MOVEMENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THREE SAMOAN DANCE TYPES:

MĀ'ULU'ULU, SĀSĀ AND TAUALUGA

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ABSTRACT

Using principles originated by Rudolf Laban, I analyze examples of three Samoan dance types, mā 'ulu 'ulu, sāsā, and taualuga, performed by three dance groups from American Sāmoa: the youth group of the Congregational Church of Jesus in Sāmoa (CCJS 'Autalavou), the Samoana High School Swing Choir and the Siva Maia Dance Group. In Chapter 1, I briefly present the geography and political situation of American Sāmoa, followed by a brief overview of Samoan culture. Then, I provide an introduction to Samoan dance, including terminology, types of dance, change, general characteristics and contexts for performance and instruction. In Chapter 2, I review the existing Samoan dance literature and other relevant movement studies. I also discuss my research and analytical methodologies. Then, I introduce the three dance groups that performed the examples in my analysis and discuss where they performed the examples cited. In Chapters 3 through 5, I analyze the chosen dance examples to reveal the movement characteristics of each dance type. Finally, in Chapter 6, I summarize the elements that characterize each dance type, distinguish stylistic variations of each dance group and suggest general features that characterize Samoan dance. In addition, I suggest possible directions for future research.

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PREFACE

Orthography: Foreign words and pronunciations

The Samoan alphabet consists of the letters a, e, i, o, u, f, g, l, m, n, p, s, t, v, h, k, r, and the glottal stop (koma liliu), symbolized by an inverted comma ('). The pronunciations of the consonants follow their English- letter counterparts except for g, which is pronounced ng, as in the English word "sing". The vowel a is pronounced as in the English word "father", e as the "a" in the word "day", i as in the "ee" in the word "eel", o as in "phone", and u as in the "oo" of "too". The glottal stop is pronounced the same as the stops in the English expression "uh-oh" or as in the colloquial pronunciation of button, "bu'un". Samoan vowels can be lengthened by extending the duration of their articulation. Vowel length is phonemic (changes the meaning of the word) and is expressed in the alphabet with the fa'amamafa (macron). For example, adding a macron to each "a" in the word sasa changes its pronunciation to sāsā and changes its meaning from "hit" to "a token or mark" and also to the name of a type of dance (explained in more detail in Chapter 4). Because macrons are not used in English, the adjective "Samoan" (an English word) appears throughout this thesis without a macron over the first "a", whereas in the indigenous word "Sāmoa", the macron is used.

In this thesis, foreign words appear in italics. The first appearance of a foreign word is followed by an English gloss in parentheses. In addition, a glossary of foreign terms is included at the end of the thesis.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Geography and politics

The Samoan islands are located in the Pacific Ocean about half-way between Hawai'i and New Zealand in what is known as the Polynesian triangle. The Polynesian triangle is loosely formed with Hawai'i, New Zealand and Easter Island as its three points and is divided into Eastern Polynesia and Western Polynesia. These groupings are based on similarities in culture and language. (See Figure 1: Map of Pacific) Some of the Samoan islands' Western Polynesian neighbors include Tonga to the south, Tokelau to the north, and Wallis and Futuna to the west. Fiji, also located to the west of the Samoan islands, shares Western Polynesian and Melanesian features. The Cook Islands, located to the east of the Samoan islands, are considered part of Eastern Polynesia.

The Samoan islands are politically divided into two entities. The eastern half of the islands, known collectively as American Sāmoa, were ceded to the government of the United States of America beginning in 1900 and presently remain an unincorporated territory of the U.S. They now include the islands of 'Ofu, Olosega, and Ta'ū (collectively known as the Manu'a islands), the small island of Aunu'u, the main island of Tutuila, Rose Atoll and Swains Island (culturally one of the Tokelau islands). The western half of the islands, officially known today as Sāmoa (although commonly referred to as Western Sāmoa or independent Sāmoa), became the first fully independent Pacific Island nation in 1962. Independent Sāmoa includes the inhabited islands of Savai'i, 'Upolu, Apolima and Manono and several smaller uninhabited islands as well.

(See Figure 2: Map of Sāmoa) Although the two Samoas are politically independent of each other, the people of both places share a common culture which is reinforced by strong family ties that cut across political boundaries.

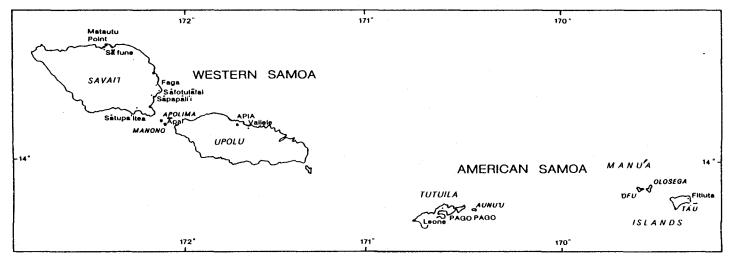
1.2 History

According to archeological evidence, it is believed that the earliest settlers arrived in Sāmoa around 1000 B.C. These early settlers are thought to have arrived by way of Tonga. After settling in Sāmoa, some of these inhabitants later migrated into Eastern Polynesia.

During Sāmoa's early history, there was much interaction with the nearby islands of Fiji and Tonga. The inhabitants of Sāmoa did not have their first recorded encounter with Europeans until the Dutch explorer Jacob Rogenveen sighted Manu'a in 1722.

Sāmoa was visited again by Europeans in 1787 and 1791. European presence in the islands was not prominent or very influential, however, until 1830 with the arrival of John Williams from the London Missionary Society (LMS). For various reasons the LMS was very successful in Sāmoa and Christianity spread quickly among the people. (Grattan 1948) Even though the people of Sāmoa adopted new practices and beliefs, they were able to meld the new Christian ideas with their traditional belief systems and way of life. New ways and old were able to coexist, enabling Samoans to maintain the majority of their traditional culture to the present day.

Figure 1: Map of Pacific (Kaeppler and Love 1998:3)



Map 3 Samoa

Figure 2: Map of Sāmoa (Williams 1984:66)

1.3 Culture

Samoan society is traditionally set up in a hierarchical system based on rank in which different individuals are invested with *matai* (chief) titles to indicate their position and responsibilities within their extended families and villages. In addition to titled individuals, which include *ali'i* (high chiefs), *tulāfale* (talking chiefs) and sometimes the sons and daughters of high chiefs (*mānaia* and *tāupou*), traditionally there were also various village associations based on age, gender and status. Two of these associations were the *aualuma* (young women's association) and the 'aumaga (young untitled men's association), which had various duties to perform (often including dance) for social events and ceremonies. Although the importance of these two specific village associations has diminished, remnants of their functions can still be seen today. In addition, one association that has gained in prominence is the 'autalavou (church youth group), which includes members of both genders and, contrary to the term, involves people of all ages.

Unlike the decline of the young men's and women's associations, the hierarchical titling system is still very much in use today, not only in Sāmoa, but also in the Samoan diaspora. Titled individuals still exert political influence at the levels of the extended families and villages, even though a Western-style government has been instituted in the islands for many years. In addition to the practical functioning of these individuals and the entire ranking system, rank relationships are also played out in the performance of certain dances. (Grattan 1948 and Shore 1982)

1.4 Current populations and migration

According to the *World Fact Book 2003*, 70,260 people reside in American Sāmoa. The majority of this population is Samoan and a small percentage is Tongan, Philippine, Korean or Caucasian. In comparison, 178,173 people reside in independent Sāmoa. The majority of this population is also Samoan and a small percentage is European and European/Polynesian mixed.

Many Samoans also currently live abroad. Some of the largest groups of Samoans living outside of Sāmoa can be found in New Zealand, Hawai'i, and California (Los Angeles and San Francisco areas), and the number of Samoans living outside of American Sāmoa currently exceeds the insular population. According to the US Census 2000, in that year, there were 91,029 Samoans living in the United States (not including American Sāmoa).

Samoans living abroad generally maintain ties with their families in American and independent Sāmoa. They maintain traditional values and culture in various ways.

Dance traditions are maintained through performances at various festivals held for Samoan holidays or to celebrate Polynesian culture. (These contemporary dance contexts will be discussed in Section 1.5.4.)

1.5 Samoan dance: an introduction

The general word for "dance" in the Samoan language is *siva*. *Siva* may be used as a verb, as in the sentence *E siva le teine*, "The girl is dancing". It may also be used as a noun in the names of certain types of dances such as *siva afi*, "fire dance", or *siva ili*,

"fan dance". Another way in which the word *siva* is used is in the expression *siva* $S\bar{a}moa$. $Siva\ S\bar{a}moa$ has two meanings. The broad meaning of $siva\ S\bar{a}moa$ is "Samoan dance". It can be used to refer to any kind of Samoan dancing, but is most often used in this sense when making a comparison with a non-Samoan style of dance. $Siva\ S\bar{a}moa$ is also used in a more specialized way to describe a style of Samoan dancing that is often associated with a specific dance, the *taualuga*. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, the *taualuga* is a very revered dance that epitomizes and illustrates important aspects of Samoan culture.

1.5.1 Types of dance

In addition to the general word for dance, *siva*, a variety of indigenous terms are used to name Samoan dances. Names exist for types of dances as well as individual dances within those types. The names of individual dances are usually identical to the names of the songs they are danced to. The names for the various dance types relate to the musical accompaniment for the dance, the function of the dance, the movements used for the dance or the implements used by the dancers. The different dance types can be determined or distinguished by a combination of these factors. Generally, a variety of different choreographies exist for each type of dance.

In addition to indigenous names for dance types and individual dances, researchers have employed various categorical divisions to look at Samoan dance. One of these divisions that is commonly used by researchers today, and that I use in this thesis, was first introduced by ethnomusicologist Richard Moyle. In his book, *Samoan*

Traditional Music (1988), Moyle divides Samoan dance into two large groups: "obsolete dances" (for dances that are no longer regularly performed) and "extant dances" (for dances that are in current and consistent use).

In the following two charts, I list Samoan dance types in accordance with their appearance in written works. There are separate charts for the "obsolete" and "extant" categories which reflect my understanding of the current status of each dance type. Basic descriptions of each dance type are not provided here. However, general characteristics of contemporary Samoan dances are provided in section 1.5.3 and the three types of dance chosen for this study, $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu'ulu, $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ and taualuga, will be discussed in detail in Chapters 3, 4 and 5.

Extant dance types	Krämer (1995)	Buck (1927-28)	Holmes (1992)		Kaeppler (1980)		Love (1998)		Tuiasosopo (2001)
'Ailao		X		X		X	X	X	
Action song						X			
Fa 'ataupati		X		X	X	X	X	X	
Laulausiva	X	X		X			X	X	X
Māʻuluʻulu	X	X		X X	X	X	X	X	X
Sakē				X				X	
Sāsā		X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Sasa siva			X						
Siva	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Siva afi (Fire knife				X		X		X	
dance)									
Siva ili						X			
Siva ipu						X			
Siva lā ʻau						X			
Siva lapalapa		X^1				X			
Siva nifo 'oti (Knife				X		X			
dance)									
Siva 'ofe						X			
Siva o le taua						X			
Siva salu						X			
Siva Sāmoa						X		X	
Siva sapelu						X			
Siva ti'a						X			
Taualuga		X		X	X	X	X	X	X

Figure 3: Chart of extant Samoan dance types²

¹ Buck uses the term sasa to label siva lapalapa. In addition, Buck lists the terms tu'i and sasa-fi'a, but it is not clear whether they are dance types or dance movements.

² The spellings used in this chart are consistent with each author's spellings of the dance types with the following exceptions: Krämer (ma'ulu'ulu), Buck (ailao, laulau siva, ma'ulu'ulu, sasa), Moyle (replaces glottal stops with apostrophes) and Kaeppler (does not use macrons).

Obsolete dance types	Williams	Stair (1983)	Krämer (1995)	Buck (1927-28)		Love (1998)	McLean (1999)
Ao siva		X			X		
Aosoa						X	
Aoula			X		X		
Fiti			X		X		X
Матай			X		X		X
Ma'omālie			X		X		
Panauvila			X				
Pōula	X	X	X	X	X		X
Sa'ē	X		X		X		X
Sao	X	T			X		X
Satē			X				
Sivaa 'ofe		X	X				
Soa			X		X	X	X
Solilemogamoga			X		X		
Solisiva			X				
Sosoa			X				
Tafua le fala		X	X		X	X	
Talalo		X	X		X		X
Tauātane			X				
Ula			X		X	X	X
Ulō					X		
Vila		X	X		X		

Figure 4: Chart of obsolete Samoan dance types³

³ The spellings used in this chart are consistent with each author's spelling of the dance types with the following exceptions: Williams (*poula lagni, sae*), Stair (*po-ula, tafua-le-fala, ao-siva, siva-a-ofe, siva-ta-lalo*), Krämer (does not use macrons), Moyle (uses apostrophes in place of glottal stops).

