

# **A SAMOAN CHRISTIAN *TUSIATA* READING OF JOHN 8: 1-8**

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Faculty of Malua Theological College

In Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Degree  
Bachelor of Theology

by

Konelio Taumaloto

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## **Abstract**

I have been always interested in considering the stories of the Bible as arts or pictures. As such, they have their own beauty that depicts other meanings of the Bible that are relevant to our worlds now. That interest evoked for me the desire to explore Jesus' writing on the ground in John 8:1-8. The interesting part about this text (John 8:1-18) is that what Jesus writes on the ground is not explicitly mentioned. Thus, this study seeks to find whether could my understanding of visual art considered by Robbins as rhetography and rhetology suggest other meanings of what Jesus writes on the ground to go alongside traditional interpretations of John 8:1-8. The study is an opportunity for me as a reader of the Bible in today's world to practice interpretation of the Bible from the approach of using our perspectives from our own world to read the Bible.

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to the memories of my grandmother Vaefaga Puā Fetoa'i. It is also dedicated to my beloved parents Poluleuligaga Taumaloto Tuiai and Ekueta Tuiai whose prayers, advices and hope were for me to enter Malua Theological College. I would also love to dedicate this thesis to my dear wife Iota Konelio, and our lovely daughter Eliyanah Beverly Konelio. I also dedicate this thesis to all my families in New Zealand and Samoa. Last but not the least, I want to dedicate this thesis to my pastor Reverend. Tavita Pulu & Mafaufauga Pulu as well as the EFKS Togo Saleimoa for their unconditional love and support.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

EFKS	Ekalesia Fa'apotopotoga Kerisiano Samoa
MTC	Malua Theological College

## Introduction

From my childhood as a teenage boy, Art is my favourite subject. I worked hard in school to become an artist like one of our colleagues, Mr Pelenato Liufau. As a Christian, being an artist is interesting and challenging because ideas about drawing pictures and making artworks are always influenced by my understanding of Samoan and Christian values and beliefs. In the last 3 years of attending and living in Malua, I have learned more not only about the bible and theology but also about ways that enable me to apply my art skills and understanding to interpreting the Bible such as seeing a text in the Bible as an artwork. From that learning evokes the desire to explore Jesus' action of drawing on the ground in John 8:1-8. I have always found the Gospel of John fascinating because of its theological portraying of who Jesus is. In this thesis, I will explore John 8:1-8 finding what could be the meaning of Jesus' writing on the ground. The exploration will be carried out from my perspective as a Samoan Christian *Tusiata* (artist). I have called myself a Samoan Christian *Tusiata*, because how I see life as a *tusiata* and draw images and pictures as *tusiata* are always influenced by the Samoan and Christian values and understanding I was taught with by my parents, family, and Samoan churches and village communities.

The area of drawing arts I have experienced in is visual art. For me, visual art is important in teaching and learning the Gospel. From an artist perspective, any text has its own beauty which can be seen as embedded in word patterns presented in various and different rhetorical textures. An example of these textures is a visual and graphical texture seen in the language of the text that depicts a picture of a moment or an event happening in the text. According to Gadamer, seeking an understanding or meaning of that moment or event is compared to the experience of art. The main question Gadamer asks is how can we find the meaning of the art or true beauty of the art? Gadamer says

that the artwork has the world behind it which is the artist's world, for he/she produces the art. The art is left by itself and it has its own world. When it is experienced aesthetically by a spectator, it is viewed from the world of the spectator. This experiencing of art is called 'play'.<sup>1</sup> The spectator has brought to the artwork his/her pre-understanding of the art, the human experience in general. At the meeting point, the art is transformed into reality at the present moment. Gadamer talks about 'play' as a contemporary movement that brings out the present meaning of the art.<sup>2</sup> In connection with the literary text, Gadamer suggests that like the experiencing of works of art, reading and understanding is also a practice of art in the moment when the 'play movement' occurs. Encountering a work of art and a text we are actually experiencing it in relation to our present situation and location. My present situation and location is an artist in today's Samoan world. It is a location considered a product of the blending of my knowledge and understanding of an artist and my understanding of being a Christian in the Samoa social and cultural world – a blending of cultures and values that could be looked at as 'Samoa Christian.' This is important because Christianity in Samoa has huge impact on how the Samoan people see and live life as witnessed in the Samoan people's blending of the Samoan and Christian values in their attempts to make sense the life activities and situations they encounter to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

One example is reflected in the appearance of that blending in Samoan artists' drawings and crafting. This study utilizes a Samoan Christian understanding and skills as an artist to guide an exploration of Jesus' drawing on the ground in John 8:1-8. It is exploring what is embedded in the language of a text as not a final product of the story

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<sup>1</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 101-02.

<sup>2</sup> Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 112-16.

told and shown but an event<sup>3</sup>communicating various meanings that are relevant to different readers of a text. This approach is significant because any text is a blending of different cultures and understanding and such blending is looked at from the sociorhetorical criticism approach as rhetology and rhetography. Thus, the exploration will be carried out using ‘sociorhetorical criticism’ (*agafesootai o faaupuga*). It is text and reader-centred therefore it will deal with what I as a Samoan artist reader find as the meanings of the texts. They may not be the meanings intended by the real author. However, considering the text as having its own world, other meanings evoke. Thus, the meanings presented here are my own interpretations and should not affect the original meanings of the text in accordance with the real authors’ intentions. It is not a study to impose my location and situation as a reader on the text but to raise more questions that would help make the meaning of the text more meaningful to my artist world. Hence, the exercise is to seek more meanings about the text to go alongside other meanings or interpretations already made about the text – such as traditional interpretations. This is how I see the text as an artist – the text that shows Jesus’ bending down and writing on the ground. Jesus is simply acting as an artist. This thesis explores this action of Jesus in this moment of Jesus’ ministry from the perspective of artist whether Jesus can be looked at an artist. I have chosen the Gospel of John for its presentation of Jesus’ ministry is theologically-based – not chronological like the synoptic gospels.

