

A “*TAUTUA MATAVELA*”
READING OF JOHN 13: 12-17.

A Thesis Presented to the
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Bachelor of Theology

by

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Abstract

The event of Jesus' washing his disciples' feet in John 13:12-17 is widely considered the beginning of the farewell discourse in the Gospel of John. The event reveals that Jesus knows that his time is coming to an end or his earthly ministry is done, and it is time to go back to his father. Jesus as the leader of the disciples doing the act of washing his disciples' feet raises many questions. One of those questions is why does Jesus the leader of the disciples' group wash his disciples feet? Washing feet is a type of work usually carried out by a servant or a slave in the first century Mediterranean society. I have experienced this type of service in our Samoan context – not washing feet but doing dirty works to serve others. For example, being an untitled man in our family, it is part of my roles as a young man cooking food, collecting food, and serving my family. All the works to be done to fulfil those roles are to be carried out with some sort of pain and suffering. This study aims to re-visit Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet (John 13:12-17) in relation to my experience of *tautua* (serve, service, servant) in our Samoan world. There are many types of *tautua* known by what each is called such as *Tautua matavela* (serve with a burnt face), *Tautua toto* (serve with blood), *Tautua fiamatai* (serve for the purpose of getting a title name). These various and different types of *tautua* show that there are good *tautua* and not good *tautua*. It is the purpose of this study to seek in Jesus' ministry more understanding of serving and service in God's kingdom to broaden the significance and importance of *tautua* in our Samoan Christian world.

Declaration

I declare that this work has not used without due acknowledgment of any material that has been previously submitted for a degree or diploma in another institution. I also declare that the work has not used any material, heard or read, without proper acknowledgment of the source.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents *Legalo Samau* and *Leua Samau*, and my aunty *Alofa Legalo*, who raised and taught me to always put God first in everything to do in life, and inspired me in struggles and difficult time.

It is also dedicated to my parents *Falana 'ipupu Tapu Legalo* and *Rosalia Legalo*, and my siblings for their support and prayers and for always encouraging me to pursue my study.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>EFKS</i>	Ekalesia Faapotopotoga Kerisiano i Samoa
LXX	Septuagint Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version

Introduction

There are many reasons as to why I have chosen to do this study – exploring John 13:12-17 from the perspective of *tautua*. *Tautua* is the Samoan word for ‘serve, servant, and service.’¹

The three reasons for the purpose of this study are: Firstly, is the importance of *tautua* in our family and village. Each family member, beginning from the children right up to our elders has certain specific responsibilities or *tautua* to perform. As an untitled man in our family, I experienced doing most of the work for the sake of our family in terms of development. It is also the impression I felt when I joined our village *aumaga* (a group of untitled men in the village). The untitled men are considered the strength of the families and villages. They are considered to be physically strong and able to perform heavy tasks such as planting plantations, collecting and carrying coconuts home, cutting down trees to build family traditional shelters, raising pigs and cattle, fishing and doing heavy work. In other words *tautua* empowers each family and village member to specific responsibilities in order to develop families and villages to secure their everyday life.

Secondly, *tautua* in the Samoan social and cultural world is reflected in the role of a servant of God in one’s church. Thus, blending of the traditional *tautua* and the religious services broadens the significance of *tautua* as a role and as a status in the contemporary Samoan world.

Thirdly, being in Malua for the last three years helped me to open my eyes to the importance of undertaking *tautua*. It is not just a responsibility or a role to be carried out in a family, village, and church – it is more than that. The fact is that *tautua* certainly

¹ Vaitusi Nofoaiga, *Samoa Reading of Discipleship in Matthew* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 33-38.

supports how vital to maintain respect among members in a community structure. The stated reasons thus pushed me to explore more about *tautua* regarding researching Jesus and the practicality of his *tautua* and service.

Jesus cleansing of his disciples' feet in John 13:12-17, manifestly shows Jesus' action as a servant. *Tautua* in Samoa is described in many types, hence I will utilize *Tautua matavela* (a servant with a burned-looking face) as the hermeneutic to explore the selected text, namely John 13:12-17. *Tautua* as a concept, subject, and hermeneutic is exhaustively used in contextual biblical literature today. Whilst *Tautua matavela* provides a deeper and more rewarding feature of *tautua*, meaning, "service that has been done beyond fulfillment". Therefore, this thesis will explore how Jesus' actions can be seen as a *Tautua matavela*. It is also used to instill with in the disciples and others through his teaching of *Tautua matavela*, as a challenge, and a lesson for discipleship and the ministry. Some of the questions that will guide the study are: What is *Tautua matavela*? Does *Tautua matavela* expand the meaning of *tautua* to a greater form of *tautua*? Can Jesus' actions be seen as *Tautua matavela* in John 13:12-17? Can *Tautua matavela* be learnt and passed on to Jesus' disciples as well as others? What can we learn from John 13:12-17 in light of *Tautua matavela* for the wider Samoan context?

The thesis chapters will be divided into four chapters. Chapter one is the brief historical background of John's gospel and the methodology used in the study. It is followed by the explanation of *Tautua matavela* hermeneutics and a brief literature review of the selected text in chapter two. Chapter Three shows the exegesis of the chosen text, John 13:12-17 but will expand and explore more of the exegesis from John 13:1-20. Chapter Four is the analysis of the exegesis using *Tautua matavela* hermeneutic and Conclusions to the thesis.

Chapter 1

Brief historical background of John and methodology

1.1 Introduction

This Chapter deals with a brief historical background of John's Gospel and the methodology used in this thesis.

1.2 Historical Background of John's Gospel

Early church tradition attributes the fourth Gospel to John as “the beloved disciple” (13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20), who belonged to the “inner circle” of Jesus’ followers (see Matt 17:1; Mark 13:3). According to Christian writers of the second century, John moved to Ephesus, probably during the Jewish War of 66-70AD, where he continued his ministry.¹ For instance, Irenaeus, the bishop of Lyons in the latter part of the second century, stated that “John the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence in Ephesus in Asia”. According to most scholars, John, the writer of this Gospel, was the son of Zebedee and Salome (compare Matt 27:56 with Mark 15:40-41).² His father was a fisherman of Galilee, though it would appear that he was not destitute of property, and was not in the lowest condition of life. He had hired men in his employ, Mark 1:20. Salome is described as one who attended our Saviour in his travels, and ministered to his wants (Matt 27:57; Mark 15:41). Jesus commended his own mother Mary, on the cross, to

¹ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John (PNTC)* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 12.

² Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John (NICNT)* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 15. Merrill C. Tenney, *John: The Gospel of Belief*, (Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1976), 23. Leon Morris ed., *The Gospel According to John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Revised Edition, (Grand Rapids; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 4-25; Gary M. Burge, *Interpreting the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992), 40; D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John: The Pillar New Testament Commentary*, (Leicester: Apollos, 1991), 68; and Kanagaraj and Kemp, *The Gospel According to John*. Asia Bible Commentary Series, 35.

John, and he took her to his own home (Jn. 19:26-27), with whom, history informed us, that she lived until her death, about fifteen years after the crucifixion of Christ. John was also known to Caiaphas, the high-priest (Jn 18:15). However, it would seem not improbable that John had some property, and was better known than any of the other apostles. He was the youngest of the apostles when called, and lived to the greatest age, and was the only one who died a peaceful death.