1.5.2 Historical developments

The changes in Samoan dance that have been documented most extensively by researchers are the names of dance types and other dance-related terminology. These changes indicate that in some instances, older dances fell into complete disuse as newer dances gained in popularity, while in other instances, the names associated with the dances were changed while the dances themselves remained intact. However, because dance movements are not always well-documented by researchers, it is difficult to pinpoint precise changes and developments in the movement elements of Samoan dance.

There are many factors that contributed to these developments in Samoan dance. Some changes inevitably occurred as the result of natural processes such as time, individual creativity and cultural exchange with neighboring islands. Samoans are often noted for their innovativeness and ability to "Samoan-ize" practically anything. This ability to indigenize foreign elements probably accounts for many developments throughout Samoan dance history. In addition to these elements, many changes occurred as the result of Christian missionary influences in all facets of Samoan life. Although there was never a ban on dancing in Sāmoa, as was the case in Hawai'i and Tāhiti, many dances and dance events were discouraged by the missionaries, especially dances performed at night ($p\bar{o}ula$), which they considered to be indecent. Eventually, as stated earlier, many of these dances were either replaced by new dance types, or the names of the dances were changed to disguise them. (Moyle 1988)

Samoan dance is continually undergoing developmental changes. Currently, in addition to more frequent contact with dance forms within Polynesia, an increasing

number of Samoans living in diasporic communities in the United States and elsewhere also contribute to changes and developments in Samoan dance. It is within these communities abroad (and within the Samoan islands, as well) that we find various festivals and competitions to celebrate Samoan heritage. These festivals serve as platforms for innovation as well as demonstrations of traditional Samoan culture. New performance contexts, individual creativity and the Samoanization of foreign elements, among many other things, will continue to influence Samoan dance.

1.5.3 General characteristics of contemporary Samoan dance types

Samoan dances are most often large, group dances, although solo dances also exist. In group dances, the performers are generally arranged in rows and columns, although different arrangements are becoming more common and are entirely up to the choreographer. Performers are both male and female and they can perform most dance types in mixed company or in distinct gender groups. When performing in mixed company, gender distinction is often seen in the arrangement of dancers and sometimes in dance movements. However, function and formality sometimes supercede gender distinction. In addition, there are some dance types that are only performed by men. The same choreography is generally performed by the entire group. When the choreography utilizes gender distinctive movements, male and female dancers will have separate choreography. When dancers perform the same choreography, there may or may not be an emphasis on precision of movements, depending on the aim of the group and the purpose of the performance.

There is generally very little locomotion in group dances; performers usually move no more than a few steps in any direction. In solo dances, more locomotion may be used, but it is not emphasized. Instead, emphasis lies in the upper half of the body, with the most movement in the arms and hands. These movements may or may not include the use of various implements. Although there are a large variety of upper body motifs, there are very few lower body motifs. The torso is generally held upright throughout most dances, and the legs are generally bent, or the dancer is seated. When the torso is moved, it is moved as one unit.

Samoan dances are rarely presented as single items (unless performed for a competition). Instead, a Samoan dance performance consists of a series of dances. A "program" may use any number and combination of dances, but will generally have an opening or introductory piece, *laulausiva*, and a concluding piece, the *taualuga*. Generally, the *taualuga* is considered the most important part of a dance event.

1.5.4 Contexts for dance performance and instruction

In the past, Samoan dances were performed as entertainment in the context of different village celebrations such as ceremonies for the bestowal of a title (saofa'i), or at 'aiavā ceremonies (evening presentations for visitors) during malaga (visiting excursions). Today Samoan dances are still performed for these events. In addition, newer contexts for dance include church fund raisers, holidays, festivals and competitions.

One of the most important celebrations for American Samoans is American Sāmoa Flag Day, which commemorates the cession of the islands to the United States as an unincorporated territory on April 17, 1900. Samoan Flag Day is not only celebrated in American Sāmoa, but is also celebrated in Samoan communities in Hawai'i, San Francisco and Los Angeles, each festival being held on a different date so that people can attend multiple events. Other popular festivals include the Teuila Festival, held in independent Sāmoa, and the Pacific Arts Festival, held in a different Pacific Island location every four years. In addition, lesser known festivals like the Arizona Aloha Festival, in Phoenix, AZ, also celebrate Samoan heritage through dance. Another popular festival is the We Are Sāmoa Week (which includes the International Fire-Knife Competition) held every year in La'ie, Hawai'i.

In addition to changing performance contexts, the transmission of Samoan dance has also undergone developments. In the past, learning dance was associated with participation in family and village activities. Today, in addition to learning in these situations, people can also acquire dance knowledge outside of the village setting in schools and through private instruction. The diversity of contexts available for learning Samoan dance have given rise to new types of dance groups that include swing choirs, church choirs, and specialized performance groups that teach not only Samoan dance, but other Polynesian dances, as well.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Literature Review

Descriptions of Samoan dance can be found throughout the history of European contact; from journals of early naval explorers and missionaries in the nineteenth century to the works of leisure travelers, anthropologists and ethnomusicologists in the twentieth century. Although there are a few detailed descriptions of different dances, no detailed analysis of Samoan dance exists. Instead, most authors provide only basic descriptions of different dance types, identifying such features as group size, dance function, and musical accompaniment. In the following literature review, I summarize the content of various sources that specifically relates to Samoan dance. Detailed literature reviews about the dance types in this study appear in the analysis chapters.

2.1.1 Sources that include Samoan dance

Some of the earliest accounts of Samoan dance were written by missionaries during the 1800s. The accounts generally consist of descriptions of whole dance events and occasionally individual dances witnessed by the observers.

In *The Samoan Journals of John Williams 1830 and 1832* (Williams 1984), missionary John Williams provides a few detailed descriptions of Samoan dance events, including the $p\bar{o}ula$, sao and $sa'\bar{e}$. He also describes dances that he witnessed at weddings and welcoming ceremonies. In addition, he draws a distinction between those

dances that he considers decent and those he considers indecent and includes a discussion about whether or not he thought certain dances should be prohibited.

In Samoa: A hundred years ago and long before (1986), originally published in 1884, Reverend George Turner writes about Samoan dance, games and sports under the heading of "amusements". Although he includes a fairly detailed depiction of one dance event, he gives no name for the event or the individual dances within it. He does, however, indicate a distinction between dances performed during the day and dances performed at night based on their degree of formality.

In *Old Samoa, or Flotsam and Jetsam from the Pacific Ocean* (1983), originally published in 1897, Reverend John B. Stair also describes Samoan dance under the subject of amusements. However, unlike Turner, he uses the Samoan names for the dances and dance events he describes, including such dances as *po-ula*, *tafua-le-fala*, *ao-siva*, *siva-a-ofe*, and *siva-ta-lalo*.

In his detailed ethnographic account, *The Samoa Islands Volume II* (1995), originally published in 1903, Augustin Krämer provides some insightful and thorough writing on Samoan dance. His descriptions of individual dances are so specific that the movements could almost be reconstructed from his words alone. He also describes and gives names for specific dance movements, distinguishes categories of dances from individual dances, names specific dancers and discusses the influence of Samoan dance on dancing performed in Tonga and Fiji. In addition, this is one of the first texts to include photographs of Samoan dances. While this text is very informative, the majority

of the dances discussed in the writing are no longer practiced, as they have either been replaced by newer dances or have been abandoned altogether.

In his field notes from 1927 and 1928 (Buck 1928-28), Peter Buck supplies a list of Samoan dances with short descriptions, including the names of some dance movements. However, because of the inconsistency in his outline format, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether he intends certain Samoan terms to indicate types of dances, specific dances or sections of dances.

Margaret Mead discusses the role of dance in Samoan society as an outlet for individual expression for young children in *Coming of Age in Samoa* (2001), originally published in 1928. She describes three different styles of dancing (which she refers to as "dance of the boys", "dance of the jesters" and "dance of the taupou") and the relationship between these dance styles and societal rank.

In *An Introduction to Samoan Custom* (1948), Grattan gives a detailed account of various Samoan ceremonies and traditions, also providing in-depth descriptions of several dance events.

Lowell Holmes provides an anthropological account of life in Sāmoa in *Samoan Village* (1992), originally published in 1974. He includes one detailed description of a dance, but the name he gives it (*sasa siva*) is not found in any other sources.

In her master's thesis from 1970, Vicki Martin analyzes six dances, two of which are Samoan dances (*siva lapalapa* and *siva nifo 'oti*), performed at the Polynesian Cultural Center. Her "analyses", however, are little more than minimally descriptive

choreographic outlines which she does not subject to further analysis or contextualization in any way.

Adrienne Kaeppler provides an entry on Polynesian dance in the *Grove*Dictionary of Music (Sadie 2001) in which she names different Samoan dance types and provides general descriptions of basic movement characteristics used for each. The descriptions are not very detailed, but do give an indication of the nature of the movements of the dances.

In *Sala'ilua: A Samoan Mystery* (1982), Bradd Shore creates a metaphor of the dance arena as a reflection of Samoan society. He shows that the entire performance space, the arrangement of dancers in that space and the way that individuals perform all have a correlation to different aspects of the village and society.

Richard Moyle includes a detailed survey of dances in Sāmoa, past and present, in his book *Traditional Samoan Music* (1988). He divides all the dance types that he writes about into the categories of "obsolete" and "extant", which many researchers continue to use in their writing. He provides information about performance contexts and also discusses factors that may have brought about changes in dance that contributed to the development of the two categories he distinguishes.

In Fa'a-Sāmoa: The Samoan way (1995), Ad Linkels attempts to paint a portrait of Samoan music and dance as it existed in the 1980s. He lists and describes different types of Samoan dances, but adds very little new information, since the majority of his text is borrowed from previous sources. He does include many of his own photographs,

however, that are frequently used by other authors and that illustrate a variety of contexts and modes of performance for many of the different dance types.

In the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* (1998), Jacob Love provides some descriptions of Samoan dance that differ slightly from other sources. The descriptions are not very detailed, as this text focuses primarily on music.

In addition to writings that focus on Samoan culture and Samoan music, more recent works have been compiled to highlight the similarities and differences in many different Polynesian music and dance traditions. In Weavers of Songs: Polynesian Music and Dance (1999), Mervyn McLean divides information first by island groups and then makes comparisons in the final chapter. In his chapter on Sāmoa, he provides no new information about Samoan dance, simply citing and paraphrasing from previous authors. In Hula, Haka, Hoko!: An Introduction to Polynesian Dancing (1999), Ad Linkels divides information not only by island groups, but also by abstract movement components. This method pits various dance styles directly against one another throughout the text for comparison, making the information a bit confusing. As in his previous book (Linkels 1995), Linkels includes many photographs to supplement the text. While these photographs can very quickly show the reader similarities and differences in some characteristics, such as costuming, group size, gender of performers and group formations, they do not relay much information about the nature of the movements executed in performance.

Much of the information about Samoan dance in recent years is not based on new research, but is reiterated from earlier works. In order to move forward in the study of

Samoan dance, authors cannot rely solely on older works to describe the current state of dance in Sāmoa. New research needs to be conducted that can add to former research and different perspectives need to be used to analyze dance to help provide a fuller understanding of what dance in Sāmoa is. Although there are many approaches, the lens I have chosen to aid my viewing and understanding of Samoan dance is that of movement analysis.

2.1.2 Movement analysis studies

Movement studies of various Pacific Island dance forms as well as movement studies that utilize the analytical tools of Labanotation and Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) have been useful for organizing the analytical parameters used in this thesis.

Studies in Polynesian dance, including Jane Moulin's *Dance of Tahiti* (1979),

Jennifer Shennan's *Waiata-a-ringa: The Maori Action Song* (1978), Victoria Takamine's *Hula 'Ala'apapa* (1994) and Alan Thomas' book about the *fātele* of Tokelau, *New Song and Dance from the Central Pacific* (1996), each show different approaches to analyzing
movement in a Pacific context. With the exception of *Dance of Tahiti*, each of these
authors focuses on only one type of dance and, in addition, uses Labanotation as either a
part or the basis of analysis.

