every event of significance. The Ceremony that centers on va, acknowledging and honoring economies and genealogies of relationalities traces the multiple Gods, inclusive of the lands and oceans, to the multitude of ancestors from Tongatapu tracing the acres of ocean routes to our original homeland, Havaiki and the circle returns to recite the present line of the legitimate Tongan Monarchy that unapologetically deceters the current Tupou line.

The Ceremony is a phenomenon that transcends Western time and space and it is, truth be told, is never ending and there is no beginning. Thus, we [person(s) documenting this narrative] recognize that we are currently located within the boundaries of Western time and this dissertation is framed within the boundaries of a deadline for a Western University and unfortunately, we are unable to document Heliaki’s genealogical oratory recitation and ceremonial offerings at this time. We humbly ask all our Tongan relatives for your forgiveness and to please refrain from cursing our ancestors because they taught us the laws of Tongan protocol. We also recognize that many of you, especially our Methodist relatives, will continue to harbor ill feelings towards us for many years and perhaps even generations ahead. This saddens us.

We return back to the Tonga High School classroom. Tonga High School is located in Nuku’alofa, Tonga, Tonga’s capital and it is historically one of Tonga’s most revered learning institutions. Most of Tonga’s most renowned scholars and leaders were trained at this institution.

Sitting quietly at desk with her hair tightly braided into two long pony tails at both ends of her head and wrapped with a yellow ribbon at the ends. She is speaking to audience.

SUPI HALAPILI:
Every Friday morning, we have religious instruction. A pastor from the Assembly of God came to preach to us. Instead of preaching, he said

Entering and taking his place at the Center. Performs a malanga for about two, three to five hours or days but we are only able to document the latter part.

ADULT TONGAN MALE PASTOR FROM ASSEMBLY OF GOD:
If you believe CEDAW is a good thing, raise your hand. I know that none of us here believe in CEDAW or want to accept it.

Eyes-wide open and is noticeably surprised at the state of the Pastor’s ignorance and arrogance. His type of performance is unknown and unacceptable in the Tongan bottle nosed dolphin world, HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known the NARRATOR attempts to raise their hand but he/she is reminded that the Great Female God, Felehune, that often shows her being in the body of a large Octopus in her home in the Moana on route to the Lau Islands near Fiji, deliberately created his/her body a bottle nosed dolphin and instead of fingers, the Great Female God, Felehune gave him/her teal colored glitter fins. They are unable to raise a hand so with their fins, they proceed to make their grandmother and five Aunty Dolphins, that recently dropped in
unannounced and without any concern for their hosts’ schedule, hot cups of la’i lemani tea served with New Zealand biscuits while the Aunty Dolphins laugh and laugh and they relentlessly question Heliaki about the contours of the private lives and hidden secrets of the members of the Tongan Royal family. They want Heliaki to report the news that is not published in *Matangi Tonga*.

**Once again, we return back to Tonga High School.**

After raising her hand and realizing that she was the only voice of dissent in the entire school

**SUPI HALAFILI:**

*Everyone was shocked when I put my hand up...everyone was giving me the evil eye.*

Still standing at the Center

**ADULT TONGAN MALE PASTOR FROM ASSEMBLY OF GOD:**

*Women do not matter!*

Exasperated with her hands up

**SUPI HALAFILI:**

*You’re saying women do not matter? We are all created by God. If there were no women, the role of the men would not be complete. Women were brought to the world to support men. I believe women can also be leaders.*

Enter wide eyed and speaking very quickly but also very slowly at the same time,

**HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN** also known the NARRATOR:

*The Tongan Pastor slammed the blackboard!!!* [Side note: This part of the play may be considered irrelevant and perhaps even painfully extraneous to most Western readers but Tongan readers view this information central to the telling of this narrative. Please bear with us.]: Heliaki is also concerned about the state of the blackboard because he/she helped to organize the fund raising efforts that included hosting a lavish Ball and fashion show at the International Date Line Hotel with the help of American Peace Corps volunteers after the big earthquake in the 1990s to renovate Tonga High School and to replace all the broken black boards. In fact, Heliaki was awarded a shiny red ribbon by Hon. Lupe Pau’u for their very charitable efforts. This moment was memorialized in a photo shown in the front page of *Matangi Tonga*.]

And once again, we return back to Tonga High School. Still taking his place at the Center and this time holding up the Christian Bible much higher to the sky:

**ADULT TONGAN MALE PASTOR FROM ASSEMBLY OF GOD:**

*Men were brought to be leaders, not women.*

*Men were brought to be leaders, not women.*

*Men were brought to be leaders, not women.*

**He kept on repeating that:**

*Men were brought to be leaders, not women.*

Continuing to take his place at the Center and holding the shiny Christian Bible much higher into the sky that it begins to grow wings and float,

**ADULT TONGAN MALE PASTOR FROM ASSEMBLY OF GOD:**

*Men were brought to be leaders, not women.*

*Men were brought to be leaders, not women.*

*Wide eyed and sitting up straight*

**HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN** also known as the NARRATOR:

(Is actually quiet, is surprisingly very quiet and teardrops begin to gather in their eyes but they are wearing their new favorite Avon Albuquerque blue eye shadow and its an important task not
want to smear it. This was a gift sent by Peti, a single mother and their fifth cousin on their paternal side from Ha’apai, a gift sent tucked away in the back of a shiny Bible all the way from Okalani, Kafefonia, and so our NARRATOR slowly tip their head back as if to kiss the sky in order to stop the flow of tears.

None of these recent happenings makes sense to Heliaki. He/she is concerned for the young Tongan girl Supi and wonders what happened to the Tongan human world that made the Tongan Pastor act so cruel to the young girl? Heliaki wonders what happened to Supi’s classmates, many of them are her blood relatives raised side-by-side and fed by the same nipple since birth, and yet they are paralyzed and unable to stand with her and to participate in speaking out against the Pastor and to speak out against the many lies against Tonganness that he is speaking? Heliaki wonders where all these horrific new changes to the Tongan human world came from? He/She wonders where all the Pastor’s anger and hatred for Tongan women came from? They also wonder where the Pastor’s exorbitant arrogance came from? Heliaki and his/her dolphin ancestors are well versed on the laws and norms of Tonganness and according to their ancestral knowledges, that spans centuries and transcends the boundaries of Western time, the current political happenings in this Tonga High School classroom is unfounded and it falls out of balance. This is not what they know and imagine as Tonganness. They know that there is nothing “authentic” or “traditional” about the Pastor’s cruelty and enmity for the young Tongan girl and especially for Tongan women. Heliaki knows that this new form of Tonganness, with its deliberate cruelty and enmity reserved for women and the Feminine, is a vessel that is dangerously unbalanced and if it doesn’t change courses immediately, it will eventually tip over and all its inhabitants will unfortunately drown.