Some scholars suggest that John 19:35 and 21:24 thus revealed as another author who faithfully collected the apostle's eyewitness account and testimonials.³ However, the bulk of the evidence, both internal and external, supports John the apostle as the author. The same tradition that locates John in Ephesus suggests that he wrote the Gospel in the latter part of the first century. In the absence of substantial evidence to the contrary, most scholars accept this tradition. In a broad sense, John wrote to provide the Christians of the province of Asia (now in part of modern Turkey) with a fuller understanding of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. More specifically, he wrote to lead his readers to a settled faith on the basis of the words and works of Jesus, with the result that they "may have life in his name" (20:31). While John most likely knew of the other three Gospel accounts, he chose not to follow their chronological sequence of events as much as a topical order. In this case they may have used common oral and literary traditions. The broad outline is the same, and some particular events in Jesus' ministry are common to all four books. Some of the distinctive differences are: (1) instead of the familiar parables, John has lengthy discourses; (2) in place of the many miracles and healings in the Synoptics, John uses seven carefully picked miracles,

³ For example is, Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 32.

which serve as “signs”; (3) the ministry of Jesus revolves around three Passover Feasts, instead of the one cited in the Synoptics; (4) the “I am” sayings are uniquely Johannine.

Some well-known stories in John’s Gospel are: Jesus’ meeting with the Samaritan woman and his attitude toward women; “The need to be born again; Jesus’ saying”, “*I am the Way, the Truth and the Life*”; “The saying about casting the first stone”; “The raising of Lazarus; Jesus washing the disciples’ feet”; “The waving of palms at Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem”; “The inscription on the cross”; “The mother of Jesus at the cross”; “The piercing of Jesus’ side with a spear; and Mary Magdalene’s visit to Jesus’ tomb; Jesus as the Word of God”.

The structure of the Gospel of John is widely accepted as having four parts⁴: The Prologue (1:1-18); The Book of Signs: Jesus reveals the Father (1:19-12:50); The Book of Glory: Returns to the Father (13:1-20:31); and The Epilogue (21:1-25). This structure will be used in this study. In this structure, the selected text for this study, John 13:1-17 is in "The book of Glory."

1.3 Methodology: Sociorhetorical Criticism

In this study, Sociorhetorical Criticism is used to identify the true meaning of Jesus 'actions and the disciples' response as recorded in John 13: 12-17. Sociorhetorical Criticism was developed by Vernon K. Robbins to delve deeper into the world in the text, the world behind the text and the world in front of the text. There are five stages of the sociorhetorical approach, Inner texture, Inter texture, Social and Cultural texture, Sacred texture and Ideological texture. For this study, I will use only the Inner texture, Inter texture, and the Social and Cultural texture.

⁴ See Craig R. Koester, *The Word of Life: A Theology of Johns Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 13; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 23; Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 35; Keener, *The Gospel of John*, 21.

1.3.1 Inner texture

Innertextural analysis is the internal analysis of the text, not only of the language used, but also of the ideas and concepts on which it is based. According to Robbins⁵, Inner texture concerns the features of the language of the text itself, focusing on words in the text. This kind of analysis is prior to the analysis of “meanings”. Its purpose is to gain intimate knowledge of words, word-patterns, voices, structures, devices, etc. It is pure observation, opposed to interpretation. So, I will only use the “*beginning, middle, and ending*” as my reading approach from the Inner-Texture.

1.3.2 Inter texture

Intertexture is a "text's representation of, reference to, and use of phenomena in the 'world' outside the text being interpreted". This world includes other texts (oral-scribal intertexture) other cultures (cultural intertexture) social roles institutions, codes and relationships (social intertexture) and historical events or places (historical intertexture) according to David B. Gowler.⁶

1.3.3 Social and Cultural texture

Gowler states that, Social and cultural texture is where a text interacts with society and culture by sharing in the general social and cultural attitudes, norms and modes of interaction that are known by everyone in a society, and by establishing itself in relationship with the dominant cultural system as either sharing, rejecting or

⁵ Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1996), 7.

⁶ D. B. Gowler, “Socio-rhetorical Interpretation: Textures of a text and its reception,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 3 (2010): 191-206.

transforming those attitudes, values and dispositions.⁷ This includes the rhetoric of praise and blame which presents the social and cultural values of “honour and shame”⁸

These questions will guide the social and cultural analysis. From “*Tautua matavela*” reading lens: How does the language of the text show the action of Jesus and his disciples (characters) in the text to the world or context encoded within the text? Does foot washing reflect the “honour and shame” in social and cultural value of the 1st century Mediterranean world? How does Jesus as the teacher deal with this social and cultural value in his conversation with his disciples. Where is *Tautua matavela* from here?

1.4 Conclusion

This Chapter gives a brief historical background of the Fourth Gospel and sociorhetorical methodology as the reading tool to interpret the text. The historical background sets the tone or the feel of the Gospel of John, in terms of what the purpose of the Gospel of John, and more importantly, how that purpose could be seen reflected in the so-called structure of the Gospel of John. The following Chapter will show a brief literature review of the text and the explanation of *Tautua matavela*, the hermeneutic.

⁷ D. B. Gowler, “Socio-rhetorical Interpretation: Textures of a text and its reception,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 3 (2010): 191-206.

⁸ Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, 76. Honour has a male and female component...honour is a claim to worth, a male component, while shame a female component refers to a person’s sensitivity to what others think, say, or do with regards to one’s honour.

Chapter 2

Literature review of John 13:12-17 and '*Tautua matavela*' – the hermeneutic

2.1 Introduction

Chapter Two gives a brief literature review of John 13:12-17 and an explanation of the hermeneutic – *Tautua matavela*. The review shows the traditional interpretations of this text mainly from the historical criticism approach.

2.2 Brief Literature Review – John 13:12-17

One of the traditional interpretations of this text is that it is Jesus' actions of showing humility from a leader to a group. As Carson's interpretation says, John 13:12-17 "...serves as a standard of humble service and therefore as a call to all of Jesus' disciples to 'wash one another's feet' (vv. 12–17). This bifocal application has generated considerable discussion on the structure and provenance of the narrative."¹ Likewise, Bennema interprets John 13:15 a general reference to humble (loving) service.² His argument is an interpretation that utilized a hermeneutic of mimesis. For Bennema, the author of the text's (John 13:12-17) mimesis involves primarily the creative, truthful, bodily articulation of the idea and attitude that lie behind the original act rather than its exact execution. In other words, Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet is seen as an art form which represents the reality of life – such as Jesus' real life as a saviour and a servant. Bennema's use of a hermeneutic to read Jesus' washing of his

¹ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According To John*. (Reprint, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 362

² Bennema, Cornelis, "Mimesis in John 13: Cloning or Creative articulation?" *Novum Testamentum* 56, no. 3, (2014) 11-17

disciples' feet is a very good example of a work that utilizes the hermeneutical approach to reading as I am doing in this study.

Craig Keener's interpretation of John 13 also shows that Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet is an act of humility carried out from a servant-hood perspective. Keener's interpretation considers important the Jewish and Greco-Roman settings of the Gospel of John paying special attention to social-historical and rhetorical features of the Gospel.³ In this interpretation, Keener marks the passage as one of the events that portrays discipleship from the perspective of the servant-hood of Jesus. This is something new in regards to the social setting at the time, because Jesus was seen as a teacher.

R. Belsterling's interpretation of Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet brings another dimension which is considering Jesus' action in this event as a mentoring action.⁴ Belsterling argues that Jesus modelled authentic relationship with his disciples because of his authentic and honest relationship with God his Father. He adds what Jesus did, had a huge impact on his disciples for they were in awe of Jesus and his teachings. This is an interesting interpretation because it is not explicitly mentioned in the text. However, this event could be looked at as the beginning of what will happen to Jesus that marvelled the disciples in the end after all. Belsterling claims that Jesus personal relationship with the twelve disciples as seen in the Gospel of John, demonstrates the key elements of a mentoring relationship. This includes helping a person grow and involves these elements: (1) casting and communicating a life vision, and (2) teaching through: (a) verbal instruction, and (b) experiential learning in the

³ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A commentary*, vol. 1 (Baker Academic: Grand Rapids Michigan, 2003), 899.