The following studies demonstrate various methods of combining concepts from Labanotation and LMA into a single analysis and were useful for constructing my analytical methodology: Elizabeth Kagan's "Towards the Analysis of a Score" and Jill Gellerman's "The *Mayim* Pattern as an indicator of Cultural Attitudes in Three American

Hasidic Communities" in *Dance Research Annual IX* (1978), Miriam Phillips' master's thesis *Both Sides of the Veil: A comparative analysis of kathak and flamenco dance* (1991), Judy Van Zile's "Balasaraswati's 'Tisram Alarippu'" in *Performing Arts in India* (Van Zile 1982) and *The Potential of Movement Analysis as a Research Tool: A preliminary analysis* (Bartenieff et al 1984).

2.2 Research Methodology

During the summer of 2002, funded by a University of Hawai'i Arts and Sciences Advisory Council Award, I spent two months on the island of Tutuila in American Sāmoa researching Samoan dance. Prior to my field work, I had participated in Samoan performing groups in Phoenix, Arizona from 1997 to 1999, at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand in 1999 and at the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa from 2000-2003. In addition, I was enrolled in Samoan language courses at Victoria University in Wellington in 1999 and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa from 2000 to 2003.

During field work in American Sāmoa, I observed and participated, when appropriate, in the practice sessions and performances of several dance groups.

Observing these groups practice allowed me to see how movements were taught and what elements of performance were emphasized. Participating in performances allowed me to experience dancing as a part of the group and watching performances gave me the chance to see how various elements are put together to create an entire performance. Because I observed a variety of dance groups in a number of different settings, I learned about movement from a number of perspectives.

I video recorded as many dance performances and practices from as many different dance groups as I could, including the Congregational Church of Jesus in Sāmoa's (CCJS) Youth Group, the children's group at the Jean P. Haydon Museum, the Siva Maia Dance Group, the Matai Ambassadors, Samoana High School Swing Choir, Leone High School Swing Choir, the Malaeloa Youth Group and Le Tāupou Mānaia. In addition to interviewing dance instructors from several of these groups and speaking informally with many of the performers, I also interviewed High Chief Pulefa'asisina Palauni Tuiasosopo, former director of the American Sāmoa Arts Council Choir, and Juliette Spencer-Sword, the current president of Miss American Sāmoa, Inc, both of whom have many ties to various facets of dancing in Sāmoa.

I also conducted library research at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's

Hamilton Library and the Bishop Museum Archive. In addition to locating sources

containing information on Samoan dance and culture, I also researched other relevant
movement studies.

2.3 Analytical Methodology

In this study, I examine selected dances from three different performance groups in American Sāmoa: the youth group of the Congregational Church of Jesus in Sāmoa-Fagatogo (from here on CCJS 'Autalavou), the Samoana High School Swing Choir (SHS Swing Choir) and the Siva Maia Dance Group (Siva Maia).⁴ A separate chapter is

⁴ I chose these groups because I believe they demonstrate a wide range of variation from one another in their performances.

devoted to each dance type analyzed in this study: $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu, $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ and taualuga.⁵ I begin each chapter with a brief overview of the relevant literature from which I construct a composite definition of each dance type. Then I present my examples, first with a description of the performance, followed by the analysis. The performance descriptions are not intended to capture every movement detail, but rather are intended to provide an overall sense of each dance for the reader. Video examples of each performance are included on DVD for additional reference.

The parameters used for analysis range from general features to specific concepts of movement analysis conceived of by Rudolf Laban in the 1920s and subsequently developed into two movement analysis systems widely used today: Labanotation and Laban Movement Analysis (LMA). Labanotation is a system of written dance notation based on concepts which can also be used to describe quantitative elements of movement. LMA also has a component of symbolic notation, but is used to describe qualitative features of movement. I use selected concepts from both systems in my analysis. At the end of each chapter, the analyses are summarized and the performances are compared with one another. The parameters I use for analysis are as follows:

- 1. comparison to composite definition from literature
- 2. group composition (number, gender and age of performers)
- 3. group formation (arrangement of dancers in the performing space)
- 4. body attitude (stance and carriage of torso)

⁵ I chose these dance types because I observed them more frequently than other dances in most performances.

- 5. means of support (body parts that fully or partially support the weight of the performer)
- 6. locomotion (movement through space)
- 7. leg gestures (direction, level, flexion and extension)
- 8. arm gestures (direction, level, symmetry, a-symmetry, flexion, extension and use of kinesphere)
- 9. hand gestures
- 10. gestures of the torso (direction, level and rotation)
- 11. gestures of the head (direction, level, rotation and facings)
- 12. accompaniment (live, recorded, melodic and rhythmic)

Although many more possibilities for analysis exist, viewing and performing many Samoan dances reveals that these parameters contain some of the characteristic elements of what is important in Samoan dancing. Because I do not focus on compositional or choreographic aspects of these dances, my analysis remains at a structural level. I also do not attempt to infer feelings, emotions, or meanings behind or involved in any of the movements. These are interesting subjects that should be addressed in future research and would reveal even more detailed characteristics of each dance type.

2.4 Overview of dance groups in study

The dance groups in this study represent a small sample of the variety of groups that exist in American Sāmoa. Although not mentioned in the literature, my observations

suggest that the Samoan dances performed by different groups often have distinct appearances due to specific emphases that each group places on various aspects of performance. While some groups emphasize singing, other groups emphasize variety in group formations, costuming and other elements. Depending on the objective of the particular group, the performance as a whole can have a very different look from one group to the next, even though each group is performing Samoan dance. The following descriptions provide a brief introduction to each performing group in this study and the context in which I viewed their performances.

2.4.1 CCJS 'Autalavou

The CCJS 'Autalavou is made up of members of the Congregational Church of Jesus in Sāmoa, located in Fagatogo. Although it is a "youth group", it is not only the younger members of the church who perform; many adult members also actively participate in the dancing while other adult members help with the organizational details. However, the younger performers are generally in the foreground. Thus, out of all three performing groups the CCJS 'Autalavou has the widest range of ages among its performers.

The dances that I analyze from this group were not performed in American Sāmoa, but rather in Hawai'i during a fundraising tour in which performances were given in August 2002 at the Sāmoa-Hawai'i Flag Day celebration, Farrington High School and various Samoan churches throughout O'ahu. Singing is the primary focus of this group.

In fact, the CCJS-Fagatogo choir is very well known in Sāmoa for having exceptional singers.

The CCJS 'Autalavou had prepared four separate programs for their fund-raising tour: two Samoan dance programs, a choral program of church music and a program of religious song and dance routines which included short theatrical religious-themed skits.

In the CCJS 'Autalavou, movements for dances were generally taught during one practice session and were not corrected later. Instead of focusing on the precision or unity of dance movements among the group members, more time was spent during practice rearranging the placement of the dancers, changing the order in which the dances were being presented and perfecting transition sequences from one dance formation to the next.

2.4.2 Samoana High School Swing Choir

The Samoana High School Swing Choir is made up of students from Samoana High School in Utulei. The group is formed ad-hoc with available students when performance opportunities arise. The dances I analyze from this group were performed at the PREL (Pacific Resources for Education and Learning) conference held in American Sāmoa during July of 2002.

The performers in the SHS Swing Choir all sing their own accompaniment to their dances. Additional live accompaniment is provided on the $p\bar{a}t\bar{e}$ (wooden slit drum) and snare drum with a synthesizer supplying background music. The performance consisted of four dances. Unlike the Siva Maia dancers, who used a variety of group

formations and several costume changes, the SHS Swing Choir performers kept the same costume, identical blue and white printed *puletasi* (traditional woman's dress) for the women and matching *lavalava* (wrap around) for the men, and the same basic group formation throughout the performance, with one exception. In the last dance, the *taualuga*, the dancer cast in the role of the *tāupou* for the group changed into an '*ie tōga* and *tuiga* (traditional ceremonial attire) and danced in front of the remainder of the group. As will be discussed in more detail later, the organization of the dancers in this *taualuga* and the manner of dancing of the group were not typical for this dance type.

2.4.3 Siva Maia Dance Group

Siva Maia consists mainly of young pre-teen and teenage students (men and women) from different schools throughout the island. They have ongoing practices and performances throughout the year. Unlike many other performance groups in American Sāmoa in which the dancers sing their own accompaniment, Siva Maia performs to prerecorded popular music that has often been remixed by the instructor, Sandra Neria, to meet her needs for particular choreographies. There is no requirement to sing along with these recordings, although some dancers do. The instructor said that since many of her students do not speak Samoan, dancing in her group is a way for them to learn about one aspect of their culture.

During the group's dance practice, I noticed that emphasis was directed toward unity and precision when executing movements. Many specific movements and

sequences were repeatedly clarified for the dancers through demonstrations by the instructor.

The dances that I analyze were also performed during the PREL conference in July of 2002. The group's performance consisted of eight different dances, three of which I analyze here. The performance was held in an open-air gymnasium (the newly constructed Samoana High School auditorium). Some of the dances were performed on a raised platform stage, while others were performed on the floor in front of the stage.

In many ways, the performances of this group exhibited more diversity than performances that I viewed from other dance groups on the island. For example, a variety of implements are used in the dances, sometimes more than one in a single dance. Also, there were numerous costume changes as well as changes in group formations. In addition, Sandra also draws on a variety of non-Samoan dance traditions in the creation of some of her choreographies. For example, in one dance, Polynesian Medley, the lyrics talk about different island cultures in the Pacific. In order to illustrate the text more accurately, Sandra utilizes hip motions from Tahitian dance and hand motions common in Maori dance. Even the costumes in this dance reflect a Tahitian style. Despite her choreographies in other Polynesian dance genres, however, in her Samoan choreographies she uses distinctly Samoan costuming and distinctly Samoan movements.

2.5 Summary of dance groups

These three groups indicate a spectrum of ways that dance is performed in American Sāmoa. In the following chapters, I describe and analyze selected dances from

these three performing groups. The first example in each chapter is performed by the CCJS 'Autalavou, the second by the SHS Swing Choir and the third by Siva Maia.

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF MĀ'ULU'ULU DANCES

3.1 Overview of literature relating to mā 'ulu 'ulu

In the late 1800s, Pratt defined $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu as "a kind of night dance recently introduced" (1878:238). Since this first written reference to $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu, sources have revealed several characteristic features of $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu dances and have also indicated changes in the dance type over time. In addition, the sources indicate some of the difficulties with describing and defining dance types clearly and consistently.

Although Richard Moyle (1988) interprets an early description by Peter Buck (1927-28) to indicate that $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu consisted (at the time of Buck's writing) of three sections: the $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, laulausiva and $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu, I think this interpretation is debatable and further research is needed to determine whether these dances were indeed performed together as a suite, or independently. Nevertheless, Moyle suggests that this three-part structure did exist (with the first two sections reversed) through the time of his fieldwork (late 1960s). However, this three-part structure is not mentioned by other authors and is not seen in $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu dances today.

In addition, Moyle describes $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu'ulu as the sole seated dance in Samoa even though he says that one of its sections, $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, is performed standing and that sometimes a three-tiered organization is employed in which the front row of dancers sits cross-legged, the middle row kneels and the back row stands. Likewise, in his book on Samoan music (field work 1971-74), Jacob Love describes $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu as "any song performed

presentationally in three tiers". Moyle also says that the songs for $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu are composed for specific occasions and discarded after use.

In Fa'a-Sāmoa: The Samoan way, Ad Linkels, interpreting these former descriptions quite literally, and not accounting for change and variation, tries to categorize certain modes of performance of mā'ulu'ulu as a separate dance type that he calls the "action song". He describes action songs and mā'ulu'ulu almost identically, but tries to draw a distinction between what he considers to be "traditional" and "modern" characteristics, including performing in a seated position and song compositions for specific occasions as traditional features and songs with general subject matter performed standing as modern features. Although these features illustrate changes in the dance from former descriptions, they do not indicate an entire change in dance type, which Linkels realizes in a later publication when he reluctantly rejects his notion of the action song stating that "nowadays all group dances – including modern action songs – that interpret or illustrate poetry are usually called mā'ulu'ulu". (1999:99)

Although individual descriptions often only provide small pieces of information about $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu, combining the information allows us to see a much fuller picture. Based solely on descriptions from the literature, the following composite "definition" of $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu can be constructed:

Mā'ulu'ulu are group dances (Linkels 1995, Kaeppler 1980), possibly consisting formerly of three separate sections (Buck 1927-28, Moyle 1988), that can be performed seated (Buck 1927-28, Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995), or with the dancers in a mixture of sitting, standing, and kneeling positions (Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995), or with the dancers

just standing (Linkels 1995). *Mā'ulu'ulu* are performed by men and women together (Kramer 1903, Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995), and the performers sing while dancing (Buck 1927-28, Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995). *Mā'ulu'ulu* songs were formerly composed for specific occasions and were only applicable to the performance situations for which they were created (Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995). However, the content of *mā'ulu'ulu* songs is becoming more general and increasingly applicable to a variety of performance situations (Linkels 1999). The movements of the dance, performed in unison (Buck 1927-28, Moyle 1988) with the arms, hands and fingers (Linkels 1995), interpret poetry or song texts (Tuiasosopo 2001, Kaeppler 1980, Linkels 1995).