Enters looking at audience, she looks around her and recognizes that she is standing alone in speaking up against the Patriarchy, she begins to feel small and the beginning strings of a belly ache tuck at her but from the corner of her eye, she recognizes the never-ending spiral of the spirits of her Ancestors that include great-grandmothers, great-great-grandmothers, great-great-grandfathers, laughing baby daughters and infant sons with sparkling eyes, yet to be born, and she recognizes the great female God, Hikule’o, the keeper of the land of Pulotu, and next to her is the great male Shark God Ha’e ha’e Tahi. All around here are rows, rows of Ancestors behind her, surrounding her, embracing her, she is not alone, she is never alone on this journey. Her Ancestors place a sisi mahokoi around her neck and rub her skin with coconut oil seeped in the tender petals of gardenia for the duration of centuries. She speaks for them, for the Tongan Ancestors of the future, the present and the past. Supi continues to stand.

SUPI HALAFILI:
So it’s time for us to make a change!
He hated it so much when I was saying the truth. I was not scared to talk to him in that way.
Enter wearing a shiny Lady Diana-style tiara on their head, clears throat and speaks in what he/she assumes is a proper British accent because they want to be taken seriously by the Tongan audience,

HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR:
Supi introduced property rights into the discussion. CEDAW guarantees women equal rights to own land. Tongan women can only lease land and, when couples get divorced, husbands keep the family property.

Enters and speaking to audience,

SUPI HALAFILI:
It is mentioned in the bible that women should inherit land, not just men.
You’re preaching the word of God. Do you know what you’re saying? And I said, If you
had the light, you wouldn’t be that angry. Everyone has a right to their own opinion or
view. I am just saying mine.
He was so mad he ended the session!!!
Pause and speaking directly to audience
SUPI HALAFILI:
Everybody [the Tonga High School Student Body that includes Supi’s relatives and close
friends] was just SILENT.
At the corner of the stage with her face hidden under a freshly starched and hand
embroidered linen handkerchief depicting the colorful birds and flowers from Neiafu
Vava’u, the land of her relatives from her maternal side,
HELIAKI THE PRECOCIOUS DOLPHIN also known as the NARRATOR:
Uncontrollable Tangi, or crying
Acts II, III, and IV of the play is currently being written. Supi Halafili and many other young
Tongan women continue to grow up alongside their dolphin relatives, like our narrator, Heliaiki
and the rest of the bottle nosed kainga, and the young women continue to learn and they begin to
remember the Tongan ancestral knowledges outside of the “smallness” of the current
heteropatriarchal status quo. They remember that their place in Tonganess is replete with
unlimited possibilities and mana and they follow the examples set by their Ancestors and they
grow up to become fearless, knowledgeable and generous Tongan leaders, Warriors, cultural
makers, poets, sisters, mothers, scholars etc, etc, and they embody many other roles that are alive
in their Tongan imaginary. They continue to tauhi va, honor and grieve all that has been lost to
the hand of past and contemporaneous European and patriarchal violence and they forge
journeys of remembering, dreaming and manifesting the generous and never ending and always-
generative mana of the Sacred, the Feminine, the heartbeat of Tonganess.

Her Tongan Sacred Shape in his Colonial Hands: Genealogy of Patriarchal Violence

In her compelling chapter “Her Shape and His Hand,” Avery Gordon writes about
African American law scholar, Patricia Williams’s important book The Alchemy of Race and
Rights. Williams traces her genealogy to a grandmother who was a slave and she also traces her
grandmother’s owner and father of her children to a powerful Tennessee lawyer named Austin
Miller. Williams’s work looks at her grandmother’s overwhelming erasure from the discourse.
She is engaged “in a long-term project of tracking his [Austin Miller’s] words—through letters
and opinions” as well as Williams looks at letters and opinions of Miller’s sons who were also
lawyers and judges and progenitors of his legacy (Gordon 5). Williams is committed to a work
“finding the shape described by her absence in all this” (Gordon 6). Williams further writes
about her work confronting the irony of her grandmother’s deliberate and prodigious institutional
erasure and yet:

I see her shape and his hand in the vast networking of our society, and in all the evils and
oversights that plague our lives and laws. The control he had over her body. The force he
was in her life, in the shape of my life today…In his attempt to own what no man can
own, the habit of his power and absence of her choice. I look for her shape in his hand.
(Williams qtd. in Gordon 6)
Williams’s compassionate commitment to find and to honor the legacy of her beloved ancestor is at the heart of her work and it shapes the methodology, “look[ing] for her shape in his hand” (6). Williams’s methodology is deeply moving and it also helps me to define some of the objectives of this research project especially this chapter that attempts to look at the historical production of Tongan manhood. It also helps me to map the Tongan political landscape and to identify the new political exigencies that shape the maneuvers of power within relationalities shared between Tongan men and Tongan women. I look at the symbolic and material deployment of the hands of Tongan manhood in shaping the contours of Tongan women’s and Tongan girl’s lives.

As I have mentioned earlier in this chapter, a national study on domestic violence conducted in 2009 and released in 2012, indicated that 77% of Tongan women are physically or sexually abused. These findings were behind the urgent push for the ratification of CEDAW and yet these painfully high statistics and the normalization of violence against women and girls was silenced in the public discussions about CEDAW and the issue was never addressed in the large public marches organized by the Tongan male Christian leaders. Thus, I am interested in examining the spatiality of Tongan manhood and “finding the shape” described by Tongan women’s “absence in all this” (105). I’m interested in tracing and making visible the historical trajectories and the political exigencies that produce Tongan women’s “absence” as a requirement for the distribution of power and privileges centralized in the contemporaneous colonial productions of Tongan manhood. In addition, I also use this metaphor to help guide me in my analysis and to help me to trace the heavy and prominent hand of colonial domination and the maneuvers of colonial institutions such as Christianity in surveilling and disciplining Tongan men’s lives and legislating new forms of Tongan manhood that are predicated on the severing of Tongan men’s relationality to the Sacred, the Feminine, constituted, precisely, and interminably through the deployment of violence against Tongan women in every day interactions. Thus, I also use Williams’s metaphor to help me to find the shape of Tongan men described by his profound “absence in all this” (105).

Genealogy of Patriarchal Violence as Legacy of European Colonialism

I share some of the key themes in my earlier work to show the genealogy of patriarchal violence and the making of the contemporaneous Tongan preoccupation with patriarchal violence as a colonial import from Europeans. I also attempt to show how the European patriarchal violence is preoccupied with the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine. In Chapter Four, I examine three key historical moments memorializing early contact that transpired between Tongans with Europeans and I attempt to show that the Europeans are the “bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the [Tongan] native” (Fanon 91). I chart three historical moments of contact with Europeans that introduce and produce a new state of Tongan preoccupation with patriarchal violence. Throughout this chapter and in the dissertation overall, I show that the quintessential objective of the colonial project in Tonga was rooted and shaped by the systemic desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine and the supplanting of these losses with heteropatriarchy symbolized by the new white and male Christian deity.