John the disciple of Jesus, also called the beloved disciple, is undisputedly regarded the author of the Gospel of John. The date/setting of John’s gospel is also found interesting as it was written in Alexandria at the time of Domitian’s reign of

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<sup>3</sup>NasiliVaka’uta from a Tongan perspective in describing the idea of text writes that “...a “text” indicates an *event* not a product; a practice not a theory.” NasiliVaka’uta, *Reading Ezra 9-10 Tu’a-Wise: Rethinking Biblical Interpretation in Oceania* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 78. In the similar sense, I consider John 8:1-8 as action texts. Jesus’ action of drawing something on the ground is an action.

terror. This contributes to the fact that John's gospel is far more depth and rich in theology compared to the other three gospels. Also contributing to John's theology is the purpose and the theme that he portrayed in his gospel. Apart from the synoptic writers, John's purpose was to provide his audience a fuller understanding that Jesus performed signs for us to believe in order for us to have eternal life that is in the Son of God. Furthermore, Jesus not only showed us signs, but he also advised and encouraged us to be bold and strong when we come to face the oppressions of the world.

The paper will be divided into four Chapters. Chapter One will describe the sociorhetorical criticism elements of rhetology and rhetography and how they will be used as a method to explore John 8:1-8 from an artist perspective. For example is identifying how rhetology and rhetography from an artist perspective are featured in the text. Part of this Chapter is the explanation of my reading perspective the artist perspective which is called in Samoan, *Tusiata*. Chapter Two will show a literature review of interpretations of the selected text. This review will lead the study to the direction of the exploration of the selected text that this thesis will pursue – a reading from an artist perspective. Chapter Three puts the methodology into action by interpreting the rhetology and rhetography of Jesus' actions told and shown in the text. It is followed by a conclusion to the study in Chapter Four.

## Chapter 1

### Rhetology and Rhetography and My Tusiata Perspective

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter will explain how the sociorhetorical elements of ‘rhetology’ and ‘rhetography’ as the argumentative textures of texts will be used to explore John 8:1-8 from my *Tusiata* perspective. Part of the Chapter is the explanation of my perspective as a *Tusiata* – a Samoan artist. It is followed by a summary to the Chapter.

#### 1.1 Rhetology and Rhetography

My reading location and perspective is placed in between my *tusiata* and Christian understanding. It approaches the text exploring how the blending of drawing pictures with Christian values expresses and pictures a Samoan Christian artist experiencing of their Samoan Christian artist world. Blending of Christianity with the believers’ particular understanding or experience about life is not a new experience. In fact, it was first experienced and practised by the first century Christians. According to Vernon K. Robbins,

“...although first century Christians lived in a culture we regularly describe as “traditional,” they found ways to weave new dimensions into existing modes of Mediterranean discourse. ...early Christians reconfigured multiple forms of preceding and contemporary discourse by blending pictorial narrative with argumentative assertions in ways that created distinctive social, cultural, ideological, and religious modes of understanding and belief in the Mediterranean world.”<sup>1</sup>

Here, Robbins speaks of how the early Christians blended their worlds with their understanding of God’s mission as proclaimed in and through Jesus’ ministry. The

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<sup>1</sup>Vernon K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, 6.

blending Robbins speaks about is the weaving of the “firstspace”<sup>2</sup> and “secondspace”<sup>3</sup> in and through a process of conceptual mapping and integration which in effect brings forth the “thirdspace.”<sup>4</sup> According to Robbins, that blending is told and shown in the text through ‘rhetology’ and ‘rhetography.’ Robbins defines these terminologies as follows.

“Rhetology: The argumentative texture of a text, which makes assertions supported by reasons and rationale; clarified by opposites and contraries; energized by analogies, comparison, examples (**rhetography**); and confirmed by authoritative testimony in a context either of stated conclusions or of progressive texture that invites a hearer/reader to infer a particular conclusion.”<sup>5</sup>

“Rhetography: The progressive, sensory-aesthetic, and/ or argumentative texture of a text (**rhetology**) that invites a hearer/ reader to create a graphic image or picture in the mind that implies a certain kind of and/or reality.”<sup>6</sup>

In other words, according to Robbins’ definitions, rhetology is a texture of a text that expresses an argument in reasons, and rhetography is a texture of a text that exhibits pictures of interactions between people and the contexts in which they interact. Robbins’ defining of blending is in a form of a thirdspace as a product of the integration of firstspace and secondspace, similar to what my being an artist is as *Tusiata*. I am an

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<sup>2</sup> Robbins defines ‘firstspace’: “A concept within critical spatiality theory (CST) in which experienced spaces, locations, and situations are primary spaces in which people develop and perpetuate special pictures and memories in their minds. Robbins, *The Invention of Discourse*, xxii.

<sup>3</sup> According to Robbins, ‘secondspace’ is “People’s cognitive and conceptual interpretation of geophysical spaces as social, cultural, religious, and ideological places. In SRI (Socio Rhetorical Interpretation), people’s blending of geophysical spaces with God’s cosmos is a special aspect of secondspace.” Robbins, *The Invention of Discourse*, xxviii.

<sup>4</sup> Robbins explains ‘thirdspace’ as the “Spaces, places, and situations in which people negotiate their daily lives in ongoing contexts of sensory-aesthetic experiences that are “spaces of blending.” In SRI, (Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation) thirdspace is a dynamic space in which readers, interpreters, and writers negotiate possible alternative identities on a daily basis in relation to firstspaces and secondspaces. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxix.

<sup>5</sup> Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxvii.

<sup>6</sup> Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxvii.



artist standing in between my artist understanding in visual art and Christian understanding that I call a Samoan Christian artist. It is identifying a third space where a Samoan Christian artist will explore the rhetology and rhetography of the selected text – John 8:1-8.

To interpret the text, I will use Robbins' proposed sociorhetorical approach,<sup>7</sup> emphasising the six major first century Christian rhetorical dialects or rhetorolects<sup>8</sup> considered as belief systems or forms of life as localization of Mediterranean ways of dealing with the world according to Robbins. For Robbins, "[e]arly Christians blended these rhetorolects into one another...creating dynamic, adaptable, and persuasive modes of discourse (such as Christian discourse) within the Mediterranean society and culture." Because of the scope of this paper, I will focus only on four rhetorolects – precreation,<sup>9</sup> priestly,<sup>10</sup> prophetic,<sup>11</sup> and wisdom.<sup>12</sup> These rhetorolects will be analysed

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<sup>7</sup> Sociorhetorical criticism was developed by Vernon K. Robbins as an attempt to integrate social science with more literary based advances in biblical studies. His goal is to develop a rhetorical approach that combines literary, social, cultural and ideological issues in texts. Socio-rhetorical criticism integrates the world of the text, the world behind the text and the world of the reader. The approach focuses on finding the meaning of the text by examining the values, convictions and beliefs in the world of the text. It examines how those values help shape meaning and as readers we compare or contrast them with the world we live, in order to make meaning relevant to us. See Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to the Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Harrisburg: Trinity, 1996), 1, 3, 4; Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (London: Routledge, 1996), 26.