In the following sections, I describe and analyze three different $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu'ulu performances from 2002. The examples are compared to each other and to the composite definition in order to identify similarities and differences.

3.2 Description of $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu example 1: CCJS 'Autalavou (See DVD, Chapter 1)

Nearly twenty-five young women in bright purple floor-length dresses and twelve young men in short matching *lavalava* fill the stage and the floor in front of it. They all sit cross-legged in neatly arranged rows and columns, with all of the men in the center two columns. Rocking forward and back, they repeatedly touch the floor in front of them and to the sides of their knees.

With their fists on their knees, the dancers begin to sing. Rocking gently back and forth they move their knees slowly up and down in time with the music. The movements of their arms and hands reflect the words of the song. They touch the floor,

move their hands together like a fish swimming through the water, and turn their hands up and down first to one side of the body and then the other. They lean back, shading their eyes with their right hands, and swoop their torsos in a large circle, presumably looking around for something they have lost. Leaning back again, they pull their hands close to one shoulder. Next, they reach forward and, with their palms facing upward, repeatedly move each hand from one side to the other (folding over the side surfaces of the wrist). They "wipe" their brows with the back of each fist, point to the audience and lean back again, covering their faces with their left arms. They make circular motions with their lower arms, clap their hands and extend their arms to the right side, left side and toward the audience.

It is quite incredible to see the same movements being executed by such a massive group, as if they are operating as one large unit. However, upon closer inspection, one will notice the almost imperceptible variations that occur as the well-rehearsed motions are embodied by each individual.

3.3 Analysis of *mā 'ulu 'ulu* example 1: CCJS 'Autalavou

In this example the dancers are seated cross-legged in six columns, five rows deep. The two central columns are male performers; the four outer columns are female performers.

The performers hold their torsos loosely upright. Some dancers' shoulders are rounded slightly forward. Exact posture varies slightly between individuals, but all the dancers look relaxed. Throughout the dance, the performers continually shift their focus

from their hand gestures to the audience, but there is an overall sense of an outward focus. In addition, the performers are always facing the audience, creating a frontal orientation.

Because the dancers are seated, there is no locomotion. However, the performers continually move their knees up and down in time with the music, lifting and lowering them gently in a sustained manner, creating the only lower body movement in the entire dance.

Arm and hand gestures illustrate the words of the song. They are generally very close to the body and often touch either the body or the floor directly in front of, to the side of, or behind the performer. The gestures are mostly in middle and low levels and generally in the space directly in front of the body. Although the gestures fluctuate between near-, mid- and far-reach space, they occur least in far-reach and mostly in near-reach space.

The torso is used in a variety of ways in this dance. It is tilted forward high and backward high to emphasize arm and hand gestures. It is also rotated slightly to face the forward diagonals. In addition, the torso is repeatedly contracted slightly and straightened to coincide with the lifting and lowering of the legs. When the legs are lifted, the torso is rounded, or contracted, slightly. When the legs are lowered, the torso is straightened, or returned to normal. This contracting and straightening of the torso performed with the leg movements creates the appearance of a slight forward and

backward rocking motion that is maintained almost throughout the dance as a way to mark time, and is referred to as lue^6 (rock).

Because the performers generally look in the direction of their hand gestures or toward the audience, they look mostly in the directions of forward middle and low, forward diagonal middle and low or side middle and low. In addition, some performers also tilt or nod their heads in time with the music.

The dancers sing while a synthesizer provides the basic melodic accompaniment.

3.4 Description of *mā 'ulu 'ulu* example 2: Samoana High School Swing Choir (See DVD, Chapter 2)

A group of twenty-four young women in long blue skirts printed with white flowers form six columns, five rows deep, filling the stage. Although their ranks seem imposing, their movements are soft and gentle. A light melody is played on a synthesizer and all the girls begin making small gestures with their hands. Keeping their arms close to their bodies, they cross their hands in front of their chests, turning them inward, then open them toward the audience and lightly place them on their thighs. They begin singing as they move their arms and hands through a series of gestures, turning their bodies slightly to perform them first to the right side and then to the left. Keeping their knees bent, one leg slightly forward of the other with only the toes on the ground, the women continually bounce their heel up and down or move it side to side with the pulse of the music.

⁶ The terminology used for Samoan dance movements is borrowed from everyday language and describes the general action of the movement. In the context of dance, these words often refer to a stylized version of the action.

Five teenage boys form a single row behind the group of women. Stepping side to side and leaning slightly forward, while holding their hands in loose fists, they continually "roll" one hand over the other and then clap, keeping their arms low in front of their bodies, throughout the entire dance.

The women step in place, shifting their weight from one leg to the other, turning often to face to their right and left sides. They look down at their hands gesturing close to their bodies, then look out at the audience as their arms reach upward and to the sides. Continually shifting their focus, they engage the audience and draw them into their dance.

3.5 Analysis of mā 'ulu 'ulu example 2: Samoana High School Swing Choir

In the second example, thirty female performers are arranged in six columns, five rows deep, and five male performers comprise a sixth row in the back, slightly staggered between the columns of girls. This formation is maintained throughout the dance.

There is an overall frontal orientation to the dance. Although the performers frequently turn to face the sides of the stage or its front corners, they always return to face the front, and the audience. Their focus constantly shifts inward and outward from their hand gestures to the audience. However, the majority of the dancers tilt their torsos slightly forward and even round their shoulders, contributing to an overall sense of an internal focus.

The female performers maintain a narrow stance, and they bend their legs a considerable amount throughout the dance (three to four degrees). The male performers

assume a much wider stance than the women and also maintain a constant bending in their knees. Although the degree of bending and the amount of torso tilting varies between all dancers, in general, the emphasis is on bending, not extreme uprightness.

Occasionally the female performers travel forward, backward and sideward in relation to their bodies. However, they do not travel more than a few steps in any direction and always return to the same place they started. Locomotion is infrequent and never changes the group's formation. In fact, the majority of the dance is fairly stationary.

Sagittal (forward and backward) locomotion is produced by a stylized walking motif in which the performers quickly lift their lower leg backward middle or low before each step (*lata*). Sideward locomotion is produced by the performers rotating their lower legs inward and outward to alternately move their toes and heels together (*se* 'e).

The performers also employ a limited number of leg gestures when they are not locomoting. Throughout most of the dance, all of the weight is shifted to one leg. With the free leg gesturing forward low and the toes resting on the floor, each performer moves her heel up and down or side to side. The performers also frequently shift their weight from one leg to the other with a quick forward low gesture of the free leg just before the weight is transferred.

Arm gestures are almost always forward and to the sides of the body in near to mid-reach space and between middle and low levels. Forward tilting of the torso gives the appearance that the arms are reaching further into an expanded kinesphere. The arm and hand gestures are mainly narrative, illustrating the song text.

The hands and fingers are very articulated in this dance. Many of the finger and hand motions are small, repeated movements that act as time keepers. Sometimes the movements are choreographed and sometimes the dancers will execute their own variations of an opening and closing motion with their hands. In general the hands are relaxed with the fingers slightly bent. They can be moved from side to side or up and down from the wrist. They can be closed into a loose fist and opened, as the lower arms are rotated inward and outward. Or, the hands can be moved as one unit with a fully opened hand or a fully closed fist. In addition, the fingers can be moved together as a unit up and down from the base joint or can be softly rolled in a successive manner from the base to the tip. Whatever manner of hand and finger movements is preferred, the result is a soft, pulsing motion.

Although the torso is generally held loosely upright, it is also tilted forward slightly to extend certain arm gestures. In addition, the performers may employ a variety of head movements: repeated nodding up and down, turning side to side or tilting quickly to one side.

The dancers sing their own melodic accompaniment while a synthesizer provides background chords and rhythms.

3.6 Description of *mā 'ulu 'ulu* example 3: Siva Maia Dance Group (See DVD, Chapter 3)

Fourteen young women in long, shiny tan and white dresses stand in a tight rectangular formation in the center of the performing area. A recording of popular music begins to play as each girl continually, and in time to the beat, taps her right foot on the

ground while patting her right thigh lightly with her right hand and turning her head to look to the right, then toward the audience. As the singer starts the $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu' 'ulu, the girls move forward in a stylized walk with their knees bent, alternately extending and bending their right and left arms in front of themselves at waist level. They tap the fingers and thumb of each hand together, cross their arms in front of their chests and, holding their hands in loosely formed fists, "roll" one hand over the other near their right hips. They walk forward and back then twist their feet on the ground to move in a sideward direction across the floor. Bending their knees, they lower themselves until they are almost sitting on the floor. Quickly standing up and walking a few steps backward, they repeat the routine from the beginning as the first verse is sung a second time.

As the song progresses, the tight rectangle formation widens and tightens again. Traveling in opposite directions, the dancers form two concentric ovals which are quickly resolved flawlessly back into a tight rectangle. Finally, taking two steps backward, the girls touch their fingers together lightly above their heads and open their arms out to their sides as each of their three rows drops to a different level, forming a tiered, picture-pose ending.

3.7 Analysis of mā 'ulu 'ulu example 3: Siva Maia Dance Group

The third example begins and ends with fourteen female performers in a tight rectangular formation. Different group formations are explored throughout the dance, but the performers are always drawn back into their initial rectangle shape.

The dancers emphasize an outward focus and frontal orientation. They hold their torsos vertically upright. Although the performers maintain two to four degrees of bending in their knees, there is still an overall feeling of uprightness. In addition, their basic stance is very narrow.

Although the lower body motifs used in this dance are few in number, there is a considerable amount of locomotion that is used to change group formations and which is usually balanced symmetrically. Most often, a walking motif (*lata*) is employed to change group formations. These walking motifs only occur forward and backward in relation to the performers' bodies, but in almost all directions of the room. In addition, to travel sideways in relation to the performer's body, the lower legs are rotated in and out as the heels and toes are alternately moved together and apart (*se'e*). The in and out motion of the heels is also performed when the dancers are stationary (*olo*).

There is an emphasis on symmetry in many of the arm movements. Arm movements occur in the front half of the dancer's kinesphere in near- to far-reach space, generally in middle level. The hands often mark the beat of the music. Arm and hand gestures also illustrate the song text.

The range of movement of the torso is small. It is usually held upright, but is often tilted forward high (when the arms are extended forward) or rotated right and left. The torso is generally used to enhance certain arm movements and give the illusion of an expanded kinesphere. The head is used mostly to emphasize or direct attention to the movements of the hands.

In this example, the dancers do not sing their own accompaniment. Rather, the accompaniment is provided by a recording of popular Samoan music.

3.8 Movement summaries for mā 'ulu 'ulu examples

In addition to the characteristics noted in the literature, several additional features of mā 'ulu 'ulu emerge based on the previous analyses. The basic group formation of mā'ulu'ulu tends to be a rectangular shape consisting of rows and columns. This basic formation is generally maintained throughout the dance or returned to frequently. There is an overall emphasis on symmetry in group formations and gender separation is common, but can be achieved in different ways. Gender distinction in movements may or may not be utilized. Generally there is very little locomotion within a single dance, but increased locomotion and changing group formations may be employed by some performance groups. There is an overall frontal orientation to these dances. The lower body has a limited number of movement motifs, which are generally named and often repetitive. In contrast, there is greater range of movements in the arms which can occupy all directions and levels in the front half of the kinesphere. A small amount of space behind the body may also be used, but the emphasis is on the space in front of the body. The arms are moved in and out of near and far-reach space in a variety of symmetric and a-symmetric gestures. Movements of peripheral body parts often mark time with small repeated movements: The hands are opened and closed, the knees are moved up and down, the feet are twisted side to side and the head may be tilted to the side or nodded up and down. These movements are often performed in different ways according to each dancer's preference and may sometimes be choreographically set.