⁴ Belsterling, R, "The Mentoring Approach of Jesus as Demonstrated in John 13," *Journal of Youth Ministry* 5, no. 1 (Fall 2006): 77-80

context of (c) a secure, mutually committed relationship; (3) intimate relationships with mentees, in which they are allowed to determine some of the direction of teaching based on questions and life circumstances, and; (4) enduring life-long relationships, though they may vary in frequency of contact.

According to these criteria, Jesus truly was the ideal mentor. Thus, Belsterling considers Jesus' action in John 13 as a unique approach of a servant teacher – a teacher who is prepared to become a servant. Jo-Ann Brant also sees Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet as a work of a servant.⁵ For Brant, the foot-washing is a gesture that illustrates what Jesus teaches during the meal in Luke 22:25–30: he comes as one who serves. Jesus has turned the social order on its head. His final words, “If you know these things, you are blessed if ever you should do them” (13:17).

The consideration of Jesus' washing the disciples' feet as a service of mentoring disciples is reflected in Warren M. Eshbach's interpretation. According to Eshbach, the event in John 13:1-20 is a feast of love⁶ - it is the love of God expressed through Christ towards his disciples. It is Jesus' self-giving love and service for the people whom he loves. Furthermore, Jesus' action is an example for all humans to follow; sharing God's love with one another or helping one another.

Another interpretation of this passage emphasizes betrayal. Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger's study⁷ of Jesus washing of his disciples' uses the reader-response approach. Kitzberger attempts to focus on the readers' response and the response to the response from John 13: 1-20 and Luke 7: 36-50. Here Kitzberger looks at how this text

⁵ Jo-Ann A. Brant, *The Gospel According to John* (United State of America: Baker Academic Pub, 2011), 200

⁶ Warren M. Eshbach, “Another Look at John 13:1-20,” *Journal of Exegetical Analysis and Interpretation*, (2012): 117-124

⁷ Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger, “Love and Footwashing: John 13:1-20 and Luke 7:36-50 Read Intertextually,” *Journal of Biblical Interpretation* 2 (1994): 190-197.

can be understood by the readers, mainly from a view of a female reader. She goes on to touch on the female followers of Jesus and their roles in the ministry of Jesus. Kitzberger makes comparisons of Jesus footwashing with that of Mary's footwashing mentioned in the previous chapter (John 12: 1-8). The footwashing of Jesus by Mary tells of Mary's repentance and acceptance of Jesus; that she is very sorry. However, Jesus washing the disciples' feet paints something else; Jesus knew his disciples will betray him and reject him yet he still offered that hospitable love for them. It's an attempt to offer female readers to see the footwashing not a negative act; being that only males' feet were washed, but the fact female readers can also be included and feel the message of the gospel.

Another interpretation of Jesus' washing the disciples' feet is an image of baptism. Francis J. Moloney states the events in John 13: 1-38 is part of a larger literary unit, the Last Discourse.⁸ He goes on to explain that there is a double interpretation of the text. Firstly are the images of baptism, that the foot washing act is one form of baptizing the disciples. Furthermore, it's a way of Jesus to express his love for his disciples whom he will be parting ways with. But the washing of their feet was symbolic; the very people whose feet he washes and receive the morsel will turn against him⁹. However, these very disciples who turned against Jesus will be the very ones to represent him on this earth. Jesus' washing of their feet and the offering of the morsel tells of his love, acceptance, and forgiveness for them – he has forgiven them before they turned against him. This is the overall message of John (according to Moloney) that Jesus has offered a new form of love for the believers.

⁸ Francis J. Moloney, "A Sacramental Reading of John 13:1-38," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 53 (1991): 240-243.

⁹ Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John A Commentary Vol I*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003). 908.

2.3 *Tautua matavela* – The Hermeneutic

Tautua is a servant. *Tautua* is not only a social and cultural status of a member of Samoan family. It is a family and a community based social and cultural role and practice. So *tautua* exhibits the role and the responsibility of the family, church, as well as the individual. As a concept, *tautua* is both a verb and a noun. *Tautua* as a verb means to serve and as a noun means service. *Tautua* as a concept has two significant meanings. On the one hand, it identifies the servant's status and role of the untitled men in the Samoan chiefly system. On the other hand, it expresses the moral value of serving the family.¹⁰ According to Namulauulu¹¹ this service stems from an ancient war tradition which saw the younger untitled men fighting from behind the title men in order to save the title men from their enemies. They were to fight from the back to save their title chiefs. Therefore, *tautua* is traditionally the servant status and role of the untitled men in the Samoan, chiefly system, but to be inclusively both women and men, hence expressing the significance of the moral value of serving the family, village and the church.

The word *tautua* can be broken down into two syllables: *tau* and *tua*. *Tau* means fight or count and *tua* means back. Thus, the words *tau* and *tua* depict clearly that a *tautua* as a servant fights, fight and counts from the back for those who are in the front – *Tagata e tau mai i tua* – not to fight against those at the front but fight against struggles that are encountered in fulfilling the role of service at the back. So, traditional *tautua* primarily involves the taking care of the *matai*. This means that the *tautua* has to make

¹⁰ Nofoaiga, “A Samoan Reading of Discipleship in Matthew, 2021.

¹¹ According to Namulauulu Filipino Tau'ili'ili Reupena Tali, “*E iloa oe i lau aganuu*” (Apia Samoa: Government Printing, 2016), 106. “O le Tautua. Na mafua mai, a’o ‘apo e Samoa le faiva o taua anamua. E tau le ta’ita’i i luma. Ae tau mai tua le taule’ale’a. E tao tao tua i lona matai, ina ne’i tagatavaleina e le fili.” Which means, “Service” during times of Samoa ancient battles in Samoa. The *matai* led and the *taulealea* fights from the back for the sake of his *matai* to save him from their enemies.

sure that the *matai* is well fed; met his obligations to the village administration as well as his dues to the church. The *tautua* therefore is a person of agility, skill, hard work, dexterity. Therefore, to be a real *tautua*, it is not an easy role to do, because the *tautua* must serve his *matai* whole heartedly, sacrifice his life for the sake of his *matai*.

There are different types of *tautua* according to our Samoan traditional and cultural way of living.¹² For this study, I will focus only on *Tautua matavela*. *Matavela* is strictly translated as one's "face burnt by fire". What this means is that it is the daily role and responsibility of a *tautua* to face and encounter the hotness of the fire that cooks the food for the *matai* and everyone in the family every day. It is a task that should be undertaken with silence. Thus, *Tautua matavela* is simply a service undertaken beyond pain and suffering for the sake of the survival of the family and the village. It is also a task considered by a good *tautua* as not a role or responsibility of suffering and pain but an opportunity to serve one's family and village. In other words, *Tautua Matavela* is undertaking a service beyond the normal expectations of doing service

2.4 Conclusion

From this review, the majority all agree that Jesus was renown in this text as a humble servant. The footwashing incidence was definitely a symbolic act which echoed service but initiated by love. It is also symbolic as it was Jesus way of teaching His disciples that they too should learn how to wash other people's feet, through service and

¹² For other scholars' works that mention *tautua* see Amosa, Sam. "Did Jesus Sweat Blood – in the Light of *Tautua toto*." B.Th. Thesis, Malua Theological College, 2010. Apulu, Melvin Taupulega Jr. "Tautua fa'atamalii: (Servant hood with Absolute Integrity) Engaging with Samoan Young People." MPhil. Thesis, Massey University, 2010. Vaitusi Nofoaiga, "Towards a Samoan Postcolonial Reading of Discipleship in the Matthean Gospel." Ph.D. dissertation. The University of Auckland, Auckland, 2014. Aiono, Manu, Faaea. "The pathway to leadership is through service: Exploring the Samoan *tautua* lifecycle". Manukau Institute of Technology, *Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*. 2021.

humility. The explanation of *Tautua matavela* followed which speaks of *tautua* at another level – beyond the normality of undertaking serving others in Samoa. This is the hermeneutic that will be used in the following interpretations of the text.