White Terror as Legacy of European Contact

California Indian scholar and writer Deborah Miranda writes about the historical moment of encounter between California Indians and their Spanish colonizers. “The key word here is not,
in fact, encounter, but destruction” (Miranda 257) Miranda’s delineation of the term “destruction” is definitive in this discussion on Tongan encounters with Europeans. In Chapter Four, I contend that the moments of Tongan encounters with Europeans produce the historical phenomenon that Mike Hill describes as “white terror,” “is terrifying because the struggle to remain ‘undistinguished’- the struggle to be ordinary, to be as passive as omnipresent, as invisible as dominant, to be an essential feature of every life and yet unaccountable” (2). I also utilize Beth Ritchie’s theory of “prison nation” to further contextualize the phenomenon of European “white terror” in Tonga, “The political apparatus that goes into building a prison nation” (3) and she names them.

According to Ritchie the “prison nation” are produced by “Practices that increasingly punish or disadvantage norm violations” (3) and secondly, “institutional regulations designed to intimidate people without power into conforming with dominant cultural expectations” and I jump to Ritchie’s fourth point that is also relevant in our discussion on the production of the colonial familial spatiality, “Ideological schemes that build consensus around conservative values (the primacy of heterosexual nuclear families)” and lastly, Ritchie profoundly argues about the primacy of fear in the production of “prison nation,” “A prison nation depends on the ability…to create fear… and to reclassify people as enemies of a stable society” (3). The European deployment of “white terror” is unequivocally a “racialized project” aimed to incarcerate Tonganness through its deployments of “gratuitous violence” that include punishment, intimidation, legislation of va and nuclear familial spatialities and it also renders productions of “fear” mongering to classify “peoples as enemies of a stable state” and thus, the objectives of “white terror” in Tonga also aims to render Tonganness as “Other” and enemy. Moreover, the violence that shapes the phenomenon “white terror” as Ritchie has suggested in her term “prison nation” legislates the boundaries of the “heterosexual nuclear family” that is unrelentingly gendered and it disproportionately targets and surveils the bodies of Tongan women and girls.

Historical Encounters and White Terror

I begin my analysis with the first historical moment memorializing the first contact between Tongans with Europeans in 1666 with the Dutch explorers Schouten and Le Maire. CThe 1666 fateful moment is marred by the Dutch explorers’ deployment of firearms and their violent taking of the lives of unarmed Tongan families that were voyaging on a tongiaki, or a sailing vessel, to Samoa, “They [the Dutch sailors Le Maire and Schouten] fired warning shots to stop them. When the Pacific islanders did not stop, they shot some and that stopped them” (Purdue). The second historical moment of contact with Europeans are Captain Cooks’ historical naming of Tonga as the “Friendly Islands” that took place during his third voyage in 1777, a historical moment that is as I argue, “At the core of the colonial technology of naming Tonganness as ‘Friendly Islander’ are the colonial processes of institutionalizing the Western values of race, gender and sexualities and the deployment of patriarchal violence against Tongan women as a strategic means to control women’s sexualities and thus, to institutionalize new forms of va and order over Tonganness. In addition, I argue that the “Friendly Islander” narrative is a historical moment that erases the Tongan leaders’ resistance to Captain Cook and to the systems of Western colonialisms that he represented. Thus, Cook’s image “Friendly Islander” paints Tonganness as quintessentially represented by the male body and as one that is
complacent and “friendly” to colonial domination. Furthermore, the colonial image of the “Friendly Islander” is a central figure in the production of Tongan manhood.

The third historical moment memorializing contact between Tongans with Europeans was the arrival of the British Christian missionaries in 1797. The Christian missionaries implemented a prodigious project that harvested irreparable and an unrelenting violence on the past, present and future of Tonganness through their institutionalization of the technology of linear time that inevitably lends to the severing of Tongan va, relationality to the heart beat of Tonganness, the Sacred. The Christian intentions for severing Tongan va to the Sacred are as Fanon documents, “does not call the native to God’s ways but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor” (Fanon 42). In fact, the Christians’ systemic desecration of Tongan va to the Sacred, was the inception of a state that Samoan scholar Albert Wendt writes, “inside us the dead” (Wendt, PoemHunter.com). The severing of Tongan relationalities to the Sacred created an irrevocable imbalance or “dead” that called Tongan manhood to perform “the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor” depicted through the normalization of the technology of violence against Tongan women or every-day enactments of desecrating the Sacred in contemporaneous and in every day Tongan families, lives and daily interactions (Fanon 42). The next section of the chapter maps the contemporaneous representations of Tongan manhood at the CEDAW marches in 2015 to the historical representations of Tongan manhood produced by European colonialisms and their deployment of “white terror” to desecrate the Sacred.

**Remembering 1840 Tongan Manhood and the March of Surrender**

This section begins by looking at what Toni Morrison terms as a “story of success” or what is often termed as a narrative of “progress” on the Western linear timeline. This narrative described by a Methodist Christian missionary as “very cheering” (van der Grijp 166) takes place in 1840 and it memorializes a harrowing moment of Tongan “several old chiefs” participating in a phenomenon that I term as a march of surrender. The Tongan phenomenon of march of surrender is a spectacle at the heels of “white terror” and it is a performance of Tongan “historical unrecognized grief.” This historical moment depicts the Tongan leaders’ march or surrender, their response to the new colonial forces’ deployment of the phenomenon of “white terror” that wrecked irreparable destruction and horror on their world and on all that they knew as Tonganness. The moment depicts the unrelenting militarization and violence deployed by the Christians and at this time in history, Taufa'ahau stands at the forefront as a leader of the Christian missionizing project. This historical narrative relishes in its boastful telling of the Christians’ hard-won victory over Tonganness. Yet, this historical moment that highlight a paradigmatic victory for the Christians was however, viewed very differently on the Tongan side and this moment was seeped with the aching of irreparable loss and it symbolizes the heart break of the Tongans march of surrender under the hands of their enemies. I argue this 1840 moment of the “several old chiefs” performing a march of surrender at the hands of “white terror” 1) indelibly marks a legacy of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that continues to haunt contemporaneous Tonganness, and 2) shapes and is materially manifested in the performances of Tongan manhood displayed in the large public demonstrations against CEDAW and Tongan women’s rights in downtown Nuku'alofa in 2015.
I revisit my work in Chapter Three on the phenomenon of contemporary Tongan “Historical Unresolved Grief” that I posit finds its historical origins in the colonial production of severing Tonga va with the Sacred, the heartbeat of Tonganness. And yet, within the Western timeline of progress, Tongan grief and mourning for this wound is institutionally denied, classified as inconsequential and/or criminalized because the Sacred represents what ‘Epeli Hau‘ofa terms as “era of darkness” or it takes place before the privileged “Era of light” or the spatiality after the arrival of the Christian Missionaries. In Chapter Three, I demonstrate three distinctive but interconnected historical moments that produce Tongan Historical Unresolved Grief by showing that these respective historical moments are bounded through their systemic desecration of the Tongan Sacred that is supplanted with the centering of the white male and Christian deity and furthermore, the desecration of the Sacred is legislated into everyday Tongan lives through the normalization of the technology of violence against women in the spatiality of the Tongan Nationalist Family. I assert that these historical moments incited irreparable suffering and pain for Tonganness, and yet, Tongan pain and mourning was systemically disavowed, and criminalized because these historical moments were termed as celebratory and they represented the upward movements of Western “progress.”