Examples one and two fit neatly with the conventional definition at the beginning of the chapter. Example three, however, shows some distinction. One feature that does not fit with the stereotypical definition is that the dancers do not sing their own accompaniment. In addition, although not something mentioned in descriptions in the literature, the text of the song used for example three is half in Samoan and half in English. Other features that distinguish example three from examples one and two, but that were also not mentioned in the literature descriptions, are the increased use of locomotion and frequent change in group formations.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF SĀSĀ DANCES

4.1 Overview of literature relating to sāsā

Researchers have written about $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ in a variety of ways, ranging from very general statements to more detailed descriptions. Possibly less than one hundred years old (but having obvious roots in earlier, obsolete dance types⁷) the history of $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ is slightly obscure due to differences among descriptions and the lack of diacriticals in some writing.⁸

In Buck's field notes from 1927-28, we find the first mentions of a dance called $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, for which Buck provides two extremely different descriptions. First, he says "Sasa [are] performed with lapalapa [coconut leaf midribs] split several times at one end. When struck against the palm of the hand it gives a clattering sound." (1927-28:89) This description does not match any other existing descriptions for $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$. Dances that do fit this description, however, are currently performed and are generally referred to as siva lapalapa. The lack of diacriticals in Buck's writing may suggest that this term referred to the actions of the dance rather than the type of dance described. Buck also says that the $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ is the introductory section of the $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu'ulu.

The ma'ulu'ulu commences with the sasa as a salutation. Certain actions are done such as clapping the hands, striking the thighs alternately and nowadays finishing with a quick right hand salute. The actions are very quickly done and various combinations may be used to form this brief introduction. The dancers sing whilst dancing what is really a salutation. (1927-28:90)

⁷ Krämer describes a dance, *tā le siva* (1995:368-369), with movements that can be found in current *sāsā* performances.

The word $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ means "a token, mark or sign", while the word sasa means "to hit or strike".

The movements in this description can still be seen in $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances today. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, it is debatable whether $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ were originally performed as one section of a dance suite or not. Today, $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ are not generally performed as introductory sections to other dances, and the dancers generally no longer sing. The two descriptions given by Buck could indicate that at the beginning of the twentieth century the term sasa (instead of $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$) was used to describe dances that contained certain actions, that there was more than one dance called $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, or that there was one dance called $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ and another called sasa.

From his fieldwork in the 1950s, Lowell Holmes provides a description of a dance that he calls "sasa siva".

Suddenly, a cry went up outside the house. The words "Mua O" were being shouted by a score or more of voices. Thirty young men dressed in bright barkcloth costumes came running down the path. It was the village aumaga arriving in a group to honor Lemalu, one of their own. The group formed into ten lines three deep. Their drummer positioned himself in front of the group with his percussion instrument—an empty kerosene can—and a stick. He began a steady, vigorous rhythm on the can; on his signal, the aumaga began their sasa siva. In Samoan, siva is the word for dance, and sasa means "to strike." Thus, the choreography involved the men clapping their hands together, slapping their bodies in unison, and going through a long series of coordinated dance movements—always in rhythm and always in concert. The dancers squatted down, leaped high into the air, turned slowly in a full circle with one arm outstretched, slapped their thighs, made the motion of paddling a canoe, and made a motion like that of throwing a spear. The dance went on for about five minutes and ended in a great war whoop. (1992:94)

The term "sasa siva" is not found in any other writing and is not used today to describe any dances. Although some of the features indicated by Holmes can be found in other descriptions of $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, they can also be found in descriptions of another dance type, the fa 'ataupati, which is performed only by men and is characterized mainly by slapping

different areas of the torso in addition to other body parts. Although these two dances share some features, they also have pronounced differences, and it is not entirely clear which dance type is being depicted in this description.

Richard Moyle, citing Buck, also describes $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ as a section of the $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu. However, he indicates that it is not always the introductory section. He also says that it is performed standing, and is performed only by men. No other sources describe $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ as a standing dance or as a dance performed only by men (unless considering Holmes' description). Although these are only two characteristics, they are features that are unique to fa 'ataupati and not $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$. However, because Moyle also describes fa 'ataupati dances in his text, it is not likely that he is confusing the two dances. This contrast with more recent descriptions and performances could point to changes in $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ over time, or could indicate that modern fa 'ataupati and $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ dances had their beginnings in the same or similar dance forms.

To illustrate the closeness of these two dance types (fa 'ataupati and $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$) even further, the following description is provided by Jacob Love in the Garland Encyclopedia of World Music and Dance:

Skin strikes skin in several named movements: a high-pitched flat clap (pati), a low-pitched cupped clap ($p\bar{o}$), the snapping of the fingers (fiti), and the slapping of other parts of the body. These and other actions occur in fa 'ataupati and $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, songless movements performed by a company in synchrony. Their sounds combine with stamps and vocal clicks and grunts to make a favorite aural mix. (1998:805)

Although he indicates specific actions employed by dancers, Love uses the same description for both dance types and does not indicate what features differentiate $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ from fa 'ataupati.

Although the above cited examples may indicate changes in $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances over time, they also indicate the need for clearer descriptions of Samoan dance that focus on the defining characteristics of those dance types and not just general features that can be applied to a variety of dances.

Based solely on these literature descriptions, the following composite "definition" of $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ can be created:

According to the literature, sāsā are group dances (Kaeppler 1980 and Love 1999) performed today predominantly in a seated fashion (Kaeppler 1980, Linkels 1995, Love 1999) by men and women (Linkles 1995) to a fast rhythm (Linkels 1995) played only on percussion instruments that include the pātē, fala, and tu 'itu 'i (Kaeppler 1980, Moyle 1988, Tuiasosopo 2001) or an empty kerosene or biscuit tin (Kaeppler 1980, Linkels 1995). According to some authors, no songs accompany this dance (Love 1999, Linkels 1995). According to one of the authors, the performers sing while dancing (Buck 1927-28). The performers move their arms (Kaeppler 1980), hands, and fingers (Linkels 1995), clap (Buck 1927-28) in different ways (Love 1999) and strike their thighs (Buck 1927-28). Movements are performed precisely, intricately (Kaeppler 1980), quickly (Linkels 1995), in unison (Love 1999), and in various combinations (Buck 1927-28). Furthermore, the dance movements depict daily events in a Samoan village (Tuiasosopo 2001). The dancers may stand in the last portion of the dance and run in place, kick their legs, and change directions. They may finish the dance standing or seated (Linkels 1995) and may also finish with a "quick right hand salute" (Buck 1927-28).

In the following sections, I describe and analyze three $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances from 2002. These performances are compared to each other and to the composite definition to determine what criteria remain consistent in current $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances, what characteristics can be added to the definition and what features have changed.

4.2 Description of *sāsā* example 1: CCJS 'Autalavou (See DVD, Chapter 4)

Seated cross-legged on a concrete patio behind a small church, gathered closely together in a large triangle shape, the boys and girls are called to attention to sit up straight and then to quickly lower their heads as they prepare for their dance. The resonant sound of a drum beat warns the dancers to be ready. A change in rhythm indicates to begin, and all the dancers "pop" theirs heads up, straighten their backs, clap their hands and repeatedly slap their thighs, until the signaling-rhythm is heard again, indicating to proceed. They execute a series of movement patterns that involve small percussive turns of the hands and a variety of short rhythmic motifs produced by contacting various parts of the body with the hands. Sometimes one pattern goes directly into the next. At other times, a clapping and thigh-slapping motif is employed as the dancers await the signal to start a new sequence of motions. The patterns may also build, becoming rhythmically more complex as they are repeated. The patterns are performed to the right, then left sides, and then sometimes in the center. The dancers slap their thighs, knees, elbows, chest and ground with the fronts and backs of their hands to create these different patterns. A series of motions that mimic certain aspects of weaving, including separating, twisting and winding fibers, are also executed. After a short pause,

the dancers stand up and form tightly arranged rows by "jogging" to new places. When the signal is heard, the dancers quickly take two steps backward and then forward, make a quarter turn and repeat their sequence until they have come full circle. They all end with a small jump, a quick shout, then immediately turn and walk nonchalantly away as if they had only been passing through.

4.3 Analysis of sāsā example 1: CCJS 'Autalavou

In a mixed group of men and women, the performers are arranged in a triangular formation, with the apex closest to the audience. All of the dancers perform identical choreography regardless of gender. The accompaniment for this dance is provided by the $p\bar{a}t\bar{e}$ (small, wooden slit drum).

There is an overall frontal orientation to the majority of this dance. There is an emphasis on verticality in the torso. Although the performers direct their attention to both the audience and their hand gestures, there is an overall feeling of outward focus throughout most of the dance. At the end of the dance, however, when the performers are standing, their focus becomes more internal as their attention is directed toward the ground and their torsos are tilted forward.

The performers are seated throughout the majority of the dance and rise to a standing position near the end. While the performers are seated, they move their knees up and down quickly. The movement is fast and small and does not include any accompanying torso movement as in this group's $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu.

Locomotion occurs only at the end of the dance. When the performers stand up, they jog to new positions, forming a tight rectangle of rows and columns. Then they perform a movement that consists of two backward steps, two forward steps and a left quarter turn. This movement pattern is repeated until the performers are facing the audience again.

The gestures of the arms and hands in this example are small, quick and generally occupy only a very small space in front of the body. The majority of the hand gestures involve some kind of body contact or contact with the ground. The hands clap each other in a cupped $(p\bar{o})$ or flat (pati) manner, slap the knees, thighs, chest and floor and are rubbed together quickly (mili). The movements are quick, small, close to the body and engage mostly the lower arm. There are a few movements that involve the whole arm. These gestures are larger and performed more slowly than those performed with the lower arm only. They also occupy more space, sometime including space behind the performer.

In this dance, the torso is almost always held straight and upright. Unlike this group's $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu where the torso moves with the arm gestures, here the torso is almost always a separate unit from the arms. In a few instances the torso tilts forward high and forward right and left diagonal high to extend arm movements further away from the body. Also, the torso turns to face the forward right and left diagonals to accent some arms gestures. However, for the majority of the dance, the torso is not moved. Most of the arm gestures seem to occur independently from any torso movement.

Tilting the head up and down and turning it side to side, the performers alternate their focus between their hand gestures and the audience.

4.4 Description of *sāsā* example 2: Samoan High School Swing Choir (See DVD, Chapter 5)

Perfectly formed straight lines of young women fill the stage, with a row of young men behind them. They are all seated with their legs crossed in front of them and their hands in fists on their knees. A shout from behind indicates for all to look forward at attention. Another shout indicates to look down. "Nofo! Tulolo! Nofo! Tulolo! Nofo! Nofo! Tulolo!" (Sit up, bend forward...) The dancers sit up straight and lower their heads on command. Then they wait for their signal to begin.

A programmed beat is played live on a synthesizer and the dancers roll their shoulders and turn their heads sharply side to side. Rhythmically clapping their hands they reach forward to the right diagonal, the center, and the left diagonal. They clap their hands and slap the floor. Crossing and uncrossing their hands in front of their bodies, opening their arms in quick motions to the side and slapping the floor again with the fronts and backs of their hands, they bounce their knees rapidly up and down. They clap rapidly, moving their hands in a circle, then repeatedly clap above their heads and slap the floor. They place their fists on their knees and start singing. Quick movements soon accompany their fast song: rotating their lower arms, turn their hands forward and back, making swift circular motions with their lower arms and clapping their hands. They stop singing as abruptly as they started and slap their thighs and chest. Extending one leg, they lean forward as they push their arms away and pull them back, as if rowing a boat.

The men stand up and the women rise to their knees. They swoop their arms low to the ground and make chopping motions with one hand against the other as if cracking open a coconut. Thrusting both arms forward, the group simultaneously shouts "Sāmoa!" After a brief pause, the entire group stands up, takes a few steps backward and a few small jumps in place, and end the dance with a final shout.

4.5 Analysis of sāsā example 2: Samoana High School Swing Choir

The thirty-five dancers are separated by gender in their formation. The thirty female performers are arranged in six columns, five rows deep. The five male performers comprise a sixth row in the back. All of the dancers perform identical movements except for one motif in which the men and women perform gender specific movements. The accompaniment is not played on the $p\bar{a}t\bar{e}$, but is provided by a synthesizer.

This dance has an overall frontal orientation and there is an emphasis on verticality in the torso. The performers direct their attention toward the audience and occasionally toward their hand gestures, with a definite emphasis on outward focus.

Throughout the majority of this dance, the performers are seated cross-legged with the lower part of the left leg in front of the lower part of the right. Toward the end of the dance the female performers rise to a kneeling position and the male performers stand. There is no locomotion.

The knees are "bounced" up and down throughout the dance. One additional isolated leg gesture occurs near the end of the dance when the female performers extend

the left leg forward from the body along the ground. It remains extended until they rise to one knee.

In this example, arm gestures occur in near-, mid- and far-reach space with more far reaching gestures than in this group's $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu. The hands are either cupped, flat, or held in fists, and used as single units. There is no fine articulation of the fingers. The movements are generally quick with the palms and backs of the hands contacting different parts of the body and different areas of the floor surrounding the body. The palms of the hands also contact each other, either with the hands held flat and parallel to each other (pati) or cupped and perpendicular ($p\bar{o}$).