<sup>8</sup> Rhetorolect: Alternatively called a belief system or form of life. A form of language variety or discourse (abbreviation of 'rhetorical dialect') identifiable on the basis of a distinctive configuration of themes, images (rhetography), topics, reasonings, and argumentations (rhetology). From the perspective of cognitive science, a rhetorolect is an **idealized cognitive model (ICM)**. By their nature, rhetorolects blend with one another, interacting like dialects do when people from different dialectical areas converse with one another. The **blending** of rhetorolects in first century Christian discourse created new configurations of speech, belief, thought, and action as the movement grew. Six major rhetorolects are prominent in first Christian discourse: **wisdom, prophetic, apocalyptic, precreation, priestly**, and **miracle** discourse. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxvii-xxviii.

<sup>9</sup> "One of the six major first century Christian **rhetorolects**, alternatively called belief systems or forms of life, which is a localization of Mediterranean speculative **philosophy**. Precreation rhetorolect interprets the invisible, while wisdom rhetorolect (a localization of moral philosophy) interprets the visible world. Precreation rhetorolect blends human experiences of divine emperors (like Roman emperors) and their households, which people hear about but often do not see (**firstspace**) with God's cosmos (**secondspace**). A special presupposition in this **blending** is that God has an eternal, primordial status as a loving heavenly emperor with a household and community populated by loving people.... In the space of blending (**thirdspace**), people establish relationships with the love of

as rhetographies – images of first Century Christian rhetorical dialects or now Christian discourses.

Exploring these rhetorolects as rhetographies will be made in the following format. From the perspective of doing visual art as Samoan Christian, the interpretation begins with a description of the local place encoded in the text as the setting of the artwork. It is followed by identifying Jesus as a local person in relation to that place. Important in the identifying of Jesus is his connection to other characters in the story such as the people from the household of the Roman empire, the Jewish leaders, disciples, crowd and women. The next part of the interpretation will explore Jesus' movements in relation to other characters. It will be looked at as Jesus' fluctuation in-between spaces to help local people in need. And this help is made in accordance with the purpose of Jesus ministry.

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God.... The goal of the blending in the precreation belief is to guide people towards community that is formed through God's love...." Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxvi-xxvi.

<sup>10</sup> One of the six major first century Christian **rhetorolects**, alternatively called belief systems or forms of life, which is localization of Mediterranean sacrificial and mystery ritual discourse. First century Christian priestly belief blends human experiences in sacrificial and mystery temples (**firstspace**) with a concept of God's cosmos and temple city (**secondspace**). In the space of **blending (thirdspace)**, people enact rituals that are perceived to activate special benefits for humans from God. ...ritual actions by humans create an environment in which God acts redemptively among humans in the world. Robbins, *The Invention of Christina Discourse*, xxvi.

<sup>11</sup> "Prophetic rhetorolect is one of six major first century Christian **rhetorolects**, alternatively called belief systems or forms of life, which is a localization of Mediterranean oracular **mantic** (divine communication) **discourse**. First century Christian prophetic belief blends experiences in a "kingdom" that has political boundaries on earth (**firstspace**) with God's cosmos (**secondspace**), with the presupposition that God transmits God's will in special ways into the speech and action of prophets. In the space of **blending (thirdspace)**, people establish various identities in relation to God as heavenly King over his righteous kingdom on earth. The nature of prophetic belief is to confront religious and political leaders who act on the basis of human greed, pride, and power rather than God's justice, righteousness, and mercy for all people in God's kingdom on the earth." Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxvii

<sup>12</sup> "One of the six major first century Christian **rhetorolects**, alternatively called belief systems or fmors of life, which is a localization of Mediterranean moral **philosophy**. ...First century Christian wisdom rhetorolect blends human experiences of the household...(firstspace) with the cultural space of Gods cosmos (**secondspace**). In the lived space of **blending (thirdspace)**, people establish identities in relation to God who functions as heavenly Father over God's children in the world." Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxix-xxx.

The questions that will guide this exploration are: How do features of John 8:1-8 as a text could tell and show the world encoded in the text as a local place? How does Jesus belong to that local place? How does the movement of Jesus in relation to other characters in this local place (as images of precreation, priestly, prophetic, and wisdom rhetorolects), show Jesus' attending to the needs of these people as his first priority in this time of his ministry?

It is my contention that the textures of John's gospel, its rhetology and rhetography of the First Century Christians' blending of their understanding of their Mediterranean world and Jesus' ministry shows that Jesus' actions in his ministry are revelations of his sovereignty as the incarnated-God. Thus, what Jesus is doing in his ministry as in John 8:1-8 could be looked at as Jesus' showing how he as God helps those oppressed and colonized in a society ruled by the Roman imperial power. In this exploration, the study will make a rhetorical analysis and interpretation of the 'pictorial-narrative function' and the 'argumentative-enthymematic function',<sup>13</sup> of the connection between the wisdom of household and the household of God and values in the Johannine story of dealing with women or those unrecognized by a society. Thus, for this study, socio-rhetorical criticism will bring my world as a Samoan Christian artist who has some understanding and knowledge of the Bible characters and events, and artist's lining and drawing into dialogue with a sociorhetorical reading of Jesus' drawing on the ground in John 8:1-8.

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<sup>13</sup> Robbins wrote: "Rhetorical interpretation, as it was re-introduced to New Testament interpretation during the last half of the twentieth century used an incorrect picturing of the situations underlying the argumentation in the New Testament." What Robbins means is that the classical rhetoric of forensic, deliberative and epideictic are meant to picture the life of people in the city situation and it is not how they are used in the New Testament text. How it is used in the New Testament text is based on the locations of the first century Christians in multiple places in connection to their understanding of God's Kingdom. Robbins, *The Inventions of Christian Discourse*, 1-2.