I look at the important research by Indigenous scholars, Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart and Lemyra M. DeBruyn with Native American communities. I am compelled by their work that describes the phenomenon of “disenfranchised grief,” as “When a society disenfranchises the legitimacy of grief among any group” (Braveheart 67). Brave Heart and DeBruyn draw the connections between the cycles of “disenfranchised grief” and connect it to a larger theory that is a phenomenon they term as “historical unresolved grief” within Indigenous communities: “We suggest the concept of disenfranchised grief facilitates the explanation of historical unresolved grief among American Indians. The historical legacy denied cultural grieving practices, resulting in multigenerational unresolved grief” (67). Furthermore, Brave Heart and DeBruyn define the significant role that “historical unresolved grief” plays in shaping the contours of contemporaneous Native American lives and they argue, “historical unresolved grief, contributes to the current social pathology, originating from the loss of lives, land and vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by European conquest of the Americas” (60).

I utilize Brave Heart and DeBruyn’s theory of “historical unresolved grief” in my research on Tonganness especially in my examination of the contemporaneous state of Tonganness. Like Brave Heart and DeBruyn, I’m drawn to accurately tracing the historical footprints of the colonial past and identifying the trajectories of pain and suffering that this past, “contributes to the current social pathology” that relentlessly haunt the contemporaneous state of Tonganness such the phenomenon that this chapter examines, the 2015 performances of contemporary Tongan manhood that were displayed at the large public demonstrations against Tongan women’s rights and CEDAW. I posit that the public performances of Tongan manhood in these public demonstrations is a contemporaneous staging of the historical phenomenon that I have termed earlier as march of surrender and it illustrates the festering contemporaneous Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that are a legacy of the histories of European conquest and deployment of “white terror” in the past and present, or as Brave Heart and DeBruyn write about their term, “historical unresolved grief,” “contributes to the current social pathology, originating from the loss of lives, land and vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by European conquest of the Americas” (60).
Tongan Manhood as Historical Production of March of Surrender

I return to examining the 1840 historical moment that retells of the “Several old chiefs” performing a march of surrender as a response to their enemies’ deployment of “white terror” on their lives. Their enemies were colonizers that consisted of European Christian militaries led by the new Tongan monarch, Taufa‘ahau that at this time of Tongan history had taken up the new English name of King George I after his baptism into Christianity. Homi Bhabha astutely writes, “Remembering is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful remembering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present” (36). I tell this historical moment memorializing a “painful remembering” of Tongan grief and mourning from 1840 because I believe that revisiting this moment and touching the edges of loss and sorrow that it recalls can help us to “make sense of the trauma of the present” or to recognize the political and historical exigencies, the vestiges of grief and the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that shaped and undergirded the 2015 public marches and spectacles of Tongan manhood displayed at the anti-CEDAW demonstrations on the streets of downtown Nuku’alofa, Tonga.

The 1840 moment of “several old chiefs” performing march of surrender came at the heel of “white terror” or the devastating massacres claiming innumerable losses for Tonganness. Sione Latukefu documents that the colonizers’ new auspicious military strategy that they strategically and unremittingly deployed under Taufa‘ahau’s leadership centered, precisely, on the desecration of the Tongan Sacred. It was in fact the deployment of this new military strategy that profoundly changed the course of history and for the first time “the Christians began to take the offensive” and helped to propel the colonizers to victory over Tonganness: “Under the leadership of King George [Taufa ‘ahau], the Christians began to take the offensive, first in Ha‘apai, where Taufa‘ahau systemically burned down the god-houses, destroyed the effigies and turned the sacred places into gardens” (Latukefu 101). Thus, in the 1840 narrative, it was the colonizers’ deliberate desecration of the Sacred and the Tongans’ adamant resistance to this violence that incited the war that broke out in January 1840, “The incident which triggered it was the removal of some sticks from one of the god-houses by some Christians” (Latukefu 115). The Tongans fought to defend their Sacred or what is profanely termed as “some sticks from one of the god-houses” that was the breadth and at the heart of all that they loved and defined as Tonganness, that included their families, the world around them and all their hopes and for the future, and in their plight to fight back and to protect the Sacred, they took the lives of four Tongan Christians. As the ominous narrative unfolds, the Tongan warriors were severely punished for their resistance and their taking of four Christian lives. Thus, in retaliation and in a show of unremitting “white terror” the Christians’ under Taufa‘ahau’s leadership, responded by deploying a cruel and violent massacre that is documented that “about 300 men and women and children were killed” (Latukefu 110).

Progress and European Responses to the Tongan March of Surrender

Interestingly, in a very telling response to the aftermath of this horrific massacre, a European Christian missionary wrote a letter to the London Secretariat that deliberately erased the “white terror” that they ruthlessly deployed on Tonganness but instead he centered and celebrated the Tongan Chiefs’ harrowing march of surrender. He described this historical
moment depicting Tongan loss as “very cheering” because “They [Tongans] have all renounced heathenism and bowed to the true [Christian] God” (van der Grijp 166). He continued to enthusiastically document this historical moment of “progress” for the Europeans and yet, it is a moment of surrender, horror and loss for Tonganness:

We hear that last Sabbath was a high day among them that several old chiefs who for the first time went to the house of [Christian] god, went dressed in the…sacred mat of the heathen deity they once feared and adored and that one of them had bored a hole in his god (a whale’s tooth) designing to hang it around his neck and thus expose it, if not himself, to ridicule. (van der Grijp 166)

This same tone of enthusiasm documenting the triumph of Western “progress” is also found in comments made by another European Christian missionary after witnessing the massacre and bloodshed of Tonganness. With a light heart he documents the long-awaited arrival of what is believes is justice constituted through the punishment of the “heathen Tonga” that leads them to their surrender to the “true” and “strong” Christian God:

Surely God has a controversy with heathen Tonga and is now punishing them for their rejecting the gospel… Hundreds of them now believe the Christian religion is true and the Christian God is a strong God. (van der Grijp 165)

It is important to note that this historical moment memorializing the “Several old chiefs” march of surrender at the heel of “white terror” is a spectacle that serves as evidence of the Tongan chiefs’ conversion to the God of their enemies’ which is Christianity. Thus, Tongan conversions into Christianity are productions legislated and mediated through “white terror” and they are devoid of Tongan agency and self determination but they are the fruits of colonialisms.