In this dance, the torso is often tilted to extend the reach of the arms. Because the hands contact the floor in front of the body, the torso must tilt in order to allow the hands to reach their destination. Also, the torso is frequently tilted in the direction of the arm gestures, at a level between forward high and forward middle, allowing the arms to reach further into space.

Because the performers generally look toward their hands, the movements of the head include turning from side to side, and tilting forward and backward.

4.6 Description of *sāsā* example 3: Siva Maia Dance Group (See DVD, Chapter 6)

Twelve teenage girls in bright yellow dresses sit cross-legged on a stage in an "open-box" formation: two columns connected in the back by a single row. Leaning forward with their hands on the floor, they gently sway their upper bodies from side to side as a melodic voice sings meaningless syllables. Small tufts of yellow feathers,

placed loosely in each girl's hair, bounce freely as the girls bob their heads swiftly down, up, and to the right. Sitting upright, the girls sustain a shout as they repeatedly slap the top of their thighs while bouncing their knees quickly up and down. Continuing to bounce their knees, the girls begin tapping and slapping various parts of their body in succession to create different rhythmic effects.

Next, the girls begin a series of new movements. No longer slapping their bodies, they lean back, move their shoulders up and down and rest on their side, propped up by the right elbow, with their legs curled to the back. They sit up again and spread their arms to the sides, as if mimicking a bird, and rock swiftly to the right. After a few more motions with their hands close to their bodies, clapping and pounding the floor with their fists, they repeat the dance from the beginning: heads bobbing, hands slapping thighs and clapping. Then, a new element is added as the girls pick up coconut halves that have been hidden behind their knees. They produce a variety of rhythmic patterns by striking the coconuts on the floor and together in different clicking and clacking combinations.

After some time, they set the coconuts down and continue with the slapping and clapping motions performed earlier. Still clapping their hands, the girls stand up.

Moving their arms to one side and then the other, they run to form two columns in the center of the stage. After a few more claps, they conclude their dance with an excited shout.

4.7 Analysis of sāsā example 3: Siva Maia Dance Group

This dance, although not technically a $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, is an example of a modern choreography that combines $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ movements with movements from different Samoan dance types including $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu and siva ipu (dance with coconut shell halves). I include it here because several movement components and other structural aspects used in this dance are similar to those found in typical $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances. The specific arm and hand movements used at the beginning and end of the dance can be found in typical $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances. In addition, the dancers also stand at the end of the dance, change their formation and end with a typical $usus\bar{u}$ (traditional war cry). Features of this dance that are not found in typical $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ performances include the use of recorded popular music as accompaniment, the use of implements and (although not completely uncommon) the inclusion of a $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu-like segment. This example shows one way in which Samoan choreographers can create dances that push the limits and conventional notions of dance types by combining and utilizing various elements of Samoan dance in different ways.

In this example, the dancers line the sides and back of the stage with one column of five girls on either side and one row joining them across the back. This formation is maintained until the end of the dance when the dancers form two columns in the center of the stage.

A frontal orientation is maintained throughout the dance. The torso is held vertically upright. The dancers focus mostly on the active hands of their arm gestures and occasionally direct their attention to the audience. There is variation among the

dancers, as some focus more on the audience while others focus more on their gestures. However, the overall emphasis is on an outward focus.

Throughout most of the dance the girls are seated in a cross-legged position. The only locomotion occurs at the end of the dance when the performers stand and run to the center of the stage to form two columns.

Throughout most of the dance, the knees are moved up and down quickly in a "bouncy" fashion with an emphasis on the downward part of the motion. Sometimes there is also a choreographed absence of this motion, in which the legs are held still for emphatic reasons. In addition, during the $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu section of this dance, as the girls lean to the side and support themselves in part with the right elbow and one hip, their legs uncross and curl together toward the back. This position is held only momentarily before they return to their cross-legged position.

The arms are generally held relaxed and usually bent. Arm gestures occur in near-, mid-, and far-reach space. They occur to the sides and front of the body in high, middle, and low levels. In general, only the front half of the kinesphere is used.

Movements are created by the hands contacting various body parts and the floor in a variety of rhythmic patterns. Generally, an open palm is used to lightly contact body parts including the upper surface of the thigh, the outer surface of the thigh near the knee and near the hip, the chest, the other palm, the face and the elbows. The floor is also touched with an open palm or a closed fist in front of and to the sides of the dancers. There is an emphasis on bilateral symmetry in many of the sound-producing movement patterns which is created through repetition: a movement is first performed on one side of

the body and then repeated on the other. In addition, this symmetry is often realized further as the movement is repeated a third time to the front of the body. During the narrative section, however, the movements tend to be a-symmetric, being performed only on one side of the body.

The torso is often tilted forward (forward high and forward right and left diagonal high) to enhance or exaggerate the movements of the arms, to expand the kinesphere, or to allow the hands to reach their desired destination (i.e. the floor). For example, in order for the dancers to place their hands on the floor in front of them, they must tilt their torsos forward. Also, if the arm is extended forward, the torso can tilt in that direction to allow the arm to reach further into space.

The performers generally look at the active hand of their arm gestures.

Constantly looking towards the hand gestures results in the performers turning their heads right and left and tilting their heads up and down. In addition, small sideward tilts of the head are sometimes used.

4.8 Movement summaries for $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ examples

In each example, there is an overall frontal orientation to the performance and an emphasis on symmetry in group formations, marked by physical separation based on gender. Despite this separation of gender, however, there is generally no, or very little gender distinction in movements. There is an emphasis on verticality in the torso and a sense of outward focus. In each example, the performers start in a seated, cross-legged position. Lower body movements are limited in number and size: generally a constant,

rapid bouncing of the knees. Short, quick and usually repeated combinations of arm and hand gestures often, but not always, produce audibly rhythmic sequences with the hands contacting various parts of the body and the floor. There is an emphasis on bilateral symmetry in the repetition of these abstract movements, which are generally performed first with one side of the body, then the other. The symmetry is often solidified with a third repetition in the center. Near the end of each dance, there is a change in supports from a lower to a higher level (generally sitting to either kneeling or standing) and locomotion to a new place on stage or a new formation by either running or walking.

Despite these commonalities, there are also unique features in each example.

These distinctions may indicate particular elements that are not considered defining features of this dance type, but may be characteristic to the specific choreography or to the style of an individual dance group.

Although there was an emphasis on symmetry in group formation, in each example, the formation was a different shape. Two of the shapes, open box and triangle, are not typically seen in very many Samoan dances, whereas the rectangle shape, used in example two, is seen quite often. Although $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ are generally described as songless dances, in examples two and three there is a short song in the middle of each dance. In example two, the movements during this section still resemble other $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ motions in their speed and close proximity to the body. In example three, however, the movements during this section resemble $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu movements.

At the end of each dance there is movement to a new position on stage. The movement and new formations differ in each example. In example two, the performers

simply walk backward a few steps. In examples one and three, the performers rearrange themselves (interestingly enough) into different sized rectangles.

The three examples also differ in how they compare to the composite literature definition of the $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ dance type. Based on this definition, example one is a typical and conservative representation of a $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$. Example two begins to push the limits of the stereotypical features by using electronic accompaniment. Example three also pushes these limits by using recorded popular music for the accompaniment and integrating aspects of other Samoan dance types into the performance, including the use of coconut shell half implements for a portion of the dance.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF TAUALUGA DANCES

5.1 Overview of literature relating to *taualuga*

Descriptions of *taualuga* have appeared in various forms in the literature for nearly one hundred years, revealing important characteristic features of this dance type. Although little change is indicated in the overall structure of the *taualuga*, changes in specific dance movements and style are more difficult to determine because even though there are a few descriptions of specific performances, there are not enough to form a basis of comparison. In addition, because the dancing is largely improvisational and meant to express the individuality and personality of the performer, performances can be quite varied. However, from observing numerous dances of this type, it becomes obvious that there is generally a prescribed manner of performance that includes certain stylistic attributes and specific, commonly performed gestures.

Based solely on literature descriptions, the following composite "definition" of *taualuga* can be created:

According to previous authors, *taualuga* is the last dance presented in a series of dances (Buck 1927, Kaeppler 1980, Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995, Love 1999, McLean 1999). Because it is the last dance, it is the most important (Buck 1927-28, Moyle 1988). It is a dance that depicts the hierarchical structure of a Samoan village (Tuiasosopo 2001, Shore 1982, Moyle 1988) through the placement of dancers and their style of moving. It is performed by a group of people (Love 1999, Moyle 1988). A *tāupou*, *mānaia*, or other person of high rank dances in the middle (Buck 1927-28, Kaeppler 1980, Shore 1982,

Moyle 1988, Linkels 1995) in a graceful style (Kaeppler 1980) while the remainder of the group sits behind him/her singing the accompaniment (Grattan 1948). Other individuals dance behind and around the central figure in a style opposite of his/hers (Shore 1982, Moyle 1988). *Taualuga* has no set choreography (Kaeppler 1980).

In the following sections, I describe and analyze three *taualuga* performances from 2002. I compare these performances to each other and to the literary definition to determine what characteristics remain constant, what elements have changed and what features can be added to the definition.

5.2 Description of *taualuga* example 1: CCJS 'Autalavou (See DVD, Chapter 7)

Seated in a tightly formed half-circle on the stage, a group of young men and women rock from side to side, first waving one arm in the air and then clapping their hands while singing. A young man in front of them directs their actions. An elderly woman stands up from her seat in the audience and purposefully makes her way to the front of the stage. Pausing after every step, she lightly closes and opens her hands with small, pulsating movements. She is followed closely by a man who continually drops money over her head. When she reaches the front of the room, she faces the audience. With her arms stretched out toward the audience, she rotates her lower arms, turning her palms up and down.

Members of the audience swarm around her tossing money, placing a lei over her head and dancing next to her, behind her, and sometimes in front of her. These dancers' movements are limited and repetitive: They repeatedly extend both arms to one side of

their bodies and then to the other while gently closing and opening their hands. They also occasionally extend both arms outward (right arm to the right side, left arm to the left side).

The woman in the center displays more variety in her movements. She claps her hands together lightly and pauses to embrace the individuals who come to show their support and respect. She tilts her head to one side, then to the other, continuing to pulse her hands in a variety of manners and swiftly changing the placement of her arms: first to the front, then spread out to both sides, then sweeping both arms to one side, and then to the other.

More and more people gather to dance behind her as her arm movements become slightly more rapid and she executes a series of light sequential tapping gestures with her fingers on various parts of her body: her thighs, her shoulders, and her cheeks. She bobs lightly up and down as she continually steps in place. It is quite a festive atmosphere with singing, clapping, continual shouts of joy and the bustling of the audience: everyone is actively participating in this exuberant performance.

5.3 Analysis of *taualuga* example 1: CCJS 'Autalavou

In this example, there is a seated chorus behind a central dancer who is surrounded by several supporting dancers of all ages and genders. In addition, there is a great deal of audience participation. The chorus (singing the same song used for this group's $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu'ulu example) is directed by a fa 'aluma (chorus leader), a young man who stands in front of the chorus directing their actions while they sing. The singers are

encouraged to sway side to side and clap their hands on the beat. The supporting dancers ('aiuli') exhibit a limited movement vocabulary (in comparison to the central dancer who utilizes a wider range of movement). Without locomoting (except on and off the dance floor) and keeping their knees slightly bent, the supporting dancers repeatedly extend their arms to the right and left sides while opening and closing their hands. They also occasionally extend both arms outward (the right arm to the right side and the left arm to the left side). These small repetitive motions form the extent of their movements. The central performer, on the other hand, exhibits more variety in her movement repertoire. The following analysis focuses on the movements of the central performer.

The central performer stands upright, her arms are generally partly extended forward in middle level, her torso is tilted slightly forward and her knees are slightly bent. She generally maintains an outward focus.

The only locomotion occurs at the beginning of the dance. The solo performer is initially seated in the audience and walks in a stylized manner from her seat to the performing area in a series of slow forward steps. Once she is in front of the audience, there is no locomotion for the remainder of the dance. However, the performer constantly shifts her weight from one foot to the other throughout the dance making her appear to be bobbing softly up and down.

When the performer uses extended arm gestures, they occur in mid to far reach space mostly in middle level and generally in the forward diagonal or side directions.

When the arms are away from the body, the hands are repeatedly closed into a fist and

opened or they are folded a small amount over the front and back surfaces of the wrist.

These small movements accent the music.