## 1.2 *Tusiata* Perspective

### 1.2.1 *Tusiata*

I will approach the texts as a Samoan Christian artist. This is expressed and pictured by the concept '*Tusiata*.' The concept is made up of two words. The first word is '*tusi*' meaning write or draw. The next word is '*ata*' meaning picture or image. The word '*ata*' also means shadow. *Tusiata* is simply drawing pictures or images. There is more in doing the work of *Tusiata*. It is not just drawing. *Tusiata* is also about observing, imagining, deep thinking, hoping, realising, aiming, figuring, dreaming, and more. These actions of my being a *Tusiata* are influenced by my being a Samoan who considered the Samoan social and cultural values very important – the social and cultural values strongly influenced by the Christian teachings and values. As such, a Samoan *tusiata* works in different spaces such as firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace. In this way, one of the aims of a *tusiata* in drawing pictures could be looked at drawing a picture or an image that brings people or things together – a picture or image that shows a *faia* (connections or relationships of things to one another). In other words, *Tusiata* is a relational action undertaken to bring two or more sides into reconciliation or into a new relationship. From this perspective, one of the aims of my exploration of the text as a Samoan Christian *tusiata* is to see whether Jesus drawing on the ground as shown in the story could be looked at as an action of reconciliation. If it is, then another question arises – a reconciliation of what? Thus, my use of *Tusiata*, here as a reader's perspective is twofold. First, it explains my Samoan Christian artist understanding, portraying where I stand between Samoan and Christian cultures. Second, it reveals my location as a Samoan in seeing how the biblical characters and events used in the texts communicate the meanings of the texts. From this perspective, I will see how the biblical characters and events in the text as a blending of cultures and values reflected in the text made to appropriate the reality of life the people in Jesus'

time faced and encountered in their contexts. Thus, my perspective is a location of a Samoan Christian *tusiata* who approaches the text with some understanding of *tusiata Samoa* and biblical worlds. Also, the approach implies my support of the social and cultural structuring of Samoan society from the point of view that the purpose of being in a status within that structure is to serve, not to oppress.

### **1.3 What is Visual Art?**

Visual art in other words is an art created from the use of five senses. Creating a visual art begins from feeling the texture of the artwork by touching the body of the artwork. Hearing, smelling, tasting, and seeing the artwork use the three-point perspectives (One Point, Two Point and Three Point Perspectives. Perspective in visual art means is called an 'Eye Level Line' (EEL) of something you can see and be used to create an outline of something, applying on paper, Canvas (special kind of fabric material use to paint pictures on), stones, cements, sand or soil, or whatever materials relevant to create an artwork.

The elements of art are 'Lines, Shape, Tone, Volume, Shading Techniques, Form and Texture.' The elements of line in creating and drawing a picture or a visual art are more meaningful than many other lines in other areas. Elements of Line in Art have their own meaning. Every single line is created or founded by point or dots. Lines in Art are termed as, Diagonal line (meaning met sometimes), Vertical line (way to glory), Horizontal line (show calm or peacefully), Spiral (confusion), Zig-Zag (Show movement).

Visual art is an expression of our feelings about the nature. Visual arts in art forms are painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, designs, craft and architecture. Many artistic disciplines such as performing art, conceptual art, and textile art also involve aspects of visual arts as well as arts of other types. Also included within

the visual arts are the applied arts such as industrial design, graphic design, fashion design, interior design and decorative art.

#### **1.4 How my *Tusiata* perspective will be used with Jesus' actions as rhetographies**

For this thesis, I will analyse Jesus' drawing on the sand from a visual art point of view which I will consider as a rhetography<sup>14</sup> – a rhetography that invites a reader or hearer to create a graphic image or picture in the mind that blending of different spaces that implies these four Christian rhetorolects (rhetorical dialects) or Christian belief systems or forms of life – 'precreation, priestly, prophetic, and wisdom.' Each of these rhetorolects as mentioned is a blending of a firstspace and secondspace.

The precreation rhetorolect is the early Christians blending of "human experience of Roman emperor [firstspace] and God's cosmos [secondspace]. The goal of the blending in the precreation belief is to guide people towards community that is formed through God's love." The priestly rhetorolect is the early Christians blending of "human experiences in sacrificial and mystery temples [firstspace] with a concept of God's cosmos and temple city [secondspace]." In the space of blending the people carry out rituals that are consider to bring forth special benefits for humans from God. They are ritual actions by humans to create an environment in which God acts to redeem the sinners among humans in the world. The prophetic rhetorolect is the blending of "experiences in a kingdom that has political boundaries on earth [firstspace] with God's cosmos [secondspace]," with the expectation that God in and through the words and actions of the prophets transmits his will. Thus, in the space of blending, the people establish identities as God's people to confront religious and political leaders who

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<sup>14</sup> "Rhetography: The progressive, sensory-aesthetic, and/ or argumentative texture of a text (**rhetology**) that invites a hearer/ reader to create a graphic image or picture in the mind that implies a certain kind of and/or reality." Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, xxvii.

oppress other through their acts of human greed, pride, and power. Their message is to live life as people in God's kingdom on the earth as God's justice, righteousness, and mercy for all people. The wisdom rhetorolect is the blending of "human experiences of the household [fristspace] with the cultural space of Gods cosmos [secondspace]. In the space of blending, people see themselves as God's people who look up to God as the heavenly Father for all people in the world.

## 1.5 Conclusion

This chapter shows how 'rhetology' and 'rhetography' as argumentative textures of texts will be explored from the perspective of a Samoan Christian *Tusiata* to find what could be the meaning of Jesus' drawing on the ground shown in John 8:1-8. The chapter explains the undertaking of the task of *Tusiata* as not just drawing pictures but observing a situation with a sense of putting together or blending different situations into one. The following Chapters which is the interpretation of the text using the above-mentioned method will show whether those functions of the role of *Tusiata* could bring about another meaning of Jesus' drawing on the ground. Thus, some of the questions that will guide the coming up exegesis of the text are: Can Jesus' action of drawing on the ground made Jesus an artist? What could be various and different values and situations embedded in the language of the text that could have impacted what Jesus is trying to draw on the ground? What is Jesus drawing on the ground? What are the significances of these actions of Jesus as Son of God to other characters in the story? How does this action and movement of Jesus can help amplify the meaning of Jesus ministry in this part of Jesus' ministry in John's gospel? Can art help save a life as in the passage?

## Chapter 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW – JOHN 8:1-8

#### 2. Introduction

This Chapter will deal with a brief literature review of the selected text, John 8:1-8. The main function of the review is to lead the thesis to the emphasis of the interpretation that will be carried out of the selected text in the following Chapter.