Furthermore, this moment memorializing the “Several old chiefs” enacting march of surrender that is evidence of their conversion to Christianity inevitably demands that the Tongan male leaders and warriors participate in the desecration of the Sacred. In fact, their enactment of the desecration of the Sacred is at the center of the march of surrender that they perform for the gaze of their enemies for as the story is told, the Tongan chiefs “went dressed in the…sacred mat of the heathen deity they once feared and adored and that one of them had bored a hole in his god (a whale’s tooth) designing to hang it around his neck and thus expose it, if not himself, to ridicule (van der Grijp 166). This 1840 historical moment elucidates the hand of colonial and patriarchal violence or “white terror” in legislating the laws that govern the institution of contemporary Tongan manhood. Frantz Fanon succinctly defines this phenomenon in his important book Black Skins, White Masks: “For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man” (110). The new laws for performing Tongan manhood are as Fanon argues, “in relation to the white man” (110). This is also a point that Maori scholar, Brendan Hokowhitu asserts, “What we call ‘traditional Indigenous masculinity,’ is in actuality a particular masculinity that has developed since colonization” (87).

As this historical moment illustrates, Tongan manhood is an institution that centers the new white and male Christian God at the cost of desecrating the Tongan Sacred, the Feminine. Thus, the spatiality of contemporary Tongan manhood with its historical motivations rooted in the desecration of the Sacred is an institution aimed to silence Tongan mana and self-determination and it aims to stifle Tongan resistance against imperialisms. The contemporaneous enactment of Tongan men’s march of surrender in downtown Nuku‘alofa follows in line with historical productions of Tongan manhood at the hand of colonialisms and the contemporaneous productions illuminates that the site of Tongan manhood is currently seeped, marred and defined by the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief.”
California Trail of Tears and Remembering March of Surrender

I currently make my new home on the occupied land of the Lisjan Ohlone, a land that is now known within settler colonial topographies as Oakland, California. When conducting research on this chapter that critically looks at the contemporaneous marches in Tonga led by the Tongan Churches’ Forum, a coalition of Tongan Christian leaders, consisting mostly of Tongan men, publicly demonstrating their opposition to the Tongan women’s rights, I was moved by a recent article in the California Sun memorializing an 1863 historical march called “the Konkow Trail of Tears” that took place here in California. I share this historical narrative that transpired here in California in this chapter because the similarities of its themes assists me to further contextualize the 1840 Tongan march of surrender. The “Konkow Trail of Tears” march occurred two decades after the 1840 march of surrender in Tonga.

The “Konkow Trail of Tears” was a phenomenon that consisted of California Indian families that included elders and children and this march took place after a harrowing massacre of California Indian lives described as, “one of the most ghastly marches” (McPhate, California Sun). The LA Times lays out more details about this historical march:

U.S. soldiers rounded up Indian tribes across Northern California at Chico Landing in Butte County. Then they marched them across the sweltering Sacramento Valley, over the rugged North Coast mountains, to what was known then as the Nome Cult Reservation. Of 461 Indians who set out under guard, only 277 completed the 100-mile, 14-day trek. Many were abandoned, too sick to continue. Some escaped. Others were killed. (Romney, LA Times)

The massacres that took place before and during the march was part of a cycle of U.S. settler colonial violence aimed at the extermination of California Indians, “Their collapse was swift. California's tribal population fell from perhaps more than 300,000 to as little as 25,000 by the end of the 19th century, a result of disease, killing, and dispossession that some historians have labeled genocide” (McPhate, California Sun).

The 1863 march named as the “California Trail of Tears” after another well-known massacre and march of Indigenous peoples called the “Trail of Tears” that took place in the Midwest and Southern U.S. in 1838 where, “16,000 Cherokee were brutally rounded up by the US Government, and made to walk what has been historically referred to as, “The Trail of Tears” (Showater 68). Sherry E. Showalter writes about the “Trail of Tears”: “They were forced to lose all that was safe, all that was familiar, their lands, their freedom, their loved ones, their hopes and dreams. More than 4,000 died. Grief and losses were too numerous to list” (Showater 68). “The Trail of Tears” was a march that highlighted the massacre of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous lives like the 1863 California “Konkow Trail of Tears,” and the similarities in these narratives here in the U.S. also draws and connects to the 1840 march of surrender consisting of the “Several old [Tongan] chiefs”: “Grief and losses were too numerous to list” (68). The 1830s were also a time of great political upheaval and resistance against colonialism in Tonga and Tongans courageously fought to protect the Sacred, these are common threads that we share with our Indigenous relatives throughout the globe and these struggles connect us to our Indigenous relatives here in Turtle Island or to what is now known as the U.S. and like many of our Indigenous relatives in Turtle Island, our Tongan and Moana Nui contemporaneous refusal to stop fighting to protect our Sacred are the shared legacies that reinvigorate and remembers our va.
In closing this section, I briefly visit a poignant and haunting narrative that California Indian writer Deborah A. Miranda shares in her book, Bad Indians. The narrative is told in the format of a poem titled, Los Pajaros about early California history that was recorded in the writings of the renowned Catholic Priest, Junipero Serra. I include this narrative in this section because Miranda helps me to further contextualize the layers and the nuances of suffering and “historical unresolved grief” that Indigenous men suffer and continue to carry as consequences of “white terror.” Miranda tells about a historical moment of excruciating “white terror” inflicted by the Spanish military in collaboration with the Catholic Church, on the vulnerable bodies of California Indigenous men and women but I want to note that the violence, like the examples of violence deployed by Europeans in Tonga, specifically targets the bodies of Indigenous women and girls. Thus, we are shown that “white terror” is not just unrelentingly racialized but its inextricably gendered.

I specifically chose the section of Miranda’s poem that focuses on California Indian men’s performances of manhood enacted during the military’s deployment of “white terror.” I pay attention to the representations of Indigenous manhood and the maneuvers of their male bodies throughout the narrative because it is profoundly different from their representations in the pages of colonial texts:

The women were caught with Spanish ropes
Indian men defended their wives—
Prey for the Spaniards’ unbridled lust—
Only to be shot down with bullets.