When the arms are brought close to the body, the hands gesture by contacting various parts of the body very lightly. The performer touches or pats her hands, shoulders, thighs and face. The arm movements are loose and sustained. They are not hurried. The hand movements are small and quick. The movements of the arms and hands do not reflect or interpret the song text.

The torso remains mostly upright or tilted forward slightly. With some arm gestures the torso is tilted forward to a greater angle and then brought upright again. The performer tilts her head occasionally to the side, but generally looks at the audience.

The accompaniment for this dance is provided by live singing and a synthesizer.

5.4 Description of *taualuga* example 2: Samoana High School Swing Choir (See DVD, Chapter 8)

Synthesized music fills the air. The dancers bend their knees and tilt their torsos forward as they gently mark the beat of the song by alternately touching first their right and then left toes on the ground just in front of them. Keeping their arms slightly bent, they alternately reach one arm toward the ground as the other is raised into the air, their lower arms twisting as their hands open and close. They start singing and extend their arms to the sides and forward. They slowly lower themselves to kneel and stand up again. They run forward and, making a large circular movement with their right arms, slap the heels of their right feet. They glide to the left and right, walk backward, clap their hands high and low and leap softly and silently in place.

A young woman dressed in a fine mat decorated with red feathers and a very large headdress, stands ready in the center at the back of the stage. In the middle of the song she runs slowly forward, pausing after every few steps, until she is in front of the other performers. She spreads her arms and bows forward to the audience, to the right and then to the left. She draws her arms in close to her body as she glides across the stage to the left. She spreads her arms and draws them in again while she glides in the opposite direction. She stops periodically to gesture with her hands in front of her chest. She begins her glide and spreads her arms again, turning her palms to face up, then down, then up once more. When she reaches center stage, the chorus joins in her dance. Now they are all performing the same movements: bending their knees and their arms, taking small running steps forward, sinking and rising while their arms and hands float around them, their fingers like little birds flying above the gentle, rolling ocean waves.

5.5 Analysis of taualuga example 2: Samoana High School Swing Choir

In this example there is a chorus which is not seated, but standing, arranged in rows and columns. The chorus has specifically set choreography throughout the dance and although the featured soloist has a short section of improvised movement in the middle of the dance, she also performs choreographed movements in unison with the chorus during the last verse of the song. Perhaps because the movements of the group are choreographed, there are not many 'aiuli in this dance. There is one instance when a young man from the back of the chorus runs forward, bends down, slaps the floor near

the *tāupou* and quickly runs off stage. It is very brief and barely noticeable. It is also the extent of the *'aiuli* display.

The choreographed sections at the beginning and end of the dance are performed in the movement style of a $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu: the motions reflect the words of the text.

However, during the $t\bar{a}upou$'s improvised solo, the movements of the dancers in the chorus (though still choreographed) and the movements of the $t\bar{a}upou$ do not interpret the text. The movements of the chorus in this section are limited and repetitive. The dancers gesture one leg forward low, touching the ground with the toes, then step in place. Then they perform the same gesture with the other leg and step in place again. As the right leg gestures, the right arm also gestures forward low, contracted three degrees as the left arm gestures place high, also contracted. These arm gestures are repeated with the opposite side of the body as the other foot gestures forward low. The lower arms are rotated out and in while the hands close and open. These movements are continually repeated by the chorus throughout the $t\bar{a}upou$'s solo. The following analysis describes the movements of the $t\bar{a}upou$ during her improvised solo in more detail.

Initially, the soloist stands behind the group in the center of the stage. At the beginning of her solo, she locomotes forward with a stylized run (two steps forward, then pausing, gesturing backward low with her left leg and touching the ground with her toes) until she arrives in her performance space in front of the group. After she arrives, the only locomotion occurs in sideward directions in a limited space.

The solo performer stands throughout her performance, consistently maintaining a few degrees of flexion in her legs. She holds her torso upright or tilted slightly forward. She continually shifts the direction of her focus from her hand gestures to the audience.

The leg gestures in this dance are very small. When the performer is not locomoting, she gestures one leg forward low. With her toes on the ground, she rotates her lower leg in and out. When shifting weight from one leg to the other, the performer first gestures her free leg forward low.

Arm gestures occur mostly in middle level in the horizontal plane. The performer moves her arms back and forth between high and low levels and near and far reach space. The performer lightly touches her thighs and chest with her hands and claps her hands lightly together. When her arms are extended to the sides, she occasionally rotates her lower arms in and out so that her palms alternately face up and down (place high and place low). In addition, keeping her fingers slightly curved, she repeatedly pulses her fingers away from her thumbs and draws them slowly closer, so that it appears that her hands are loosely closing and opening.

The torso has limited movement. It is tilted forward high and right and left side high. It is also rotated to face the forward diagonals. These movements are small and often help to extend arm gestures further into space.

The head also has limited movement. Looking mostly at the audience and at some hand movements, the performer occasionally tilts her head quickly to one side.

Accompaniment for this dance is provided by live singing and a synthesizer.

5.6 Description of *taualuga* example 3: Siva Maia Dance Group (See DVD, Chapter 9)

A familiar tune announces the anticipated arrival of a young girl, dressed in a fine mat decorated with red feathers, who walks purposefully in a stylized fashion to the center of the floor. With her arms extended out to the forward diagonals and her palms turned upward, she bows to the left, takes a few steps and bows to the right. She walks back to the center, faces the front and makes a circling gesture with her arms. Like a leaf floating on the surface of a pond, she glides to one side and back to the center again while extending her arms out to her sides and drawing them back in towards her body. She walks in a small circle in place, raising and lowering her bent arms in front of her. She faces front and kneels. She extends one leg to the side while she rests on the opposite hip. She touches her foot, her knee, her hip, shoulder and head, while leaning to rest on her elbow. She draws a circle in front of her face with her hand and pulls herself back up to her knees with the help of an imaginary rope. She sits back on her heels, rises and sits back as she moves her arms away from and toward her body before she slowly rises to her feet. She circles again, this time not with steps, but gliding by means of her feet sliding against the floor while her hands trace up the sides of her frame. When she has completed her turn, a young boy jumps and lands belly-down on the floor in front of her. She places her foot on his back, removes it and he runs away.

Gliding diagonally forward and backward, she tilts her torso forward, reaches her arms away from her body and pulls them close again. She traces another small circle, this time walking with her legs fully bent so that she is almost sitting on her heels. She

stands, reaches forward, lightly claps her hands, pulls them back in and lightly slaps her shoulders and thighs.

The tempo of the music increases. She circles again while audience members walk up and throw money in front of her. Her movements become quicker. She claps her hands, pushing them away from her body as she walks forward. She claps above her head, behind her back and slaps her elbows and thighs. Another boy falls in front of her. She walks forward, steps over him, and finishes her dance with a bow to the audience.

5.7 Analysis of taualuga example 3: Siva Maia Dance Group

In this example, there is no chorus. Instead of the dancers singing the accompaniment, it is provided by a recording of popular Samoan music. Despite the lack of a chorus, there are supporting dancers who utilize a very limited movement repertoire in comparison with the central dancer, who exhibits great variety in her movement ability and knowledge. There is also a great deal of physical space between the supporting dancers and the central dancer. At two separate times, however, a young boy jumps and lies down in front of the *tāupou*. But he quickly runs away after she places her foot on his back. Aside from these two boys, the movements of the supporting dancers are limited and repetitive: The dancers extend their arms first to one side of their bodies and then the other while closing and opening their hands. In addition to these performers, toward the end of the dance, a few audience members approach the dancer with gifts of money. The movements of the *tāupou* are described in more detail in the following analysis.

There is an overall emphasis on verticality in this performance: The torso is held extremely upright and there is generally very little bend in the knees. In addition, there is an emphasis on an outward focus.

Although the solo dancer primarily performs standing, she utilizes a variety of other supports throughout the dance. In one portion of the performance she lowers her support to her hip and her elbow (almost lying on the floor), then to her knees and finally to her feet again.

Locomotion is used frequently in this dance, but in a fairly limited space. The solo dancer makes her entrance from the side of the performing area and walks to the center. Throughout the dance, the performer walks forward, backward and in a circle. She also "glides" right, left and in a circular formation by means of rotating her lower legs in and out to alternately move her toes and heels together and apart. In addition, whenever she travels away from the center, she immediately travels back to it. In this way, her locomotive patterns are often symmetric.

Whenever the dancer "walks" (except when her knees are fully bent), the lower leg is lifted quickly backward high before each step. Whenever she is not locomoting, she gestures one leg forward with her toes on the ground. She moves the heel of that foot up and down or side to side by rotating the lower leg inward and outward. Although the solo performer generally maintains one to two degrees of flexion in her legs, she utilizes a variety of level changes in her supports, ranging from fully straight to fully bent legs.

The solo performer utilizes a wide range of reach space with her arms throughout her dance. Her arms are generally between middle and high levels and move in the

horizontal and sagittal planes. The arms contract and straighten repeatedly. The performer also contacts her body with her hands by lightly touching her elbows, hands, thighs, hips and head.

The torso is not moved a great deal in this dance. It is generally held stiffly upright, but is occasionally tilted slightly forward. The head also has limited mobility in this dance. Although mainly focused forward from the body, the dancer also performs a few small tilts of the head to the side.

The accompaniment for this dance is provided by a recording of popular Samoan music.

5.8 Movement summaries for *taualuga* examples

Many characteristics are similar to all of the *taualuga* performances analyzed in this study. In each example, there is a featured soloist for at least part of the dance and additional dancers that serve either as supporting dancers, a chorus or both. In each of these specific examples the solo dancer is female. Although supporting evidence indicates that the solo role can be performed by either a male or female dancer, in the examples, and my personal observations, there is usually a predominance of female dancers in the solo position. In each example, the solo dancer enters the performing space from an area "off stage" with a stylized forward walk or run. After this entrance, each solo performer acknowledges the audience with a "bow" or series of bows. After this point, the solo dances diverge in terms of individual movements, and although the dancers may use an increased amount of locomotion in comparison to the supporting

dancers, they still perform in a relatively limited space. In addition, the central performers in each example demonstrate a larger movement vocabulary than the supporting dancers, whose movements are often limited and repetitive. However, some of the male supporting dancers demonstrate movements that are not in the soloists' repertoires, such as lying face-down on the floor.

Many differences can also be seen in these three examples in the arrangement of the dancers in the performing space, their functions and their movement repertoires. In example one, the chorus is seated in a half circle behind the solo dancer. There is also a chorus leader who directs the group. In addition, several audience members act as 'aiuli for the principle dancer. In example two, the chorus is arranged in a rectangular formation behind the solo dancer. The chorus not only sings, but dances, as well, and not with specifically contrasting movements to the *tāupou*, but with movements similar to those used in *mā'ulu'ulu* dances. In example three, there is no chorus. Members of the dance group act as 'aiuli, dancing around the soloist, but generally at a fairly great distance.

The role of the audience also varies in each *taualuga*. In example one the audience plays an integral part in the performance, forming the core of supporting dancers for the *tāupou*. In the second and third examples, the audience has less involvement with the performance. Waiting until the end of the dance to participate, the audiences in these examples do not act as supporting dancers, but do contribute money to the performers.

Differences in the extent of the movement repertoires displayed by the solo dancers can also be seen in each performance. In the third example, the *tāupou* demonstrates a larger movement vocabulary than the other two solo dancers. Utilizing a variety of supports and a greater amount of locomotion, this performer not only shows her knowledge of culturally appropriate movements, but also her technical skills as a dancer. Although the solo dancers in examples one and two demonstrate a larger movement vocabulary than their supporting dancers, their movements are not as varied or extensive as the solo dancer's in example three.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary

Descriptions of Samoan dance are found scattered throughout the literature in missionary journals, explorers' accounts and books on Samoan music and Samoan culture. These descriptions indicate several general characteristics of various Samoan dance types but are not very revealing of specific movement components. This is largely due to the fact that previous authors write from a non-dance perspective.

Samoan dance types have previously been defined based on musical accompaniment and general features such as gender of performers, and the nature of some movements, but not on specific movement characteristics and signature use of the body. While such definitions provide some general clues about the dances, they often do not describe what sets apart one dance type from another or what characterizes them as Samoan dance. By using movement to determine features of dance types, differences and similarities become more obvious.