Chapter 3

Exegesis of John 13:1-20

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will be the exegesis of John 13:1-20 using the sociorhetorical approach. This will then be followed by an analysis of that exegesis using the hermeneutic – *Tautua matavela*. The exegesis presented in this chapter is in three parts, according to the method used in this study. First is exploring the inner textures of the text. Second is exploring the inter-texture of the text, and finally, is looking at the Social and Cultural texture of the text.

3.2 Exploring the inner texture of the text

To explore the inner texture of John 13:1-20, I will use selective focus questions for this exegetical paper, which are: Can Jesus' acts be seen as *Tautua matavela*? How does the language of the text present the action that Jesus does reflect the picture of a *Tautua matavela*? Can his *Tautua matavela* be passed on to the disciples and others? Are there any other characters in the story that portray *Tautua matavela* analogy?

It is important to know the placement of the text first to find what could be the literary and theological significances of its setting but also the reason as to why this story was placed in the middle of the gospel of John. It is also essential to find the connection of this passage to the gospel as a whole. According to Paul¹, the *placement of the text* falls within the third section of the book, "*The Book of Glory*". This is also

¹ Paul N. Anderson, *The Riddles of the Fourth Gospel: An Introduction to John*. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 9 says, Paul N. Anderson outlines John's gospel into four sections, which is the Prologue (1:1-18), the Book of Signs (chapters 1-12), the Book of Glory (chapters 13-20), and the Epilogue (21:1-25).

called the “*hour of Glory*” in which Jesus teaches his disciples about his return to the Father and return to his glory through the cross. This story of Jesus washing of his disciples feet comes right after signs that Jesus did in chapter 1:19 to 12:50. This is the second section of John’s Gospel called the “*Book of Signs*”. Mentioned in this section the prediction of the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus in his last day on earth which begins in chapter 13:1-20 where the chosen text explored herein is placed. As In the placement of the story, John makes two assertions to introduce this transition from Jesus doing of signs to Jesus’ last hour of glory in his Gospel. Firstly, Jesus knows that his time has come to be crucified – he came from God and is now on his way of returning to God. Secondly, Jesus knows that Judas will betray him, but it is under the Father’s rule.

From the eyes of the hermeneutic *Tautua matavela*, I consider John 13:1-20 as a rhetorical and narrative unit² which shows a story about Jesus washing of the disciples’ feet as Jesus’ action of *Tautua matavela*. It is part of Jesus’ anticipation of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection as revelation of glory of his Father. This bifocal application has generated considerable discussion on the structure and provenance of the narrative³. Therefore, any rhetorical or narrative unit has opening and closing indicators which mark the beginning and the ending of a unit. The opening indicator of John 13 as a rhetorical and narrative unit is revealed in verse 1 which is Jesus’ Love for his people on earth. It indicates that the foot washing was motivated by love shown in and through the work that Jesus performs for his disciples. It is Jesus showing of how their work of being disciples is to be done – it is a task to serve people by being good servants of

² Kennedy describes ‘rhetorical unit’ as a unit that has a beginning, middle, and an end. George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 33-34

³ Donald A. Carson, *The Gospel According To John*. (Reprint, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 37

God. Then the closing indicators of John 13 as a rhetorical narrative unit are given in verse 20, “*Very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.*”⁴ According to Robertson,⁵ “A believer who receives those who Jesus has sent forth receives him.” It shows that, serving others as Jesus shows to his disciples, receives it in order to receive us. Thus, from *Tautua matavela* hermeneutic, foot-washing is not only a way of doing the work of God but also a way of God that received by those the Gospel proclaimed.

The rhetorical unit is divided into three parts: the beginning, middle and the closing. That threefold structure of John 13:1-20 as a rhetorical and narrative unit considers verses 1-3, as the beginning then verses 4-11, as middle and verses 12-20 as ending. I will use Samoan words to name each part of the structure as follow.

- i. Beginning: (1-3) *Fa’aosofia ile alofa* (Motivated by love)
- ii. Middle: (13:4-11) *Aga fa’a-tautua* (Act of a servant)
- iii. Ending: (13:12-20) *Talanoa fa’a tautua, Tautua upu* (Servant teaching)

3.2.1 Beginning (13:1-3) – *Faaosofia ile alofa* (Motivation by love.)

I have chosen to name the beginning of the unit as “*Fa’aosofia ile alofa*” because the actions of Jesus in his first move as narrated in the story, very much bear actions of compassionate, desire and generosity. The Samoan word *fa’aosofia* is divided into three small words, *fa’a*, *oso*, and *fia*, *fa’a* simply a prefix added to the noun *oso* making the word *fa’aosofia* a verb which means “to urge”. The word *oso* has many meanings according to our Samoan language which means to jump, to rise, and to pass. *Oso* also means a gift; *oso* also refers to a stick that a farmer uses to plant taro, or any plant. The

⁴ Taken from NRSV, John 13:20.

⁵ Robertson A.T, *Robertson Word Pictures in the NT*, (Power Bible CD Power Bible CD Programed),55.

word *fia* meaning wanting to or is a desire to do something. For example, *fia inu*, want to drink or thirsty. Another example is *fia ai*, wants to eat. And *alofa* simply means, to love, to show kindness, to be generous, and to be compassionate. So *Fa'aosofia ile alofa* simply means the feelings that urge a person to rise up with a desire of love, of compassion and generosity. One of the elements of *Tautua matavela* emerges from this desire of love is called *fa'aoso*, meaning a gift that is urged, or is prepared for a traveller, or anyone. Thus, Jesus in this passage could be seen as a person who has a desire or a person who is *fa'aosofia* to prepare a *fa'aoso* for the disciples to take on their journey as his disciples.

In the beginning, the setting and time of the foot-washing event are mentioned. John talks about the *love* of Jesus to the world and his people. Firstly, the author mentioned, “*Now before the festival of Passover*” which informs that what is next is the festival of the Passover. Secondly, it reveals the main reason for this festival, because “*...he knew that his hour had come to depart from this world*”, which means that his earthly ministry is near the end. And most importantly, “*having loved... he loved them*” truly he was driven by love (*Fa'aosofia ile alofa*) for his people. The devil at the same time is involved, not through Jesus but his disciple Judah. It depicts the picture that where God is present, the devil is there as well. But that does not stop Jesus from what doing the will of his Father for he has the authority to do so.

In the beginning, V. 1 *Πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα* (*Now before the feast of the Passover*) means just before the Passover feast⁶. This shows that the foot-washing took place in the eve of the Passover, (according to the Jewish calendar, on the evening of Nisan 13) Therefore, John clearly distinguishes between the last supper and the

⁶ Gerard S. Sloyan, *Interpretation, John* (United State of America: John Knox press, 1988), 168. His view of “before the Passover”, a matter of theological importance for an evangelist who will describe Jesus as the Passover lamb of whom not a bone would be broken.”