The Indian men tried to defend their wives
of various and beautifully blended colors
only to be shot down with bullets
seeing your people come through the fields (3)

Miranda’s poem highlights the courageous resistance of Indigenous men at a moment of “white terror” and in this narrative, the deployment of their male bodies were unafraid and unwavering in their commitment to defend their beloved wives, “Indian men defended their wives” from the many forms of violence that the Spanish military deployed, “unbridled lust” on their Indian bodies (3).

This moment urges us to view the many textures and complexities embodied within the contemporaneous spatialities of Indigenous manhood and the multiple layers of shame, grief and loss that Indigenous men conceal and keep hidden within the archives of their “historical unresolved grief.” Thus, Miranda’s narrative compels us to view the histories that are silenced in the colonial renditions of histories and she elucidates the prodigious topographies of heartbreaking losses that Indigenous men suffered and continue to carry because they were unable to defend and to protect their beloved wives, children, their ancestral lands and all that was Sacred to them from the prodigious “unbridled lust” of colonialisms.

I share this narrative because it helps me to contextualize the 1840 historical narrative about Tongan manhood and to center Tongan men’s humanity that is erased in the colonial remembering of this narrative. The trauma and grief that the “several old chiefs,” the Tongan men carried on that fateful historical moment was rendered by the “white terror” and their hearts and spirits were wounded by the losses and deaths of relatives and loved ones that they were unable to stop. Although they resisted and fought back with all their might, they were unable to stop the unrelenting “white terror” and the terror devoured all that they knew and loved. Their
wounds are founded in their shame of not being able to tauhi va, or to fulfill their sacred obligations to protect the Sacred, their families and all that was beloved to them. This is perhaps where Tongan men’s greatest grief is founded. This is perhaps the heaviest and most profound sorrow that they carry within the folds of their archive of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and these are the wounds that are alive and publicly performed contemporaneously by Tongan men in the 2015 demonstrations against Tongan women’s rights in the streets of downtown Nuku’alofa.

**Contemporaneous Tongan Manhood and the Desecration of the Sacred**

This last section looks at the 2015 images of Tongan manhood displayed at the anti CEDAW and anti-women’s rights marches in downtown Nuku’alofa. The month of May, 2015 was a time of political excitement in the streets of downtown Nuku’alofa, the capital city of the Tongan nation. Hundreds of Tongans, that included intergenerational families consisting of elders, young children, babies to exuberant youth marching bands dressed in their Sunday-best tupenu and ta’ovala, joined together and marched the streets, united in a movement led by the Tongan Churches’ Forum, a coalition of Tongan Christian leaders, consisting mostly of men, to publicly demonstrate their opposition to the Tongan government’s aim to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women better known as CEDAW.

The Tongan Churches’ Forum’s exuberant public demonstrations were rooted on their fear that CEDAW would alter the Tongan status quo and lead to the erosion of patriarchal power by creating new laws that would allow women to own land, allow the legalization of same sex marriage and they also feared that CEDAW may also lead to granting Tongan women reproduction rights that may include access to abortion. All three of these major women’s rights are currently legislated as illegal in contemporaneous Tongan jurisprudence. However, the urgency for Tongan lawmakers to support the ratification of CEDAW was highly publicized by Tongan women’s rights leaders and activists because according to a national study on domestic violence conducted in 2009 and released in 2012, 77% of Tongan women are physically or sexually abused. As I have argued earlier, although these numbers are astoundingly high and they reflect a crisis, they are also not representative of Tongan women’s realities and these numbers are a conservative rendering of contemporaneous Tongan women’s lives. As the harrowing statistics and the large public demonstrations against CEDAW illuminates, to be a Tongan woman in the 21st Century, is to know the hands of patriarchal violence and its various maneuvers, intimately, and to know that its familiarity and the silence that shrouds its horrors are norms that are embodied and intricately woven into the fabric of Tonganness.

The Tongan Churches’ Forum led the public demonstrations that were motivated by fear that CEDAW would alter the Tongan status quo and lead to the erosion of patriarchal power. As reported in the *Contemporary Pacific*, “CEDAW is seen as anti-Christian,” and this belief is rooted in CEDAW’s “demand for gender equality, which is assumed to be against the biblical teaching of subservience of women” (Ratuva 185). Furthermore, “CEDAW was also interpreted as antithetical to constitutionally enshrined cultural practices such as male-based landownership, an important anchor of monarchic stability and power” (Ratuva 186). It is therefore not surprising that in a nation marred by our colonial past and present with 98% of Tongans identifying as Christians, along with a growing movement of fundamentalist Christianity, including the fact that Tonga currently holds the global record of hosting the largest Mormon
Conversion rates in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it’s therefore inevitable, that the resistance against CEDAW would attract popular mainstream participation. As documented in a roundtable discussion on CEDAW that included the voices of proponents and opponents regarding the ratification of CEDAW, “The women advocate at the roundtable perceived that their main antagonists are the church ministers, the faifekau who propagate fear of the future. There were at least four faifekau in the room” (Fonua, Pacific Island Report). And in a significant and paradigmatic moment during the roundtable discussion, that is widely documented, a disgruntled faifekau or Christian Pastor, “shouted, as if from the pulpit, ‘You women should know your place!’” (Fonua, Pacific Island Report).

As I have shown in this chapter, the colonial production of Tongan manhood illustrates the new systems of va, or relationalities and allegiances are constituted through centering the desecration of the Sacred, the Feminine, and the systemic supplanting of the losses through privileging the colonial systems of heteropatriarchy symbolized by the new white and male Christian deity at the center of Tonganness. The historical and systemic desecration of the Sacred is saliently and painfully reproduced in contemporaneous and every day Tongan life and culture through Tongan men’s physical deployment of violence against Tongan women especially within intimate spaces such as the home and familial spaces like the contemporaneous spatialities of the Tongan Nationalist Family and the Tongan Mormon Family that I examine in this dissertation. Earlier in this section, I shared some key points from my research in Chapter Four that looks at the genealogy of colonial violence or what I more often term, patriarchal violence, or the phenomenon of “white terror” that I posit is an import from the Europeans that transpires at the moment of first contact in the seventeenth century and throughout several other notable historical moments of early Tongan contact with Europeans.