#### 2.1 Review

D.A. Carson<sup>1</sup> supports a longstanding interpretation in the church that Jesus wrote part of Jeremiah 17:13. Likewise St Thomas Aquinas<sup>2</sup> interpreted the Jesus' writing on the ground as part of Jeremiah 17:13. Aquinas added two other reasons. One is Jesus wrote on earth to show that he would perform signs on earth, for he who writes makes signs. Thus, to write on the earth is to make signs. Two is he wrote on the earth because the Old Law was written on tablets of stone, which signify its harshness: "A man who violates the Law of Moses dies without mercy". For Thomas L Constable,<sup>3</sup> Jesus perhaps wrote the words of Jeremiah and the words in Exodus 23:1. Constable's interpretation emphasizes the use of the verb 'write' in its past tense. It is used in this event to express the importance of writing words, drawing pictures, or making signs. There have been several suggestions about what Jesus may have written in the dust, all of which are guesses. Perhaps he wrote the words mentioned in Jeremiah 17:13b and in

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<sup>1</sup> Carson D.A, *Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary, APOLLOS Leicester England, (Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 1991), 333.

<sup>2</sup> Aquinas St Thomas, *Chapter 8*, Commentary on John Chapters 6-12, The Catholic University of America Press Washington, D.C, (Thomas, Aquinas Saint 2010), 99.

<sup>3</sup> Constable Dr Thomas L, *The Woman caught in adultery – 7:53-8:11*, Notes on John, (Sonic Light 2016), 127.



Exodus 23:1b. Therefore, this is the only mention of Jesus writing in the New Testament, along with verse 8. Incidentally, this is the only record of Jesus writing on the ground that we have in the Bible. For Constable, if the writer is not mentioning what Jesus writes on the ground then that is not the emphasis of this event. In other words, what Jesus wrote was secondary to what his writing was. Perhaps, Jesus was reminding scribes and Pharisees that God originally wrote the Ten Commandments with his finger. However, Jesus actions remind the readers of this and thus suggest that Jesus is God. Perhaps Jesus “wrote on the ground” to delay responding to those who criticized him at the same time. The important part of these interpretations which emphasize not what Jesus wrote but his action of writing is the action of making signs. These scholars’ interpretations reflect the importance of Jesus making signs as it is the emphasis of the first part of the Gospel of John – from chapter one to chapter 12 – the so-called book of signs.

Other scholars like Frank E Gaebelein<sup>4</sup> interpreted the event of Jesus writing on the ground as an event about the Pharisees attempt to find ways to catch Jesus. For example, the question of the Pharisees was emphatic: "You, there! What do you say?" Jesus did not answer, but "he bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger." For Gaebelein, this is not the emphasis of this event. Instead, it is about the Pharisees’ presence to set a trap for Jesus, in which case they themselves were guilty. According to Jews Law, in any case, the stoning of death must be initiated by witnesses. It is certain whether Jesus made a statement indicating that they had committed forgiveness or adultery with this woman, or whether he spoke of past personal guilt. In

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<sup>4</sup>Gaebelein Frank E, *The Woman taken in adultery*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Zondervan Publishing House, ( Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1981), 89.

both case, each of the accusers would have to either admit that he was guilty or refrain from demanding the death of the woman.

Other scholars considered this event as an event about adultery. According to Andreas J. Kostenberger, the emphasis of the event is the subject of adultery for adultery is not addressed elsewhere in this Gospel. It suggests that the verb and noun for “adultery” mentioned only here is limited to the present context. The importance of this emphasis is reflected in the action of Jesus in this event which is not mentioned anywhere in John’s Gospel – the action of bending down and writing on the ground. The uniqueness of this event according to Kostenberger suggests the uniqueness of the meaning of Jesus’ response to the situation – the response of saving the woman. Reflected in the interpretation by Gerard S Sloyan<sup>5</sup> is that emphasis of adultery where the men used the woman to hide their adultery. According to Sloyan, the connection of “scribes and Pharisees” is not Johannine. In the books of Moses both male and female adulterers are to be put to death, but there is no mention in this passage of the apprehension of the woman's partner. The actual issue in the story is the far greater guilt of the accusers than the woman. Hoping to draw attention away from themselves, they prove their kinship with the types he censures.

The traditional interpretation of John 8:1-8 is to show how Jesus saves a sinful woman. In this interpretation the woman is considered the focus of the event. And one of the questions that need answers about this event in John 8:1-8 is: Who is the woman that the Jewish leaders took to Jesus? The traditional interpretations see this woman and adulterer without a name. But according to Adam Clarke,<sup>6</sup> her name was Susana and

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<sup>5</sup>Sloyan Gerard S, *Who is Jesus?*, Interpretation A Bible Commentary for teaching and breaching, John (Knox Press Atlanta, 1988), 95.

<sup>6</sup> Clarke Adam, *A woman taken in adultery*, Clarke’s Commentary The New Testament, volume 6 John Through Acts, AGES Software – (Albany, OR USA, 1997), 162.

she married to an old man named Manasseh. The woman died a saint in Spain; where she had followed St. James. Clarke's claim is based on a tradition about this woman by the Polish people. This woman was considered a high priest for her righteousness. Clarke added that this woman was saved from being punished under the Jewish laws because the Roman laws at the time did not condemn adultery to be put to death.

According to J.C Ryle<sup>7</sup> the narrative which begins the eight chapter of John's Gospel is of rather peculiar character. In some respects, it stands alone. There is nothing quite like it in the whole range of the four gospels. In every age some scrupulous minds have stumbled at the passage, and have doubted whether it was ever written by John at all. But the justice of such scruples is a point that cannot easily be proved.

## 2.2 Conclusion

The review shows different interpretations and their emphases. The interpretations that sought to find what Jesus wrote which predominantly looked at as the words mentioned in the Book of Jeremiah and the Book of Exodus. Some of those scholars added to their interpretations the importance of Jesus writing as making of signs. The main conclusion from those interpretations on finding what Jesus wrote was that it was not known. The next important emphasis of interpretations of John 8:1-8 is adultery. The woman as adulterer is the traditional interpretation of the passage. Some scholars as mentioned in their interpretations considered the men at the scene as adulterers as well. These men used the woman as cover for their adultery. Other interpretation saw the event as showing the Pharisees' attempt to find ways to trap Jesus. One of the interpretations considered the event as not from the hand of John the author. Overall,

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<sup>7</sup> Ryle J.C, *St. John. Volume 2*, Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of John with Notes, William Hunt and company, 23, (Holles street Cavendish Square, 2008), 2.

there are rhetorical problems in the text that need revisiting. And it is the task of this study to revisit the text looking at the context of where the event happened and Jesus as the Messiah as portrayed in the Gospel of John. Revisiting the text by looking at those areas will be done so from the perspective of *Tusiata*, and will be the task of the following chapter using the methodology explained in Chapter One.