Jewish Passover, because it contradicts the synoptic version, in which the last supper was the Passover meal, and Jesus died a day later. However, Robertson argued that,⁷ “Jesus ate the regular Passover meal at the usual time, hence, “Just before” as John says – not twenty-four hours before which is Thursday evening according to our Calendar (beginning of 15th of Nisan, Sunrise to Sunset Jewish day). Jesus was crucified on the Friday 15th of Nisan”. Debate continues on the difference between the synoptic and John’s Gospel which brings forth the date of the last supper. But, according to Barnes⁸ the simplest solution of the difficulty is to attribute the apparent discrepancy to that loose way of speaking of the feast which suggests that when the synoptic evangelists speak of the Passover they refer to the actual paschal supper. But when John speaks of the feast of the Passover, he refers to the seven days feast of the unleavened bread which opens the actual paschal supper. Thus, the conflict in finding the date among scholars does not change the valid date of the festival which was “*before the feast of the Passover*”. This is explicitly shown in Jesus knowing *εἰδὼς* which is in perfect active participle of *οἶδα* with a present meaning – that is to know that *ὥρα* (hour).

What is important is the use of the word *Αγαπήσας* which is the aorist active participle of *ἀγαπάω*. As Wright says,⁹ the emphasis is that he loves his own people, describes the motivation that encourages him to do the washing of his disciples’ feet. According to Gerard,¹⁰ love becomes an important concept in Christ’ to deal with his

⁷ A.T. Robertson, *Robertson Word Pictures in the NT* (Power Bible CD Programed Phil Linder: Online Publishing Inc. 2000), 44.

⁸ Barnes. A, *Commentary on St. John* (Power Bible CD Program Online: Publishing, 2000), 44.

⁹ “All of that, the love, and the down to earthiness – comes through in this marvelous passage. It is both the beginning and the end: the beginning of the long, slow build up to Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, and the end, the climax, the goal of everything Jesus has done so far.” Tom Wright, *John for everyone*, Part 2, chapter 11-21. (London Great Britain: Ashford Colour press, 2002, re-issue 2014), 43.

¹⁰ “Where the term “his own” is different. John uses the same word for Jesus’ transfer from one sphere to another. Still in verse 1, “to depart”, “he does not come into judgement, but has passed from death to life” Gerard S. Sloyan, *Interpretation, John* (United State of America: John Knox press, 1988), 168.

disciples – it is the most important motivation behind any undertaking of a *Tautua matavela*. Therefore, Johannine use of the Greek phrase *Εἰς τέλος* “to the end or to the utmost” is intentional. The 2nd participial phrase in v. 1 is extraordinarily significant: (*ἀγαπήσας τοὺς ἰδίους τοὺς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ εἰς τέλος ἠγάπησεν αὐτούς*). So *εἰς τέλος* is successful of each an adverbial ‘to the uttermost’ and a temporal ‘to the end’ meaning, with most suggesting that in common are possibly intended. The temporal feel connects strongly with the experience of Jesus’ hour which has now arrived. Thus, the ambiguity is probably intentional for the two meanings are related. Love is the laying down of one’s life and therefore to love completely or utmost means to love to the end of one’s life. In addition, the love that has been evident throughout continues right up to the end; in crucifixion by that we see the ultimate revelation of that love, that is, its full extent. Jesus as such is a *Tautua matavela*.

According to Schnackenburg, *ἀγαπήσας* translated as “love”, as aorist participle refers to the relationship between Jesus and his disciples up to this point, whereas the finite verb *ἠγάπησεν* reflects a single motion on Jesus part,¹¹ mixed with the temporal feel of *εἰς τέλος* and the reference to Jesus’ hour. Thus, Schnackenburg argues that the single motion on Jesus part anticipates Jesus’ crucifixion on the cross. However, this presentation of a single motion on Jesus’ phase as an act of love needs to be viewed in the mild of the way in which vv. 1-3 are structured. As Tenney mentions, “The significant is not that he loved them to the last of His life, but that He loved them to the uttermost degree of which he was capable”.¹² Thus, the love of Jesus was an active and unconditional love. It is twice mentioned in the first verse and the third verse. Therefore, the motivation behind Jesus action during this last supper with

¹¹ R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John*, vol. 3 (London: Burns & Oates, 1982), 2.

¹² Merrill C. Tenney. John, *The Gospel of Belief*. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1976), 196.

his disciple was to show a true love of a servant of Christ, because he knows that his time is coming to the end in this world. In other words, Jesus gives an example of love in the heart of his disciples.

According to the above exegetical discussion, there is a relationship of Jesus' actions in the opening first verse with the action of *Fa'aosofia ile alofa*. Jesus knows that his hour is coming, which means that his earthly ministry is coming to an end. It is time to go back to his Father and he loves his disciples. The word *Αγαπήσας* emphasizes the love of Jesus. Thus, describing the motivation that had a compelling force on him. To show his compassionate and generosity to his disciple, Jesus prepares a Passover feast to reveal this love. The feast is not only to teach them how to live the life of a disciple as a God-given gift or *fa'aoso* (*provision*) for their journey, but also for them to learn to share with each other – the gift of being a true servant of God; being a *Tautua matavela*. This is revealed in Jesus doing all the preparation for the feast, gathering the disciple, and preparing the *fa'aoso* to reveal compassion, desire and generosity, and love for his disciples and for the world.

3.2.2 Middle: (13:4-11) *Aga ale tautua* (Act of a servant)

I have opted to name this middle indicator as “*Aga ale tautua*”. As such the actions of Jesus portrayed within this second part of the story (the act of foot washing) shows the attitude or the manner of *tautua* – an action motivated or driven by Jesus' love for his disciple and more importantly by Jesus' love for this world.

Before, I exegete this part of the text, I would like to elaborate on *Aga ale tautua*. There are many meanings of *aga* in our Samoan language. *Aga* is conduct, behavior, attitude, manner of acting. *Aga* also means direction. It also means a hand span (*measuring fine mat*) and a strong hand. For example, “Tom is a right handed man”,

which means that Tom's clever hand is right hand. Therefore, *Tautua* is two words, as mentioned above *tau* and *tua*. *Tau* means the weather. It also means fight. The cover of a Samoan *umu* is called *tau*. And *tua* means back, behind, or beyond. So *Aga fa'atautua* is a behavior, or a manner of serving a family or a person from the back – a service considered as not an easy task which is why a person who is able to endure that type of work is a fighter. Thus, *Aga fa'atautua* is a manner of doing the action of service regardless of its circumstances so that the service is carried out and fulfilled. The middle part of the rhetorical unit states the action of *tautua* as carried out by Jesus in washing the feet of his disciples. Peter as one of the characters in this event plays a very important part in defining that *Aga fa'atautua* – someone who seems to be doing the opposite of what *Aga fa'atautua* should be according to Jesus' actions.

The Greek word “*ἐγείρεται*” (*verb, present, and passive, indicative*) in verse 4 translated “he got up”¹³ shows that Jesus is the main character who is now in action to do what he wants to do for his disciples. It is the word used in the resurrection of Jesus to describe the rising of Jesus from his death. Thus, the rising of Jesus from the table, is looked at from the lens of *Tautua matavela* as the rising of the resurrected Christ. In order to show to his disciples the Godly ways that will help bring the world into salvation. It also reveals the way of serving others from below by being with them in the level of their livingness, and bringing them into the becomingness of God's kingdom.