**Epidermalization of This Inferiority**

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon writes about the phenomenon “epidermalization of this inferiority,” described as a process of “internalization” and “The entire purpose of his behavior is to emulate the white man, to become like him, and thus hope to be accepted as a man” (Sardar xiii). The phenomenon of “epidermalization of this inferiority” is further described as:

> When the black man comes into contact with the white world he goes through an experience of sensitization. His ego collapses. His self-esteem evaporates. He ceases to be a self-motivated person. The entire purpose of his behavior is to emulate the white man, to become like him, and thus hope to be accepted as a man. (xiii)

The 2015 images of Tongan manhood displayed at the anti-women’s rights and anti-CEDAW demonstrations depict Fanon’s theory of “epidermalization of this inferiority” that is a psychological process of “internalization” and it politically aims towards “The entire purpose of his behavior is to emulate the white man, to become like him” and in the case of Tongan manhood, to enact the desecration of the Sacred that is reproduced in every day Tongan life and culture through the normalization of violence against women, “and thus hope to be accepted as a man” (Saadar xiii).

In addition, and correspondingly, I have also attempted to show historical narratives that depict Tongan men are also victims of systems of patriarchal violence. Robert Alexander Innes and Kim Anderson write in their introduction chapter to their collection, *Indigenous Men and Masculinities*:
The ways in which hegemonic masculinity has acted to subordinate Indigenous men encourages them to similarly assert power and control by subordinating Indigenous women...As a result, many Indigenous men abide by these ideals, even though doing so contributes to their own subordination as a group. As non-whites, Indigenous men’s privilege is ultimately subordinated by white male privilege, so they are then confined to achieve their privilege through the oppression of those who are perceived from a hegemonic masculine perspective as being weaker and more vulnerable than they are. (11)

These are also themes that Haunani Kay Trask addresses in her critical analysis of the marginalization of Hawaiian women from the U.S. political system that on the other hand, offers Hawaiian men opportunities for upward mobility in this system:

Because American culture, like Western civilization generally, is, patriarchal, that is, structured and justified by values that emphasize male dominance over women and nature, American institutions reward men and male-dominant behavior while positions of power. This is how patriarchy entrenches itself. (92)

In fact, these vexed complexities define the 2015 public performances of Tongan manhood at the anti CEDAW and anti-Tongan women’s rights marches illustrate a theory about the “colonial image” that Homi Bhabha terms as, “the site of ambivalence” that he describes,” as point of identification—marks the site of an ambivalence.

Representations of Tongan manhood are always spatially split—it “makes present something that is absent” (xxx) and perhaps is absent in the formation and performance of Tongan manhood are Tongan men’s agencies, resistances against colonialisms and perhaps what this new formation of manhood erases is especially the very tenderness of their hearts that allow us to view their humanity. As Fanon has argued, “For not only must the black man be black; he must be black in relation to the white man” (110). The contemporaneous Tongan man’s march of surrender constituted through their commitment to heteropatriarchy at the expense of the desecration of the Sacred is the very thread that connect Tongan manhood’s “relation to the white man” (110).

*Tongan Historical Unresolved Grief and the Soul Wound*

This last section of the essay looks at the 2015 performances of Tongan manhood that ostentatiously and vociferously depicted a relentless opposition to Tongan women’s rights as if these fundamental right winged politics were “traditional” Tongan values. Interestingly, the Tongan male leaders in 2015 performed the historical production of the march of surrender that the “Several Old Chiefs” performed at the gaze of their Christian enemies in 1840 after the Christians massacred their families, their Tongan ancestral lands and all that was Sacred to them and to their ancestors. The historical march of surrender is a spectacle that serves as evidence of Tongan conversions to the European deity and values of Christianity and our Tongan appropriation of the colonial institution of heteropatriarchy are markers of irreparable loss and grief for Tonganness. Thus, the 2015 performances of Tongan manhood elucidates not just Tongan “historical unresolved grief” but it profoundly also highlights the presence of the “soul wound.”

In his important work delineating the legacies of historical trauma on Indigenous peoples and communities, psychologist Eduardo Duran recalls his early clinical work with Native American communities in central California and he documents a phenomenon that took place in
many of his conversations with community members, “When asked about the problems in the community, people did not mention the expected symptom-oriented problems. They began to mention such as spiritual injury, soul sickness and soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” (15). Duran examines the phenomenon of “Spiritual injury, soul sickness, soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” that these Indigenous California community members documented and he traces and connects their contemporaous suffering to the histories of past and present “systemic genocide” that “was inflicted on many of the Original People of this hemisphere” and he adds, “Eradication of the Native life-world was attempted through a long process of genocide, ethnocide, and cultural hegemony” (7, 27). Duran terms the “Spiritual injury, soul sickness, soul wounding, and ancestral hurt” that Indigenous communities are currently suffering as a phenomenon that he terms as “soul wound” that he describes as, “intergenerational trauma, or historical trauma (15) and furthermore, he contends, “Basically, these terms have similar meanings. The difference is that the Native idea of historical trauma involves the understanding that the trauma occurred in the soul or the spirit” (7). The 2015 performances of Tongan manhood on the global stage reveal the phenomenon of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” that is founded on the important research that Indigenous scholars Brave Heart and DeBryn posit “contributes to the current social pathology, originating from the loss of lives, land and vital aspects of Native culture promulgated by European conquest of the Americas” (60). Brave Heart, DeBryn, and Duran’s work are significant contributions to Indigenous communities and especially for scholars in Tongan and Pacific Studies because they make visible the heavy hand of the colonial past in shaping the suffering carried by contemporaneous Indigenous lives and communities not just here in Turtle Island but also to those of us in Moanua Nui because of our shared histories of colonialisms.

Correspondingly, I want to highlight one of Duran’s points delineated in his theory of “soul wound” in my discussion of the 2015 performances of Tongan manhood. Duran argues: “the difference is that the Native idea of historical trauma involves the understanding that the trauma occurred in the soul or the spirit” (7). The performances of Tongan manhood displaying an adamant commitment to Christianity and heteropatriarchy, foreign institutions that were imports from our Western colonizers, illuminates the contemporaneous suffering that Tongan men carry in their “soul or spirit” (7).

The Tongan Soul Wound

Recalling the 1840 historical moment memorializing the spectacle of the march of surrender of “Several old chiefs” was a harrowing moment that came at the heel of “white terror” and the devastating massacre of Tongan lives including the deaths of unarmed women and children as punishment for the Tongans defending the Sacred. This particular battle as well as the larger wars that most Western historians apolitically and uncritically term Tongan Civil wars, or the “preoccupation” with violence that dominate the Tongan political landscape that I term patriarchal violence or “white terror” is a historical phenomenon that I have shown throughout this dissertation is an import from the Europeans and this is a legacy of the European’s histories of colonialisms and trajectories of “progress” in Tonga.