## **Chapter 3**

### **EXEGESIS OF JOHN 8:1-8**

#### **Introduction**

The exegesis will show the use of Robbins' proposed sociorhetorical approach, emphasising three of the six major first century Christian rhetorical dialects or rhetorolects - belief systems / forms of life applied by the peoples of the Mediterranean in dealing with the world. The four rhetorolects are precreation, priestly, prophetic, and wisdom. These rhetorolects will be analysed as rhetographies – images of first Century Christian rhetorical dialects or now Christian discourses. Exploring these rhetorolects as rhetographies will be made in the following format. From the perspective of doing visual art as Samoan Christian, the interpretation begins with a description of the local place encoded in the text as the setting of the artwork. It is followed by identifying Jesus as a local person in relation to that place. Important in the identifying of Jesus is his connection to other characters in the story such as the people from the household of the Roman empire, the Jewish leaders, disciples, crowd and women. The next part of the interpretation will explore Jesus' movements in relation to other characters. It will be looked at as Jesus' fluctuation in-between spaces to help local people in need. And this help is made in accordance with the purpose of Jesus ministry. The questions that will guide this exploration are: How do features of John 8:1-8 as a text tell and show the world encoded in the text as a local place? How does Jesus belong to that local place? How does the movement of Jesus in relation to other characters in this local place (as images of precreation, priestly, prophetic, and wisdom rhetorolects), show Jesus' attending to the needs of these people as his first priority in this time of his ministry?

### 3.1 Exegesis of John 8:1-8

#### 3.1.1 Rhetography

From the eye level line of Jesus as God, Jesus actions in this passage (John 8:1-8) are interpreted as God's action. Jesus has finished his proclaiming the word of God to the crowd then everyone there went home while Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. In the morning Jesus returns to the temple and all came to him and he begins teaching them. Then three characters appear in the scene and they are very important in the visualization of the event. The three characters are introduced: γραμματεῖς/οἱ Φαρισαῖοι/οἱ....., γυναικᾶ. The author of the Gospel often refers to the religious contemporaries of Jesus as the "Jews." But in this case, he describes these religious figures based on the sects in which they belong. Given that the setting of the story takes place in the temple, the use of these roles denote the importance of these figures in relation to Jewish religion. Furthermore, it is important to make note of these roles because they foreshadow what will happen in the later sentences. Scribes are religious figures who have expertise in interpreting and expositing Jewish law (ie. the Torah). Their responsibilities to the church include constant questioning and answering of things related to the law. In other words, their service requires critical questioning of the law and constant interpretation of it. The prefix γρα as found in the noun γραμματεῖς/οἱ has several meanings. Γρα is generally accepted as meaning "writing alphabetized letter capable of being read." Other meanings of the verb γρα include "to design<sup>1</sup>," or "to create lettered writings." From the *Tusiata* perspective, these interpretations of the verb γρα serve a common goal. In action, γρα communicates an

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idea or message from an artist/writer to an audience. Such is the purpose of a γραμματει/φ. Through writing, they communicate a message to an intended audience, specifically, the Jews. The *faia* (connection) between the Scribes and the Jews is one bonded by religion, and how the Scribes occupy the space of *faia* between them and the Jews is evident in the prefix γρα. The Scribes communicate important writings and designs for the Jews. gunai/kais as woman is the other character introduced into the storyline in verse 3. The noun is translated to mean woman or wife. The woman is described with the noun μοιχει,α|, and therefore we can conclusively see that γυναι/καισ as used in the texts is a reference to the woman as being a wife.

The Scribes and Pharisees disrupt Jesus' teaching the crowd by bringing to Jesus a woman whom they blame to have been caught in adultery. The Jewish leaders bring the woman with their decision that she should be stoned for she committed adultery, a sinful action according to the Laws of Moses. Jesus does not immediately reply to the Jewish leaders' desperate approach to punish the woman on the spot, Jesus bends down and writes with his finger on the ground.

Hence, the exercise is to seek more meanings about the text to go alongside other meanings or interpretations already made about the text – such as traditional interpretations. This is how I see the text as an artist – the text that shows Jesus' bending down and writing on the ground. Jesus is simply acting as an artist. This thesis explores this action of Jesus in this moment of Jesus' ministry from the perspective of artist whether Jesus can be looked at an artist. I have chosen the Gospel of John for its presentation of Jesus' ministry is theologically-based – not chronological like the synoptic gospels.

Quickly we snap to a desperate situation. Why does Jesus not say anything to the Jewish leaders but write on the ground? What is Jesus writing on the ground? The aim of the thesis is highlighted here. The mysterious act of Jesus bending and writing something unknown on the ground, invites and even encourages interpretations of the story in the text, that are non-traditional. It is the artistic quality inherent in Jesus' actions, that we are pursuing, and which underlines the purpose of this paper. We are drawn into this crisis. As soon as the Jewish leaders realize that Jesus, the renowned healer and preacher, has responded differently to their request, they immediately go away. Their effort and attempt to test Jesus fails. There is significant interaction between Jesus and Jewish leaders as described in this story, and it all happens at the Temple ground. Jesus is persuaded and moves to side not with the Jewish leaders but the woman. Through the Jewish leaders' request to punish the woman, Jesus put forward his decision of what to do. The woman in silence throughout the Jewish leaders' action is let free by Jesus with Jesus' words to go and sin no more. Jesus declares not only to the woman but also to those who witness the situation, that he is God who has the power to forgive sins.

I have explained the visualization of the event occurring in John 8:1-8. I will now move on to exploring that visualization using the rhetorolects or rhetorical dialects considered to have been part of the invention of Christian discourses in Early Christianity.

### **3.1.2 Precreation rhetorolects reflected in the text**

The precreation rhetorolect is the early Christians blending of "human experience of Roman emperor [firstspace] and God's cosmos [secondspace]. The goal of the



blending in the precreation belief is to guide people towards community that is formed through God's love."