The word “*took off*”¹⁴ is present indicative active verb meaning places or puts aside something. It shows Jesus performing another action of a *tautua* of putting aside his out garment – the garment symbolizing higher status in the Jewish community – and

¹³ Rev. W. Frank Scott. *Commentary on the Gospel According to St John* (United State of America: Grand Rapids, 2001), 365.

¹⁴ R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John, vol. 3* (London: Burns & Oates, 1982), 3.

puts on the garment that shows Jesus as a *tautua*, the towel. It is no different to a *tautua* putting on an *ieie* (an old dirty cloth) preparing to do the work of serving his family from the back kitchen. Thus, puts aside his status that recognizes him as the leader to his disciples and as the Son of God and lowers himself to level of a servant.

In verse 5, “*poured*” means to throw or cast water into a basin and “*began*” to wash the disciple’s feet. “*Began*” is a verb with an aorist tense, which mean it’s an action with deliberate, and it’s a complete action. Therefore, wash and wipe are not the same, wash means to wash one’s self, and wipe means to knead. So Jesus washes one by one of the disciple’s feet, and kneads to make sure it’s clean and dry. No wonder why foot washing is a task for a very lower ranking people in a family or society, like slaves. These descriptive pictures suggest that a high level of resoluteness and intimacy is apparent in this very act, unlike when Gentile slaves would do the washing. Thus, on that wise Jesus showed his love by this act to his disciples. The implication is that the natural relationship is reversed in an act of love and striking humility.

Vs. 6-7 the Greek word *λεγει αὐτῷ*; translated as “he said”, in a form of 3rd person singular. Many manuscripts indicate the change of subject at this point. A probable interpolation of another text or a kind of repetition is observable in the text. Thus, it suggests a combination of two different sources or texts. This has given the Johannine symbolism “dual approach with varied submissions”¹⁵. However *-ἔρχεται οὖν πρὸς Σίμωνα Πέτρον λέγει αὐτῷ, Κύριε, σὺ μου νίπτεις τοὺς πόδας;* “Then he came to Simon Peter; he said to him, Lord, does thou wash my feet?” The term *σου* and *μου* are emphatic; hence a special stress lies on *μου*, as following another pronoun directly. Peter either was amazed with the Master’s condescension even to the level of such

¹⁵ Bultman, R. *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*: Trans. By G. R. Beasley Murray (Western Printing Services – Ltd, 1971), 200

menial work. He felt convicted and inadequate for such treatment from the Master. Hence, the disciples had been disputing about precedence (V. 4) and Jesus reminds them, as he had done before on dignity of service and ministry (12:26) as being the high place which *διακοναί* (service) occupies in His life and teachings. He illustrates by his action of love and service for the divine prerogative for the kingdom ethics of love. This essential feature of his mission was what he bids his disciples to follow (V. 16).

In verse 8 *Οὐ μὴ νύψῃς μου τοὺς πόδας*, this construction, the resistance was very strong and was attested by the phrase of double negation *Οὐ μὴ*. Peter's sense of what is fitting for his Master is completely outraged. In response to Peter's resistance (V. 8) Jesus says cryptically *Ἐὰν μὴ νύψω σε, οὐκ ἔχεις μέρος μετ' ἐμοῦ* unless I wash you, you have no part "*μέρος*" (inheritance or share with me). Jesus picks up the challenge of Peter whose act amounted to irreverence and wants of confidence. It asserts that, the first condition of discipleship is self-surrender. Thus, the fear of losing fellowship with his Master threw him open to an artificial brokenness – On the contrary, he is still ignorant of his unbroken-ness and selfishness. In verse 9, *μὴ τοὺς πόδας μου μόνον* ..., (not my feet only...) reveals Peter's selfishness of wanting more from his Master. He now senses the glory of being cleaned which also reveals that Peter does not really understand the Master's act.

In verse 10 *Ὁ λελουμένος* - He that is bathed, perfect passive participle of *λῶ* to bath the whole body (Acts: 9: 37), implies that having bathed the whole body the only thing necessary thereafter is only to wash his feet. Thus, his whole body is "clean" *καθαρός ὅλος*. It is noteworthy that textual variants and the use of synonymous terms of two different words poses a serious hermeneutical problem and thus assumes varied

conclusions from interpreters. As Barret mentions,¹⁶ that the statement of v.10 was misunderstood partly because it was not grasped that *λουειν* and *νίπτειν* were synonyms, and secondly, because of the social custom involved. He therefore says the text was expanded regardless of the fact that it introduced the implication that the foot washing was a comparatively unimportant addition to the process of bathing. However, as mentioned in the above exegesis of the middle part of the unit, it is clearly revealed that the foot-washing plays a very important part in showing the importance of Jesus' relationship to his disciples, especially in revealing the significance of helping each other in and through serving each other from below – the so-called '*Aga ale tautua*'. It is simply Jesus' sacrificing his status as Son of God to be a servant of God.

3.2.3 Ending: (13:12-20) *Talanoa fa'atautua* (Servant teaching)

I have named the ending part of the unit as *Talanoa fa'atautua*. Jesus prepares the feast driven by his love for his disciples (*Fa'aosofia ile alofa*) shown in the beginning part of the unit. It is followed by Jesus' putting that love into actions considered as *Aga ale tautua* in the middle part of the unit where Jesus washes and cleans his disciples' feet. The unit completes with Jesus telling the disciples why he washes their feet which I call *Talanoa fa'atautua*.

Talanoa is a traditional word used across the Pacific to reflect a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue.¹⁷ The purpose of *Talanoa* is to share stories, build empathy and to make wise decisions for the collective good. The process of *Talanoa* involves the sharing of ideas, skills and experience through storytelling. So the *tautua* sharing ideas, skills and experience from what he was done before. *Talanoa*

¹⁶ C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: Camelot Press Ltd, 1976), 99

¹⁷ Mautanoa Lisi Vaai, *Samoan Dictionary*, 2021. George Pratt, *Pratt's Grammar and Dictionary of the Samoan Language*. (Malua: Malua Printing Press, 1960).

is made up of two words, *tala* simply means, to open, or a story, *noa* is an empty space. So *talanoa* therefore could be looked at as sharing of stories or conversations to fill up an empty space. So *Talanoa fa'atautua*, depicts the image of sharing knowledge and understanding of being a servant to fill up an empty space needed to be filled in order to help people in need in any space or place.

So the ending part of the unit is the last part of the story of the foot-washing which speaks of Jesus teaching the disciples about what he did. It depicts the picture of *tautua* as not only performing but also teaching. It is where Jesus asks questions to find whether his disciples understand his actions as shown in verse 12. The Greek words *Γινώσκετε τί πεποίηκα ὑμῖν* asking the question of whether the disciples understand Jesus' act is an example. The word *πεποίηκα* is a *perfect active indicative* of *ποιέω* with dative case *ὑμῖν* expresses a searching question for Simon Peter and Judas whether they understand what he did. As evident later in Jesus' ministry, these disciples do not understand.

Though Jesus knew his very status and dignity, yet, he acted in great humility to demonstrate the meaning of true love in leadership, and still adhere to his given responsibility. After that, he challenges his disciples, that if he their Master and Lord did it for them, it was an obligation the disciples owe to each other. Thus, as leaders they must denounce pride, selfishness, greed and embrace love and humility in the manner of Christ. This very last moment, Jesus emphasizes to his disciple, “*not speaking to all of you; I know whom I have chosen*”. When Jesus chooses a person he knows them. He does not choose apart from his knowledge of who they are and what they will do. It was important for Jesus to tell the disciples that he was not surprised by the betrayal that would soon happen.