Furthermore, I also want to point out that the narrative featuring the march of surrender of “Several old Chiefs” in 1840 must also be read outside of its colonial containment and we Tongans must attempt to read the silences that haunt these narratives and to recognize that these historical moments force us to view the histories of our Tongan ancestors’ unrelenting resistance
and commitment to defend the Sacred and to defend the lives of their beloved families and ancestral homelands. It is the narratives of our Tongan male ancestors’ commitment to va, to defending the lives of their beloved wives, their daughters, their relatives, their homelands that we must revive and tell in our contemporaneous renderings of Tongan manhood so that we can all imagine being Tongan, once again, in a way that honors and remembers our ancestors and the histories of innumerable losses and grief that they carried and so that we can also attempt to release these burdens that are too heavy to carry. Perhaps this is our most potent gifts that we can offer for the young Tongan women and men that are our Tongan ancestors yet to be born.

Conclusion

I have mentioned earlier in this chapter and throughout this dissertation project, the urgency for the ratification of CEDAW was founded in the 2012 survey that showed that 77% of Tongan women and girls were victims of violence and yet, these stories of pain and suffering that define the texture of every day lives and experiences of Tongan women and girls were erased in the public meetings and discussions on CEDAW and furthermore, the safety of Tongan women and girls were also silenced in the massive public demonstrations led by the Christian male leaders. Yet the historical and systemic violence against Tongan women and girls are ghosts that cannot be appeased by silence and they make their presence known through other means. As Avery Gordon terms in the theory “her shape in his hand”:

I see her shape and his hand in the vast networking of our society, and in all the evils and oversights that plague our lives and laws. The control he had over her body…In his attempt to own what no man can own, the habit of his power and absence of her choice. I look for her shape in his hand. (6)

In the hyper vigilant public performances of Tongan manhood centered on Christianity and heteropatriarchy that I argued followed in a cycle of the historical production of march of surrender displayed in downtown Nuku’alofa in 2015, spectators came face-to-face with the dead.

The haunting and ghosts were not appeased with the silence and the enthusiastic colonial tropes reciting the victory of European “progress” in Tonga and over Tonganness. The ghosts allowed us to view the “dead” and all that has been lost. The ghosts of Tongan women and Tongan girls, the very victims of patriarchal violence whose lives and suffering invoked the urgent call for Tonga to sign CEDAW came out in troves, to haunt and to remind us that the past and present are intermeshed. After all, it was the lives and historical suffering of Tongan women and girls that incited the march and even in their physical absence, their spirits lined and vigorously marched the streets of downtown Nuku’alofa. Even in their very poignant invisibility from this very large public discourse that centered on the spectacle of the virility of Tongan manhood, we were able to distinguish and view “her shape in his hand” and we were able to view the heinous power stratifications and layers of Tongan “historical unresolved grief” and “soul wound” that has systemically given Tongan men the authority “to own what no man can own, the habit of his power and absence of her choice” (6). “Her shape in his hand” was made visible in the painful discomfort that many of us shared when viewing these images and it is this continued discomfort and haunting that brings me to writing this chapter and it motivates my commitment to finishing this dissertation project at all costs.

The representations of Tongan manhood were images often too painful to view because of the silences that they revealed and could not contain. The public performances of Tongan
manhood at the expense of the lives and safety of Tongan women and girls broke my heart. I am one of the multitudes of Tongan women that the Tongan male and Christian leaders ignored and pushed aside in their rejection of CEDAW and Tongan women’s rights. Furthermore, its Tongan women like me, like my mother Litia, and like our beloved sister Feifafa that I memorialize in Chapter Three, as well as countless other Tongan women that are victims and survivors of the histories of patriarchal violence, that our Tongan leaders threw away in their refusal to confront the issues of systemic violence against women in our Tongan families and Tongan communities. Furthermore, like so many other Tongan women, our intimate knowledges and familiarity with the unrelenting cycles and layers of patriarchal violence are intricately woven into the lattices of our Tonganness that we are often unable to imagine any other possibilities outside of these terrains. It is this patriarchal stifling of not only our physical bodies but it’s the reach of the violence to our spirits and imagination that perhaps hurts the most.

It is also important to note that these moments of crisis, inevitably, brought the Tongan warriors to the forefront. I was inspired and deeply moved by the example set by the young fifteen year-old Tonga High School student, Supi Halafi. Halafili courageously stood alone and without any support from her entire high school and she fought the patriarchy on behalf of herself and for other Tongan women and girls that didn’t have a voice. This young Tongan woman used her voice as a weapon to fight and to reject the normalization of heteropatriarchal authority and violence and by doing this, she placed Tongan women in the forefront and she reminded us that our role as Tongan women is at the forefront and as leaders of our nation. Halafi’s example allows us to trace the multifarious possibilities that are alive and thriving in the Tongan imaginary.

In closing, I share a statement made by Sara Deer about rape and sexual violence in Native America; I have shared this statement throughout this dissertation project because of its profound relevance and significance for contemporaneous Tonganness. Deer writes about the profound historical wounds and trauma that are consequences of rape on not only individuals, but on collectives and nations:

All of these events are attacks on the human soul; the destruction of indigenous culture and the rape of a woman connote a kind of spiritual death that is difficult to describe to those that have not experienced it. It is not only Native women who have been raped but Native nations as a whole. (12)

Deer’s work, like Eduardo Duran’s theory of “soul wound” allows us to view that Tongan men’s deployment of violence against women that often includes the violence of rape on the bodies of Tongan women are not just individual or private cases that should be kept as family secrets within the boundaries of their respective families; rather, it is important for us to recognize that these cycles and incidents of violence against women that are predominant in our respective Tongan intimate relationships and familial spaces coalesce to produce a collective “soul wound”: “It is not only Native women who have been raped but Native nations as a whole” (Deer 12).
Endnotes

1 The union organizer and renowned folk singer Utah Philips’ beautiful song “The Telling Takes Me Home” helped me to shape this title.

2 Bob Marley is a hero to many of us Tongans and Pacific peoples. I can’t tell a Tongan narrative without including Bob Marley, who is a beloved ancestor. This song is especially touching because it includes the Wailers.

3 All these articles can be found under in this article by David Noyce, “Salt Lake Tribune Wins Pulitzer for Campus Rape Coverage, Praises Victims for Sharing Their Stories.” Salt Lake Tribune, Updated Oct 3, 2017.

4 Methodism is the national religious institution and it is still Tonga’s largest Church. The Mormon Church comes in second and has surpassed Catholicism. Catholicism was once the second-largest religious institution in Tonga. The 2011 statistics reveal the growth of fundamentalist Christianity in Tonga that includes institutions such as Mormonism.

5 To view the full document, Constitution of Tonga, 1875, please look at Appendix D in Sione Latukefū’s Church and State in Tonga.

6 Huichin is the Ohlone name for the East Bay. The Ohlone are the First Peoples of the East Bay. Oakland is located in the East Bay, Alameda County, California.

7 Gloria Anzaldúa writes, “Cervicide—the killing of a deer. In archetypal symbology the Self appears as a deer for women” (127).
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