As revealed in the rhetorgraphy or the visualization of the passage shown above, the Jewish leaders bringing of the woman to Jesus is to put her on a trial or a hearing according to the Laws of Moses. In the Roman Imperial ruling of the first century Mediterranean world, trials of and hearing of so-called criminals were carried out in public courts. The purpose of doing these trials in public is to humiliate the criminals. This could be one of the reasons behind the Jewish leaders' attempt to bring the woman considered caught in adultery to Jesus. It is to humiliate publicly not only this woman as a criminal but also Jesus as the judge.

The woman is described with the noun *μοιχεί,α*, and therefore we can conclusively see that *γυναι/κα* as used in the texts is a reference to the woman as being a wife. Given the context of the Scribes and Pharisees bringing this adulterous wife into the temple, several assumptions can be made about the woman. Like the Pharisees, Scribes, the people gathered in the temple, and Jesus, this woman also belongs to the Jewish community. *κατειλημμε,νηνχαν* be translated as "to apprehend," and *στη,σαντεφ* means to "to cause to stand." *στη,σαντεφ* also means to "stand before judges." The labelling of the woman as *μοιχεία* by Pharisees and Scribes, and her being apprehended and stood before judges illustrates an imagery of judgement in the court of law. The woman can be seen as powerless and submissive to the authority of Pharisees and Scribes, and therefore we can conclude that such respect for Jewish authority indicates the woman's membership within the Jewish community.

But Jesus' response surprises the Jewish leaders and everyone there including the woman. Instead of punishing and humiliating the woman, Jesus forgives and lets her go. Jesus shows the difference between judgment as defined and practiced by the Roman

empire, and judgement from a God's perspective. It also shows that Jesus himself is God who is the only and the main Judge of the world. Even if the woman was caught in adultery, only God can forgive her sins. Thus, what has happened shows the sovereignty of God in and through Jesus Christ.

### 3.1.3 Priestly rhetorolect

The priestly rhetorolect is the early Christians blending of "human experiences in sacrificial and mystery temples [firstspace] with a concept of God's cosmos and temple city [secondspace]." In the space of blending the people carry out rituals that are consider to bring forth special benefits for humans from God. They are ritual actions by humans to create an environment in which God acts to redeem the sinners among humans in the world.

From the eye level line of the action of sacrifice, I see Jesus bending down twice in the story; he bends physically, but also metaphorically in an image of sacrifice. The action of bending is looked at as Jesus the Son of God lowering himself to be in a status lower than the woman to carry out an act of sacrifice to help the woman – the woman condemned by the Jewish leaders as someone caught in adultery. Sacrifice of animals and food to God as atonement sacrifice are carried out in the temple. The place where Jesus is doing the action of bending down is the temple. So from the view of drawing visual art, what Jesus is doing in his response to the Jewish leaders is offering himself as an atonement for the woman. Followed Jesus' first bending down is his straightening up and saying, "*Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.*" Jesus then bends down again and writes on the ground. What Jesus writes on the ground is not known. What is clear is that Jesus writing on the ground is an action of waiting for anyone to throw a stone at the woman. I wonder what would happen if someone throws a stone at her. Another important part of Jesus' action as part of an

image reflecting priestly rhetorolects is Jesus' mentioning of sin in his words – “who is without sin.” Thus, the whole picture from the priestly point of view is that Jesus is preparing to sacrifice himself for anything that might happen to the woman in this situation.

This is evident in the use of the word ἀπνε,κυψεν in verse 7. The NRSV translates this as “straightened up.” Other translations report this term as meaning “to stand.” This action opposes what Jesus does in verse 6, κυ,ψαφ. However, further investigation of the verb provides a deeper meaning to what Jesus does. The verb doesn't just mean “to stand” in the literal sense. Instead, ἀπνε,κυψεν also means “to lift up one's body and/or soul,” or “to be elated or exalted.” Jesus' preparing to sacrifice himself is also evident was in the end when Jesus said to the woman to go her way and not to sin again. It shows that the woman is a sinner but she is forgiven by Jesus who is himself God. Thus the whole purpose of doing sacrifice as carried out by the priests in the temple can be looked as being carried out by Jesus in an indirect way. From, the visual art perspective portrayed in this study, this is a beautiful picture of Jesus the Son of God offering to sacrifice himself to help this woman in a desperate situation. So the form and texture of Jesus' actions as mentioned show that picture. Jesus' bending down, straightening up, and then bending down again, sets the saving tone and mood of the woman standing hopelessly.

### **3.1.4 Prophetic rhetorolect in the text**

The prophetic rhetorolect is the blending of “experiences in a kingdom that has political boundaries on earth [firstspace] with God's cosmos [secondspace],” with the expectation that God in and through the words and actions of the prophets transmits his will. Thus, in the space of blending, the people establish identities as God's people to confront religious and political leaders who oppress other through their acts of

corruption and violence. Their message is to live life as people in God's kingdom on the earth as God's justice, righteousness, and mercy for all people.

The action of Jesus as described in the visualisation of the event happening in John 8:1-8 could be also looked as reflecting prophetic rhetorolects. This is seen in Jesus words to the Jewish leaders and the woman, and Jesus' action of writing on the ground and Jesus being called a teacher. The Scribes and the Pharisees in verse 4 refer to Jesus as διδάσκαλε or "teacher." We can describe the Scribes' duty as communicators and teachers of the Mosaic laws. But here, they collectively refer to Jesus as "teacher." This is reference to the action taking place in the temple from verse 2. Jesus stands before the audience teaching. Furthermore, regardless of the intentions of the Pharisees and Scribes behind the questions that they will ask Jesus in the latter sentence, we see that they have also come as students to learn from Jesus. διδάσκαλε indicates that a power dynamic between the Pharisees and Scribes is at-play. Jesus in turn is the communicator of messages needed (teacher) and the Pharisees and Scribes are those seeking to understand or to learn the message being communicated (students).

Prophets in the time of Israel as portrayed in the Old Testament are also considered teachers. They teach and deliver the message of God as commands. Message of God as commands is seen in Jesus' encounter with the Jewish leaders shown in verses 9 and 11. Jesus' words, "*Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her*" are looked at as prophetic words or a prophetic command. Likewise are Jesus' words to the woman: "*Go your way and from now on do not sin again.*" These are the words of God through Jesus that are delivered with God's sovereignty. This prophetic role is carried out in the Roman Imperial Ruling of the first century Mediterranean world and the religious particularism of the Jewish leaders. The Roman Imperial power which its political boundaries on earth were boundless and the

Jewish leaders' consideration of the Judaism religious boundaries as for the Jews only are here challenged by Jesus in his words as prophetic words. Thus, Jesus' giving of those commands in this event as prophetic commands is the space of blending, where Jesus with the people establishing identities as God's people confront religious and political leaders who oppress others through their acts of human greed, pride, and power. Jesus' message therefore in forgiving and letting go that woman is to live life as people in God's kingdom on the earth as God's justice, righteousness, and mercy for all people.