In this thesis, I analyze various examples of Samoan dance in an effort to provide some additional insight into the visual landscape of different dance types and dance groups in American Sāmoa. In summary, based on the examples analyzed, the following characteristics have been determined for each dance type in this study:

Mā 'ulu 'ulu

- Can be performed either in a mixed gender group or a group of all one gender.
 Performers can be a variety of ages, but are most generally teenagers (13-20 years old). Gender separation is typical. Gender distinction in movements may or may not be used. Group size averages between twenty and thirty performers based on the examples analyzed.
- 2. General group formation is a rectangle shape with the performers in straight rows and columns.
- 3. Body attitude varies between individual performers and between dance groups.
- 4. Manner of supports varies from sitting to standing.
- 5. The use of locomotion ranges from none, to moving the entire group as one unit, to changing group formations.
- 6. Leg gestures are limited, small and often repetitive.
- 7. Arm gestures occur mostly in the front of the body.
- 8. Hand gestures are small and repetitive and vary between performers.
- 9. The head is generally used to look in the direction of arm and hand gestures, toward the audience or to mark the pulse of the music.
- 10. Accompaniment varies between dance groups. In some groups the dancers sing their own accompaniment. In other groups the accompaniment is provided by recorded music. In all cases, the accompaniment includes text that is illustrated by the movements of the dance. The texts are generally in Samoan, but, based on this study, may also be in English and Samoan.

Sāsā

- 1. Can be performed by a mixed gender group or a group comprised of a single gender. Performers range in age but are generally teenagers. Gender separation is common, but not strict. There is generally no or very little gender distinction in movements. Group size averages around 20 to 25 dancers.
- 2. Group formations vary, but are generally symmetrical. Also, group formations are generally changed at the end of the dance.
- 3. Body attitude varies between dancers and dance groups, but there is generally an outward focus and an emphasis on verticality in the torso.
- 4. Initially the performers are seated cross-legged, but there is generally a change to a standing support at the end of the dance.
- 5. There is no locomotion until the end of the dance when it is used to change group formations or move the entire group to another location on the stage.
- 6. Leg gestures are small and repetitive. While seated, this gesture consists of a rapid bouncing of the knees.
- 7. Arm gestures occur mostly in near-reach space in the front of the body.
- 8. The hands are primarily used to create abstract, rhythmic sequences which may or may not produce sound and are often symmetrically repeated with the opposite side of the body.
- 9. The head is used to look at hand gestures and toward the audience.
- 10. The accompaniment varies in each example from percussive instruments to a synthesizer to recorded music.

Taualuga

- Performed with a principle dancer, supporting dancers and sometimes a chorus of singers. The principle dancer is generally female and can be any age. Supporting dancers can be any age and gender. The chorus members are generally a part of the performing group, whereas the principle and supporting dancers can be a part of the performing group or the audience.
- 2. Performers can have different arrangements and relationships to each other. In general, the principle dancer is in the center of the performing space with the supporting dancers and chorus behind.
- 3. The body attitude of the principle dancers generally emphasizes uprightness and an outward focus.
- 4. A variety of supports are used by all the members of this dance.
- 5. The use of the body in this dance is similar to the other two dances described.

 The main difference in this dance type is that the principle dancer generally demonstrates a larger movement vocabulary than the supporting dancers and the chorus. The supporting dancers and chorus generally utilize repetitive movements while the movements of the principle dancer are more varied.
- 6. The accompaniment for these dances is provided by a chorus of live singers backed by a synthesizer or a recording of popular music. The principle and supporting dancers generally do not sing.

These characteristics illustrate some of the features that characterize each dance type and differentiate one dance type from another. In addition, many characteristics point to variations among the examples analyzed for each dance type, suggesting a range of acceptability in performance and possibly suggesting stylistic characteristics associated with specific dance groups. Also, there are several features that cut across all the dance types suggesting some overriding characteristics of Samoan dance in general. My observations of Samoan dance suggest that exploring the use of energy and the relation of movements to rhythmic, melodic and textual accompaniment would reveal additional distinguishing characteristics of Samoan dance types.

6.2 Stylistic characteristics of individual dance groups

Although only a small sample of the existing dance groups in American Sāmoa are featured in this study, the sample does represent a variety of ways that Samoan dance is interpreted and performed. The examples from CCJS 'Autalavou show some of the more stereotypical features associated with the dance types: their $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu is danced sitting down, their sasa is accompanied by the $p\bar{a}t\bar{e}$, and the honor of dancing the taualuga was given to the most important person at the event. Out of the three groups used in this study, CCJS 'Autalavou presents the most conservative dances when compared with the literature descriptions.

On the other hand, the Siva Maia Dance Group utilizes some less conservative choices concerning music and choreography (when compared with the literature), emphasizing personal innovation and creativity. In the *mā'ulu'ulu*, the dancers do not

sing and there is an emphasis on locomotion. They also exhibit a dance that combines typical $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ elements with elements from other dance types. It is performed to popular music, not percussion instruments, and also incorporates the use of ipu (coconut shell halves). Their taualuga, however, was presented in a conventional fashion.

Finally, the Samoana High School Swing Choir presented some dances that fit with literature descriptions, but also incorporated additional elements as well. Their $m\bar{a}$ 'ulu 'ulu was conventional, but their $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$ abandoned the complete use of percussion instruments and utilized a synthesizer instead. Their taualuga contradicted conventional notions by utilizing specific choreography for the $t\bar{a}upou$ and the chorus.

6.3 Overriding characteristics of Samoan dance

In addition to features that help to distinguish different dance types from one another and unique components that help to suggest a group's style or characterize an individual dance, similarities throughout the examples in this study, regardless of dance type, also begin to suggest some overriding characteristics of Samoan dance in general. As noted in the literature, Samoan dances are group dances, or rather, group activities. Even "solo" dances require the cooperation of a group and involve all the performers and audience on some level.

Almost all of the dances, except the *taualuga*, emphasize unison movements. In these dances, performers are often arranged in rows and columns in a rectangular fashion. Group formations tend to emphasize symmetry and gender separation. Gender distinct movements may or may not be used, but often are not. Symmetry is also emphasized

choreographically with locomotion and bilateral repetition of arm and hand gestures. Symmetry is especially seen in abstract movements and may or may not be used with more narrative kinds of movements. The majority of arm gestures occur in the space in front of the body, in the front half of the kinesphere. Locomotion is not emphasized a great deal. However, in order to take the emphasis off the relation of movements to song texts, an increase in the use of locomotion may be more common in performances intended for non-Samoan speaking dancers and audiences. Movements of the lower body and peripheral body parts are limited, repetitive, mark the beat of the music and often vary from performer to performer.

6.4 Conclusions

In addition to determining characteristics associated with various dance types, dance groups and Samoan dance in general, in this thesis I also explore some of the complexity and problems involved with defining individual performing genres.

Difficulties occur because of different research perspectives in the literature, cultural changes over time and the variability of dance performances in Sāmoa today.

Researchers have often written "around" the subject of dance from various perspectives, mainly addressing the issues of "who", "when", "where" and "why"—but not always addressing the "what", and very seldom "how"; thus, not dealing directly with the movement. In fact, consideration of movement is often pushed to the sidelines instead of being placed at the center of Samoan dance research. This lack of focus on the movements of dance is partly due to the fact that the majority of writers on Samoan dance

have not been trained specifically to deal with aspects of movement. So, while their descriptions and analyses may be complete from the perspectives in which they are trained, they generally do not adequately account for movement characteristics.

However, because movement generally lies at the heart of any dance, or at least is usually one of the main factors that differentiate one dance from another, the movements of dance need to be factored into analytical equations in order to move forward in the field of Samoan dance research.

Previous researchers often attempt to define Samoan dance types based on a limited number of variables giving the most consideration to musical accompaniment, means of support and a few suggestions of movement qualities or specific isolated actions. However, as can be seen from the analyses in this study, many features are not characteristic of only one genre, or dance type, and within each dance type there can be many variations. Due to these overlapping characteristics as well as diversity in performance styles, Samoan dance types do not always adhere to rigidly constructed definitions. However, by analyzing the movements and other important features of Samoan dance, in multiple examples, conceptual guidelines can be constructed that outline key characteristics while leaving room for variation, innovation, acculturation and change.

Using movement analysis to study Samoan dance can bring us closer to understanding the details and variations of performance that contribute to characterizing different Samoan dance types; what differentiates them from one another and what makes them all recognizable as Samoan dance.

6.5 Directions for future research

Because I use a limited set of parameters to analyze a small selection of examples from a limited number of dance groups, this thesis only offers a small window into the variety and possibilities that exist for Samoan dance research. Analyzing more examples from additional dance groups with a wider set of analytical parameters will help establish more solid definitions of dance types in future research. In order to move forward in the study of Samoan dance, researchers need to begin looking at dance from different perspectives. In addition, dance in Sāmoa needs to be taken seriously as the focus of study rather than as a peripheral side note or afterthought.

The study of Samoan dance should include the study of movement. Using movement to determine the characteristics of dance types reveals more information about Samoan dance than what is currently available in the literature. Additional studies from the perspective of movement analysis will contribute to a fuller understanding of Samoan dance. However, because Samoan dance does not consist of just movements alone, research is also needed that incorporates the analysis of movement, music, text, function, context and the many other elements that contribute to making Samoan dance what it is.

One of the most important avenues for new research in Samoan dance is studies from indigenous perspectives. Dance studies from a Samoan viewpoint are much needed and would definitely add a new light to the subject.

Because so little research has been conducted in the area of Samoan dance, many possibilities for future studies exist. From case studies to comparative, historic to contemporary, dance groups to individual choreographers and performers, and with

growing diasporic communities in several locations, the possibilities that exist for Samoan dance research are virtually untapped and endless.

APPENDIX A: DVD

The accompanying DVD was made with *imovie* and can be played on any standard DVD player or any Apple Computer DVD player. All of the contents on the DVD were digitally transferred from fieldwork videos filmed by Jennifer Radakovich in American Sāmoa in 2002, except Chapters 1, 4 and 7, which were filmed by Kuki Tuiasosopo in Hawai'i, also in 2002. Diacriticals are not used in the DVD chapter titles due to limitations in the *imovie* program fonts.

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Chapter 9: Taualuga Example 3, Siva Maia Dance Group

GLOSSARY

afi. fire

'aiavā. evening presentation of food at a malaga.

'aiuli. to demonstrate respect. In *taualuga*, dancing in order to demonstrate respect for the central dancer.

aualuma. young women's association

'aumaga. untitled men's association

'autalavou. church youth group

ali'i. high chief

fa'aluma. clown, dance leader or chorus leader

fala. mat woven from pandanus, can be rolled and played with two sticks as a "drum"

fiti. flick. As a dance movement, while seated cross-legged, performers flick the floor gently just in front of their legs with their fingers in time with the beat.

'ie toga. fine mat

ili. fan

ipu. coconut shell half

lapalapa. midrib of a coconut leaf. When used as a dance implement, the ends are split and struck against the palm of the hand and thigh.

lata. stylistic walk used in dance. The center of gravity remains lowered and the lower leg is lifted quickly backward high before each step.

lavalava. wraparound "skirt"

lue. lit. "to shake or to rock". A dance movement performed while seated cross-legged. Dancers lift and lower their knees while slightly contracting and straightening their torsos, giving the appearance of a forward and backward rocking motion.

malaga. visiting excursion

mānaia. son of a high chief

matai. chief

mili. lit. "rub". As a dance movement, the hands are held flat and parallel with the palms touching, and are rubbed together quickly.

nofo. to sit. In the context of $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, it is used as an instruction to prepare the dancers. The dancers are already seated cross-legged when the instruction is given, at which time the dancers sit upright at attention with their backs straight. The instruction "nofo" is alternated with "tulolo" (bend).

olo. lit. "rub or grind". A stationary movement used in dance that consists of moving the heels in and out by rotating the lower legs.

pātē. small, wooden slit drum

pati. a clap that is performed with both hands flat and parallel and produces a high-pitched sound

pō. a clap performed with both hands cupped and perpendicular and produces a low-pitched sound

pōula. night dance

puletasi. typical woman's attire of a long skirt and matching top.

saofa'i. ceremony for the bestowal of a title

se'e. lit. "slide or glide". A dance movement that produces sideward locomotion when the heels and toes are alternately moved together through inward and outward rotation of the lower legs.

siva. dance

tāupou. daughter of a high chief

tuiga. ceremonial headdress worn by the tāupou or mānaia

tu'itu'i. a drum made from a rolled mat (*fala*) with resonators inside such as pieces of bamboo or empty bottles

tulāfale. talking chief

tulolo. to bend. In the context of a $s\bar{a}s\bar{a}$, it is used an instruction to prepare the dancers. When the instruction is given, the dancers lower their heads, tilt their torsos forward and place their hands on the floor, or perform any other predetermined movement that involves lowering the head or tilting the torso forward.

ususū. traditional war cry

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