When Jesus says, *“The one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me”*, he had in mind what is mentioned in Psalm 41:9. It has the sense of a treacherous, unexpected attack or taking cruel advantage of someone. In Biblical culture the code of hospitality and a shared table meant that if one *“who eats bread with me”* did afterward *“lift up his heel against me”*, it was great betrayal and treachery.

So Jesus a *tautua* as a leader, he was teaching his disciple to make sure, that his work to help save the world is *not* done. Judas will not win. The work of Jesus will continue and they are the chosen ones sent as his representatives to take that ministry to all nations of the world. Jesus also wanted Judas to know, rejecting him meant rejecting God who sent Jesus. It is rejecting the love of God. Jesus says, *“very truly, I tell you, whoever receives one whom I send receives me; and whoever receives me receives him who sent me”*. Receiving Jesus that means you receive God.

3.3 Exploring the Inter-texture of the text

The following questions from the Inter textual method as mentioned before, will guide the inter texture analysis. How does the Old Testament text encode the recitation in John 13:1-20? What is the connection to the whole meaning of the text? If it's relevant to the text why Jesus cited? And how does it promote the proclamation of the act and the teaching of Jesus in the text? The Inter textual analysis of John 13:19, shows how Jesus recitation of Psalm 41:9 affirms that Judah present to fulfill this quote. As mentioned from the inner texture, that verses 2, 10 and 11, Jesus reveals the present of the betrayer, one of his disciples will betray him, accordingly when the devil put into the heart of Judah to betray his master. This is refers to verse 19, Jesus say, *“the one*

who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me". It is a quote from the book of Psalm 41:9. As Michael reveals in his additional notes¹⁸

Psalm 41:10 (LXX)

“καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς εἰρήνης μου, ἐφ’ ὃν ἤλπισα, ὁ ἐσθίων ἄρτους μου, ἐμεγάλυνεν ἐπ’ ἐμὲ περνισμὸν”¹⁹

Psalm 41:9. “For even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, lifted up his heel against me”

John 13:18 (Greek)

Οὐ περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν λέγω· ἐγὼ οἶδα τίνας ἐξελεξάμην· ἀλλ’ ἵνα ἡ γραφὴ πληρωθῇ· ὁ τρώγων μου τὸν ἄρτον ἐπῆρεν ἐπ’ ἐμὲ τὴν πτέρναν αὐτοῦ.

As for “*hath lifted up his heel against me*”; according to Ironside²⁰

3.4 Exploring the Social and Cultural texture

In the inner texture and the inter texture analysis, Jesus’ action is seen as a role of *Tautua matavela*. Likewise in the Social and Cultural analysis of the text, Jesus’ action

¹⁸ According to what Michaels mentioned, “He who shares my bread has lifted up his heel against me. Some commentators have notice that **shares my bread** (lit. “ate my bread”) uses the same usual Greek word for eat found in 6:5, 56-58 and have proposed that John has chosen this word (instead of the common word found in the LXX of Ps. 41:10) for the sake of supposed Eucharistic implication. More likely it is either a word he was in habit of using purely as a matter of style, or else the LXX manuscripts with which he was familiar had it in their texts of Ps. 41:10. It is true, however, that what was violated, both by Judas and by subsequent betrayers in the ancient church, was (at least at one level) the fellowship of the Lords table. However, the phrase lifted up his heel against me rest on an ancient gesture of contempt probably carrying the connotation of trampling someone underfoot, or perhaps shaking the dust of his city from one’s feet”. J. RAMSEY MICHAELS, *New International Biblical Commentary John*. Vol 4, (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publisher, 2007), 248.

¹⁹ Taking form LXX – Septuagint translation.

²⁰ H. A. IRONSIDE see this verse as “by supplanting him, dealing hypocritically with him, and betraying him into the hands of his enemies: the metaphor is either taken from an unruly horse throwing his rider, and then ungenerously spurning at him, and trampling on him; or from wrestlers, who seek to supplant and trip up each other’s heels; which shows the ingratitude, baseness, and treachery of Judas”. H. A. IRONSIDE, *An Ironside Expository commentary JOHN*, (United State of America: Grand Rapids, 2006), 320.

will be looked at as *Tautua matavela* – a *tautua* as an honored role in the Kingdom of God.

3.4.1 Honour and Shame

Despite being opposites, honour and shame are values that were common in the Mediterranean culture especially when looking at its influence during the Hellenistic era in the Middle East. To be honoured, meant that you held as a person of positive value within the eyes of a group, either because of your character or your deeds.²¹ In other words, it is all about how one is perceived in the public and accepted to be a person of great recognition because of something they did or simply are as a person to be acknowledged.²² According to Malina, honour is obtained in two ways, “ascribed” and “achieved”²³, whilst Neyrey has his own two way system, “kinship or endowment”²⁴, the former being honour based upon the bloodlines of a person connected to a family that earns honour from society, and the latter being honour granted as a reward or merit for a person’s actions that was cause for the grant of honour in the first place. Honour as a virtue, was something that people also competed for.²⁵ It was seen as something that would mean that in order to obtain honour, they had to take it from someone else in the form of competition. The ancient Olympics would have surely been the place where honour would have been the goal for any athlete. Shame on the other hand, is the loss of respect, because of something that a person did which did not meet the societal

²¹ Bruce Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, "Honour and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World." in *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, edited by Jerome H. Neyrey, 25-65. (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publisher, 1991).

²² Elliot, 1993, p. 130

²³ Malina and Neyrey, "Honour and Shame in Luke-Acts," (1991).

²⁴ Malina, Bruce J, and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew*. (Sonoma: Polebridge Press, 1988).

²⁵ Malina & Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names*. 1988, 114

standards of what is considered “honourable”, especially if it is from a person whom people have high respect and admiration for.

Jesus was a person who was seen as a person of high respect and admiration by those who viewed him that way. Jesus, a rabbi, a teacher, and healer, was welcomed into the streets of Jerusalem with high praise and cautious admiration from the intellectual circles, such as the Sadducees and Pharisees. Yet in the biblical text,²⁶ it’s a subversive ideal, the disciples see their master, their teacher, their rabbi, kneel down and wash their feet. For the disciples, this was not an honorable thing to do, because it was something only a house slave would do as part of their hospitality. To see their leader perform the duties of slave and wash his followers feet, would have been a huge unexpected move on his behalf. The disciples were not expecting this kind of action, they were willing to help those in needs, but Jesus was trying to show them to also help each other first, before they go out into the world. From Jesus perspective, it was because of honour that made him perform such an action against his disciples in the first place, whilst in the view of his followers; it was a shameful thing to do.

In the story of the foot-washing, the honor in Jewish society and the 1st century Mediterranean world were simply earned through recognition of higher status and good wealth. It is manifested in the type of clothes worn by certain people as evident in the difference between the outer garment that Jesus put aside and the towel he places around his waist. These different clothing symbolize the different statuses of a Master and a Slave. Judas willingness to betray Jesus for money is another example of the desperateness of getting good wealth because of gaining that high recognition in a society. This way of honoring was encouraged by the Roman Imperial ruling of the first century World. However, Jesus’ actions as revealed in the story, it’s an ideal way of

²⁶ John 13:1-20 NRSV.

honoring in the Kingdom of God. It is an action against the social living and the culture of that time. It's another way around, and it is also the social and cultural expectations of being a *Tautua matavela* in our Samoan social and cultural world.