But these messages as prophetic utterances and rhetorolects are sent with the purpose of sending the message that those who obey and repent are rewarded. There is a sense of exaltedness in verse 7. Upon ἀπνε,κυψεν, Jesus speaks. A conjunction is used to indicate that in ἀπνε,κυψεν and Jesus' speaking happens simultaneously: καὶ. εἰ=πεν. What Jesus says is connected to the exaltedness that physically stands him up. In other words, there is a connection between the inspiration that led to Jesus' κυ,ψαφ and κατε,γραφεν to what then leads him το ἀπνε,κυψεν καὶ. εἰ=πεν. Thus, Jesus straightening up could be looked at as an action that implicitly reveals exaltation for anyone who repents himself or herself from doing sin.

### 3.1.5 Wisdom Rhetorolect

The wisdom rhetorolect is the blending of "human experiences of the household [firstspace] with the cultural space of God's cosmos [secondspace]. In the space of blending, people see themselves as God's people who look up to God as the heavenly Father for all people in the world. This is shown in Jesus writing on the ground as showing Jesus as God's relationship with the earth. It shows God's wisdom in creating the world as a household for everyone to live happily. It is Jesus' response to the

question posed by Jewish leaders in verse 5. The action κατεγραφενορ (to write) is important in the relationship of a Father teaching his children in any household. The action Jesus performs involves γρα, something that γραμματει/φ practice in their daily routine. Considering the expertise of γραμματει/φ in the field of γρα, it appears as though Jesus' action in response to their question is his attempt as διδα,σκαλετο meet his students where they are at. In other words, it is a way for Jesus to best communicate knowledge as a Father as teacher and his answer in a way that his children as students could best understand. It is where the being-ness of God the Father shall be the becoming-ness of humankind the children. The being-ness of God whose sovereignty creates everything according to God's will – everything that is put in order. Things that are out of order are put back to order by God only.

The woman's life might be out of order and so the Jewish leaders. But Jesus' bending down and writing on the ground could be visualize and seen as a space of Jesus blending of the reality of this world and the true culture of God's creation of the world. In this way, people should therefore look up to God as the Heavenly Father who will only make right what is done and gone wrong for his people. In the case of the woman, by sinning no more she will become a better woman for her family and community. So as the Jewish leaders, Jesus' response to them should be the way for them to lead the Jewish religious household. It is they share with the gentiles God's salvation delivered by their forefathers

### **3.2 Conclusion**

For conclusion of this chapter, may see that the setting of the story is at the Temple when Jesus came to teach. But there are several types of people present, not only the audience, but also the scribes and the Pharisees. These are the law taker, in

which they see Jesus as teacher because he teaches the audience. So they bring an adultery woman to Jesus according to Mosaic Law. The law was commanded by Moses requires the stoning of a women who commits adultery. So the point of taking her to Jesus is not about the adultery, more likely it is to trap Jesus by seeking flaws in his teaching. In this case, Jesus stoops down to “write” or “to design,” fulfilling the need of a student who prefers learning through visual aid for the use of the action Jesus performs involves gra. This action reveals that Jesus understand his relationship with the scribes and the Pharisees. However, they were still standing questioning Jesus about the law, as they stand actually means, to “to lift up one’s body and/or soul,” or “to be elated or exalted.” So the design or writing Jesus performs is verbalized in Verse 7, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” “To bend” and “to design” leads to “to stand exalted” and “to speak.” As for the Tusiata perspective it is often perform their art, and leave the visual to be interpreted by an audience. But there are times when Tusiata are given the platform to speak on the image and provide meaning. So this image that he designs and the finishing adds in verse 8 is to engrained into the memory of his audience for a purpose to never be forgotten.

## Chapter 4

### ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Accordingly after the exegesis discussion, it reveals the undeniable relationship between Jesus action in the story and the *tusiata* perspective.

In the beginning of the exegesis, it clearly presented three different characters in the story, Jesus as a Jew, the scribes, Pharisees, and the adultery woman. And they were all connecting to the setting of the story, which is the Temple. However, when the Pharisees and the scribes heard that Jesus is there, then they report to him a woman with adultery.

As I mention in my exegesis the importance of the *faia* between Jesus, the Pharisees and the scribes in their identity and their roles and they are all Jews. However, the Greek word γρά gives their *faia* clearly because their communication importantly communicates in writings and designs. Therefore, the “ἀπνεκύψεν” in *tusiata* perspective it communicates an idea or message from an artist or writer to an audience.

In the story as I exegete, tells the story that the woman was reported to Jesus, in a sense that she was stand in judge under the law. Accordingly they mention Moses law in the Old Testament as a test of accusing Jesus and his teaching. As the law says, sin like this must be stoning to death. It is also a challenge to his teaching, because they called Jesus a teacher, which means they are all students listening and observing Jesus.

In verse six, seven and eight, clearly stated the action of Jesus as *a tusiata*. Because *tusiata* always perform their art, and leave the visual to be interpret by the audience. According to the exegesis, when the adultery woman send to him, and question the law, then he bend, design, leads to stand exalted and speak.



Over more, Jesus gives the platform to speak on the image and provide meanings just as a *tusiata* perspective, it gives an inspired artificial, with hope of inspire.

Jesus gives a perfect example of a *tusiata* in this story refer to his approach and his action performed when the sin woman report to him. he bend and design an inspired art meaning, and possibly in hopes to inspired, after that, he speak on behalf to remember in their heart what was drawing. This is an act of a *tusiata* in our world, setting platforms, bending, design when it's done then stand before the audience and speak about what the picture is about to satisfy the audience.

How does this study can help our Church in terms of reading and seeing the Bible? This study has shown that our experiences and understanding as Samoan and Christians of our serving our church create for use pictures and imaginations that can be used to guide our interpreting of the Bible. It is not to impose our knowledge and understanding of our worlds on the text but to help make more sense in our worlds the meaning of the Gospel. This could a very good idea of approaching the Bible for the youth and young people of our church. It is a way of making the connection of the new generation and their own worlds to the Gospel.

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