3.5 Conclusion

In the summary of this chapter, the exegesis of the passage using the sociorhetorical approach gives a reading and understanding of the text from the exploring of the inner texture, inter texture and the social and cultural texture of the text. The inner texture was divided into three parts, the beginning (*Fa'aosofia ile alofa*), the middle is (*Aga fa'atautua*), and the ending part is (*Talanoa fa'atautua*). From these three parts, Jesus was preparing the last supper as a last special ceremony or occasion to reveal his disciples his love. Hence, in this context, love becomes an important concept in Jesus dealing with his disciples. It shows that love according to Jesus is the laying down of one's life to share that love with others in order to help those in need. Jesus shows this love all the way to the end to his death and resurrection. In the middle part, Jesus prepares his disciple by putting that love into action, revealing an act of sacrificial love shown in and through the washing of his disciples' feet foot washing. And the last part of the unit as interpreted shows Jesus going back to his seat starting teaching them about what he did, and also the inter-textual reading of the text elaborates and affirmed the action of Judah was cited by Jesus as a betrayer from the Old Testament, in Psalm 41:9. Lastly, the social and cultural texture, talks about honour and shame as values common in the Mediterranean culture as seen in the foot-washing event. It shows that what Jesus did is shameful, according to the first century Mediterranean world culture, but it is an honorable undertaking in Gods kingdom. Thus shows the subversive understanding of the Kingdom of God. It's also shows that, to lead, one who has serve,

just like a Samoan *Tautua matavela*, so it's not only an honored in the eyes of our context and our Samoan culture, but also in the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 4

Analysis of the Exegesis using the '*Tautua matavela*'

Hermeneutic and Conclusion

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter will analyze the exegesis made herein using the *Tautua matavela* hermeneutic and the conclusion.

4.2 Analysis

The exegesis has shown that there are elements of *Tautua matavela* within the text. One example is *Tautua matavela* preparing of a *fa'aoso*. *Fa'aoso* is a gift of food or money prepared by the *Tautua matavela* for people leaving to go on a journey. Jesus' washing of his disciples' feet is looked at as Jesus' preparing them *fa'aoso* – it is teaching them how to be good disciples by being good servants for each other. It is living among each other with humility and humbleness. Jesus as a leader of the group has offered to do the favour of preparing a meal for them in which Jesus washed their feet. It was done out of love for them because Jesus knew that his time was near. Love in Greek is *ἀγάπη* translated in Samoan *alofa*, was the main motivation behind this.

Aga fa'atautua, is an act of a servant that is done in silence. This is what Jesus did when he decided to wash his disciples' feet. Without a word he stood up began washing his disciples' feet. He bended on his knees to wash his disciple's feet, reflecting humble servant. However, he only said a word when he was asked by Peter, a person that reflects in his character the *Tautua fiamatai* means he was only accepting foot-washing when he heard about rewards. However, Jesus put aside his outer robe and put on the towel – reflecting a servant and it is putting aside his pride, his status of recognition,

and become a *tautua*. This is *Aga fa'atautua*, humbleness and humility that Jesus wants his disciples to have when they do the work of spreading the good news but not like Peter's attitude.

When Jesus has done the foot washing, then he started teaching his disciple – a teaching of making sure that they understood what he has done. This is a *Talanoa fa'atautua* analogy. Therefore, this is another significant part of the *fa'aoso* prepared by a *Tautua matavela*, which is the role of speaking on behalf of your family, village and the church. As we often hear in our Samoan culture, those who serve their family well as *tautua* are gifted with good mouths (*poto le gutu e tautala*). It is a blessing of being a good *tautua* – blessing bestowed upon by their parents and *matai* of the family. This could be looked at as *fa'aoso* carried on to the next generations by the good *tautua* of this generation. So as what is seen in the event of foot-washing. If Jesus' disciples listen and do what Jesus is showing and teaching them, that will be a good *fa'aoso* for the next generation of disciples. In other words, they will carry the *Talanoa fa'atautua* as Jesus did with them – the *talanoa* of a servant who does what he/she says.

At the last part of the foot-washing event were Jesus' words that reflected words from Psalm 41:9 “*the one who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me*” – words that referred to Judas' plan to betray Jesus. In our Samoan context, what Judah did reveals the picture of *Tautua fia matai*. He was serving his master expecting a reward which is an opposite of *Tautua matavela*. As one of the Samoan saying says, “*O si ota lima lava e paia ai si ota mata*” or “*O manu'a mai fale*” which means that, what was happening was from within the inner circle of disciples. So this was another part of the *fa'aoso* prepared by Jesus to his disciples – not to be betrayers among themselves but to be good friends sharing what they have to help each other.

Lastly is the social and cultural reading in relation to honour and shame in the time of Jesus. What Jesus did as a leader was shameful in the eyes of the disciples and anyone who saw it. But it was an honored act in the Kingdom of God. It is what *Tautua matavela* is all about. To put one's body, mind, and spirit on the line of duty to serve the people in one's family and community in need. As Jesus says, "...to be first, have to be last" so to become a leader, be a servant. *Ole ala i le pule ole Tautua.*

4.3 Conclusion

After analyzing the text by using the hermeneutic of *Tautua matavela*, the questions raised in the beginning of this paper are answered. Can Jesus' acts be seen as *Tautua matavela*? How does the language of the text present that the action of Jesus reflects the picture of *Tautua matavela*? And can his *Tautua matavela* be passed on to disciples and others? And are there any other characters in the story that portray *Tautua matavela*? Yes, Jesus has shown doing actions of *Tautua matavela* and his taking it to another level through death and his glorious resurrection to save the world.

It is an important message and encouragement for our families, villages, and churches to continue serving the ministry as *Tautua matavela*. Jesus did as part of his ministry teaching his disciples to become servants to each in order by sharing the pain and the suffering of serving God with one another. As found in the exploration of the selected text shown herein, Jesus' action of washing his disciples' feet depicts the picture of *Tautua matavela*. It is an action of sacrifice of our self to save others, with humbleness, compassionate, generosity, and with love. Thus, it is our task as a Church to do likewise in our context. We do not have to wash the feet of the members of our Church. In our context, we do that in and through sharing with them any gift, food, whatever we have in abundance. Also, part of our washing of their feet could be reflected in helping their needs by our Church providing materials to build basic needs

needed by people of our communities that really need help – basic needs like houses, and water tanks.

Lastly, from a biblical reading exercise perspective, taking this thesis forward, I hope to continue using Samoan Hermeneutics as reading lens to do interpretations of the Bible. It is continuing making sense in the reality of life that I experience in my worlds today as in light of the Gospel.

Glossary

<i>Aga</i>	direction or an action
<i>Aga faa-tautua</i>	Act of a servant
<i>Alofa</i>	love
<i>Aumaga</i>	a group of untitled men in the village
<i>fa'a</i>	it's a prefix
<i>Faaoso</i>	provision
<i>Faaosofia ile alofa</i>	Motivated by love
<i>Fia</i>	wanting to, desire to do something
<i>Ieie</i>	an old dirty cloth
<i>Matai</i>	high chief
<i>Matavela</i>	face burnt by fire
<i>Noa</i>	empty space
<i>Oso</i>	to jump, to rise, and to pass
<i>Tala</i>	to open or story
<i>Talanoa faa tautua</i>	Servant teaching
<i>Talanoa</i>	talk, dialogue, sharing of ideas
<i>Tau</i>	fight or count
<i>Tautua matavela</i>	a service undertaken beyond pain and suffering for the sake of the survival of the family and the village
<i>Tautua fia matai</i>	servant after rewards
<i>Tautua</i>	Servant and service
<i>Tua</i>	back
<i>Umu</i>	Samoan earth oven
<i>Upu</i>	word

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